

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION

COUNCIL OF THE GINA CODY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Friday, November 5, 2021

PRESENT:

Chair: Debbabi, M.

Voting members: Afif, J.; Akgunduz, A.; Athienitis, A.; Bagchi, A.; Ben Hamza, A.; Campbell, S.; Clarke, J.; Contreras, I.; Constantinides, C.; De Visscher, A.; El Ayoubi, C.; Fayyaz, F.; Ge, H.; Ghafouri, M.; Gopakumar, G.; Goodarzi, B.; Jahanshahi-Anbuhi, S.; Kuzgunkaya, O.; Majumdar, S.; Medraj, M.; Nasiri, F.; Narayanan, L.; Nduwumwe, A.; Ng, H. D.; Ormandjieva, O.; Paquet, J.; Pugh, M.; Qiu, D.; Saleh, R.; Shayan, Y.; Shihab, E.; Shivamallappa, M.; Soliman, A.; Stathopoulos, T.; Thiel, S.; Witte, R.; Yan, J.; Younes, E.

Non-Voting members: Bencheikh, Z.; Binsley, R.; Kraulis, I.

Observers: Athienitis, I.; Baptiste-Brown, S.; Clarke, A.; Edwards, J-M.; Fiorentino, N.; Gosselin, G.; Himmo, M.; Martel, C.; Tajmel, T.

Guests: Akin-Aina, T.; Mulligan, C.; Piccirelli, O.; Siddiqui, N.

REGRETS:

Voting members: Carr, G.; Charky, K.; Rais, R.; Rathore, A.; Reddy, K.; Rivaz, H.; Whitelaw, A.

Non-Voting members: Ward, M.

Observers: Allaire, V.; De Melo, D.; Miatello, M.

1. Closed Session
2. Call to Order of the Open Session

The Chair called the open session of the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion 2021-06-01 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (G. Gopakumar/Y. Shayan), it was passed that the Agenda be adopted as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

4. Approval of the Minutes of Open Session ECFC 2021-05 – October 1, 2021

Motion 2021-06-02 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (B. Goodarzi/S.Thiel) it was passed that the Minutes be approved as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

5. Chair's Remarks

- It was announced that the feedback received from the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board for the Aerospace Engineering accreditation was positive. Everyone involved in this success was thanked. A special thank you was given to Dr. A. Akgunduz, Dr. M. Pugh and Dr. Y. Shayan for their leadership and to professors Carole El Ayoubi, Lyes Kadem, Abdelwahab Hamou-Lhadj, and Kash Khorasani.
- A thank you was given to staff in the Dean's office: Dr. Hoi Dick (Eddie) Ng, Guy Gosselin, Vincent Allaire for the videos of the labs and thank you to Rhonda Binsley, Marisa Ward, Amanda Clarke, Zineb Bencheikh and Kristin Tedd in ECE. All of the technical and administrative staff who participated in the meetings were also thanked, along with the student representatives and industry representatives that played an important role.
- The Applied AI Institute was officially created a few months ago and hosts 90+ faculty members, many from GCS. The institute brings together researchers with different specialties who work on artificial intelligence. There is a workforce training initiative with Ericsson, which will invest \$400,000 in the area of applied AI and 5G.
- GCS did well in the latest round of rankings. In the NTU Ranking by National Taiwan University, Civil Engineering ranked number 5 in Canada, up from 7 in 2020. It ranked 90th in the world (also climbed 83 spots). Mechanical Engineering is 6th in Canada; 143rd in the world (climbed 35 places). Electrical Engineering ranked 6th in Canada. Computer Science, 8th in Canada and Chemical Engineering, 10th.
- In the 2021 edition of the Shanghai Ranking's Academic Ranking of World Universities, Concordia placed in the 501–600 category. Last year, Concordia was ranked in the 601–700. Among 28 Canadian universities, Concordia ranked 21st–22nd, compared to 21st–24th in 2020. We ranked better this year in part because of the highly cited researchers indicator. Moreover, the university scored 3.8 on the Science and Nature indicator, up from 1.4 last year. This reflects a greater number of articles published in *Science and Nature* in the last five years from authors affiliated with Concordia.
- Concordia retained its standing in the [Times Higher Education \(THE\) World University Rankings 2022](#) Concordia has now a put online a COVID-19 dashboard: <https://www.concordia.ca/coronavirus/dashboard.html>. As of November 1, 2021, there were four confirmed cases of COVID-19. The four cases were on campus between October 26 and November 1, 2021. Concordia also disclosed vaccination rates. Students are vaccinated at 89% as of mid-October, 2021. Faculty and staff reached 90% vaccinated as of October 7, 2021. Dean Debbabi noted that we need to continue to follow the health and safety guidelines, but the numbers are encouraging.
- **Accolades:** Professor Muthu Packirisamy and affiliate professor Anirban Gosh from MIAE were featured in a story on the Concordia website. The story was about a paper published in the journal *Biosensors and Bioelectronics*. They describe a new liquid biopsy method using lab-on-a-chip technology that they believe can detect cancer before a tumour is even formed. (<https://www.concordia.ca/news/stories/2021/10/19/concordia-researchers-develop-a-new-way-to-find-cancer-at-the-nanometre-scale.html?c=/news>)
- ECE Professor Habib Benali was recently featured in a story to relaunch the Physiological Suite at Concordia's PERFORM Centre. They have brought together new and existing equipment all under the same roof to help multidisciplinary and translational research. (<https://www.concordia.ca/news/stories/2021/10/19/concordias-perform-centre-hopes-to-bring-research-beyond-the-lab.html?c=/news>)
- There were 1,900 international graduate students and undergraduate students who weren't able to upload immigration papers into the system in time and were going to be deregistered. The university, faculty and departments have joined forces to mitigate this issue. The graduate student issue has been resolved to a large extent. The majority of undergraduate students were unable to get their

papers and therefore they will be deregistered on November 8, 2021. Students who have uploaded documents will stay registered and potential graduates will be dealt with case by case.

- An in-person convocation will be held on January 18, 2022 and February 16, 2022. The event will be dedicated to students who graduated in Spring 2020. There is a possibility of having another graduation during the month of April 2022.
- An email was sent to staff and faculty this week for an invitation to a special workshop on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA). The session will be led by the Concordia Equity team and there will be two sessions offered, one for staff members on November 10, 2021, from 3-4 p.m. and one for faculty members on November 17, 2021, from 3-4 p.m. The workshop aims to provide an overview of the equity work happening at the university, the mission and direction of the Equity Office, and strategies and tips for practicing Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility in our everyday lives. Everyone is encouraged to attend.
- The university created a pilot program called the equity advocate program. The program appoints faculty members to act as EDI advocates and will work with department hiring committees to support EDI initiatives in hiring.
- The Engineering Deans of Quebec prepared two reports for the Quebec government. Analysis was conducted on the engineering training needs in Quebec. There was strong collaboration with Emploi Québec, Statistics Canada and OIQ. The report detailed the needs of engineers and software engineers. A second report of 100 pages was submitted on the obstacles and barriers that are preventing students from joining STEM programs. The two reports were submitted to the government.
- In the past, we had an allocation of \$1.08 million for scholarships for undergraduate students for electrical and software engineering and computer science, from the ministry of higher education. The amount has been increased to \$1.3 million. The scholarships will be given with an emphasis on attracting and retaining female students. The amount will be \$3,000 per annum during their years of education.

6. Concordia Alumni Connect

Presenters: Olivia Piccirelli, Temi Akin-Aina and Nida Siddiqui

- Olivia Piccirelli introduced herself as the Alumni Officer of External Partnership with Alumni Relations and her team, Temi Akin-Aina, Associate Director and Nida Siddiqui who is the faculty liaison who responsible for GCS programs. The platform, Concordia Alumni Connect, is a digital mentoring platform for Concordia alumni, students, and staff. An email is sent to students after convocation to let them know that they have access to the platform as an alumnus. Alumni Connect helps to build a diverse virtual community for connections among current students and alumni by seeking out mentors for career resources. There are currently 467 students, 168 are from GCS and 25, 000 alumni, 73 are from GCS. There are currently 69 mentoring connections. There is a YouTube video that shows users how to navigate the platform: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nNjhzqgH0>. It is important to note that a new feature called connection request has been implemented to better connect mentees with mentors.
- Olivia Piccirelli can be contacted directly at Olivia.piccirelli@concordia.ca
- <https://www.concordia.ca/alumni-friends/career-services/alumni-connect.html> can be shared with your networks to encourage engagement on the platform.

7. Centraide Campaign at Concordia University

Presenter: Catherine Mulligan

- Professor Catherine Mulligan is a co-leader for the Centraide campaign. The Centraide campaign ends on November 12, 2021. The university's goal is to raise \$200, 000. Thus far we have \$168, 000. Centraide supports the Montreal community and helps 350 different organizations in Montreal. A small donation of \$10 per pay can help 20 families. November 16, 2021, is the date of the closing ceremony. Please note that reminders have been sent from Philippe Beauregard. Please pay attention to this emails to find out how to participate or check-out www.concordia/events/centraide.html

Action : Rhonda will distribute the Centraide presentation to Council.

8. Associate Dean Remarks

Ali Akgunduz, Associate Dean, Academic Programs and Undergraduate Activities

- The aerospace accreditation process was recently completed. Thank you to everyone who contributed.
- The faculty needs begin preparing for the next accreditation, which will be held in three years.
- Remote courses will no longer be offered during the Winter term 2022, however we have blended teaching, which is a new format. If you are thinking of offering a blended course, this needs to be planned.
- eConcordia courses will continue to be given online. In-person exams were given for eConcordia courses prior to the pandemic, but this is no longer an option. The eConcordia exams will now only be offered online.
- On an exceptional basis, Zoom can be used for courses. The exceptions are being dealt with on a very temporary basis.

Feedback: *Concerns were expressed that eConcordia may find it difficult to offer to certain engineering and computer science courses without in-person exams.*

Hua Ge, Associate Dean, Student Academic Services

- A town hall was held for international undergraduate students on November 1, 2021. Dr. Ge thanked faculty and staff within the departments who helped sending emails to undergraduate students on the list to help improve the situation.
- Applications have increased by 20 percent compared to last year, Admissions have also increased. Registration is down compared to last year, but hopefully the number will improve.
- Central Advising working group (CAWG) is organizing its first Advising colloquium. The purpose is to share best practices among faculties to see how to better support students. The event will be held on November 11, 2021 from 9:00 – Noon. Ms. Himmo shared the information with the departments and staff and faculty are encourage to attend.

Hoi Dick (Eddie) Ng, Associate Dean, Academic Affairs

- We have 25.5 faculty positions to be filled in the current hiring cycle. Application deadlines for seven MES tenure track positions has now passed. Departments will begin the process soon or they are already underway. People on the hiring committees are asked to please participate the EDI workshops before application review process begins.
- The Centraide campaign is underway. An email was sent personally to each Concordia employee. Please do not hesitate to contact Hoi Dick (Eddie) Ng, Catherine Mulligan or Marisa Ward for further information.
- Students can apply online by November 12, 2021, for TA positions through the Teaching Assistant Application System (TAAS). Please note that the deadline for CSSE is one week after.
- Please remind professors that they cannot guarantee anything before the application goes through the process.

Emad Shihab, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies

- There were 436 international students who were at risk of being unregistered. Thank you to all GPAs and SAS for their help lowering the number of unregistered students to 222. There were 16 thesis students, and the remaining are MEng students.
- The committee was asked to please tell students to try to make it to Montreal for the Winter 2022 term. There is a strict deadline of November 8, 2021.
- The final numbers for Fall registrations are 108 PhD students, which is lower than the 127 last year. It was noted that the number is lower because we have to be on campus.
- The Council was asked to please remind faculty members to encourage students, especially local students to join in the Winter 2022 term.
- There are currently 19 registered PhD students, which is an increase from last year's 10.
- There are currently 131 thesis Masters' students, which is an increase when compared to 96 last year.
- There are 1,300 MENG compared to 765 MEng for the Fall term.
- The NSERC discovery was due November 2, 2021. There were 42 proposals submitted from GCS. Many departments did their own internal reviews and the Dean's office also conducted internal reviews at the faculty level. Everyone who helped was thanked and it was noted that he has seen improvement of the quality of NSERC proposals.
- There were 5 RTI proposals, which is lower than the usual. In the past we submitted 12 proposals.
- There were 3 CERC Canadian Research Chair LOIs submitted from GCS.
- There is currently a training program with Ericsson ongoing through the AI institute. We are beginning to look at the possibility of replicating this model with other industrial partners.
- There is a signed MOU with IVADO, which means we can work with a lot of different industrial partners.
- Gratitude was expressed to the three AI co-founding directors – Kash Khorasani, Tristan Glatard, and Nizar Bouguila.
- This week Dr. Marina Pushkareva, Research Funding Advisor, began working in the Dean's Office. Marina is the first hire of a team of four that will be responsible for increasing partnerships with industry whether government or non-profits. We will have three more positions filled when the right candidates have been selected.

9. Curriculum Changes

- a) Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2022-23 Academic Year
Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering:
SOEN 387 (ECFC 2021-06-01)

Motion 2021-06-03 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (L. Narayanan/S. Thiel), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-01, be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

- b) Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2022-23 Academic Year
Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering:
Revise curriculum of Joint Major in Mathematics and Statistics
(ECFC 2021-06-02)

Motion 2021-06-04 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (A. Akgunduz/L. Narayanan), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-02, be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

- c) Graduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2021-22 Academic Year
Centre for Engineering and Society:
ENCS 692 (ECFC 2021-06-03)

Motion 2021-06-05 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (E. Shihab /G. Gopakumar) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-03, be ratified as submitted, with the following edits:

- *Ensure the course numbers within the document remain the same.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

- d) Graduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2021-22 Academic Year
Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering:
CIVI 691 and BLDG 691 (ECFC 2021-06-04)

Motion 2021-06-06 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (E. Shihab/J. Clark), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-04, be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

- e) Graduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2021-22 Academic Year
Department of Computer Science and Software Engineering:
COMP 692 and SOEN 692 (ECFC 2021-06-05)

Motion 2021-06-07 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (E. Shihab /S. Majumdar), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-05, be ratified as submitted with the following edits:

- *Make the course numbers in sync.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

10. Ratifications of Elections (ECFC 2021-06-06)

Motion 2021-06-08 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng/T. Stathopoulos), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-06, Representative on the Academic Programs Committee be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2021-06-09 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng/ M. Pugh) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-06, MIAE Representative on the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science Faculty Council be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2021-06-10 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng/ L. Narayanan) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-06, Faculty Elections Committee Chair be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2021-06-11 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng/T. Stathopoulos) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-06, Representative on the Senate be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2021-06-12 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng/ B. Goodarzi) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-06-06, Representative on the Advisory Search Committee for the VP of Research and Graduate Studies be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

11. Other Business

- Yousef Shayan announced a new LOI program in bio-medical engineering is being offered in ECE. Recent announcement from federal government to fund \$ 2.2 million in.
- The CAE low-carbon, positive energy resilient communities webinar was hosted on October 12, 2021. Andreas Athienitis is one of the leaders and Dean Debbabi gave opening remarks with Mr. Yves Beauchamp, the President of CEA. The event was coordinated with the University of Victoria. The event was very impressive comprising several aspects from building design, building exportation, and international and national low carbon community projects were presented. The next event will be in 2023. The information from this event will be relayed to both the federal and provincial governments. If anyone has questions or comments, they may contact andreas.athienitis@concordia.ca
- Concordia and GCS hosted the MBRI student research forum 2021 on September 23 and 24, 2021, which was organized under the leadership of Chunjiang An from BCEE and in collaboration with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
- The Premiere of Quebec said they will provide additional support to Engineering and Computer

Science.

- Dean Debbabi thanked Dr. Claude Martel, Director of the Concordia Institute of Co-Operative Education, who is retiring. A special thank you for outstanding contributions to GCS and outstanding support to students.

12. Adjournment at 3:46 p.m.

Zineb Bencheikh
Secretary of Faculty Council
Gina Cody School of Engineering & Computer Science