

**MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING OF
THE COUNCIL OF THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
OPEN SESSION**

December 12, 2024 at 10:00 am in EV 2.309

PRESENT

Ex-officio members: E. Diamantoudi (Chair), M. Fitzgibbons.

Voting members: E. Adams, A. Aghdam, R. Berger, K. Dizon, G. Dover, A. Fattoum-Guedri, F. Grond, X. Huang, N. M. Ilyas, C. Lesage, W. Linds, M. Medraj, A. Soliman, P. Stoyanov, M. Sussman, E. Tsabary, S. Ullah, F. Yuen, M. Zaare.

Non-Voting members: S. De Celles, D. Lafrance (Secretary), M. Jordan (Recording Secretary).

Guests: G. Beltran, N. Butt, D. Cossette, E. MacFadden, C. Nahman.

REGRETS

Voting members: J. Agbonhese, C. Hachem-Vermette, M. Salazkina, F. Scala, C. Wilds.

Non-Voting members: W. Cheaib, S. Gabriele.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved and seconded (G. Dover, A. Aghdam). Carried.

3. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Meeting of November 7, 2024

Moved and seconded (M. Medraj, E. Tsabary). Carried.

4. Chair's Remarks

The Chair reminded Council members of upcoming Graduate Program Director Townhalls, by which time we should be aware of the government's quotas on international students.

Given the provincial government's directive to encourage French at English-language institutions, Dr Diamantoudi raised the possibility of removing the English-language requirement (TOEFL, IELTS) for students in research programs from French-speaking countries or those who did the majority of their prior studies in French-language institutions. Departments would be able to maintain English-languages requirements, should they so choose. Canadian francophone students are already exempt from the requirement.

Dr Diamantoudi shared the good news that Gabrielle Mandl (PhD in Chemistry) had won the CGS/Pro-Quest Doctoral Dissertation Prize – a first for Concordia.

5. Question Period

In response to a question about defining French-speaking students, the Chair clarified that those who had completed their primary, secondary and undergraduate education in French would be regarded as francophone. The initial rollout of this change would be for research programs only, as students currently have the opportunity to submit their work in French. Extending it to course-based programs could also be considered in the future.

Business

6. Proposed Graduate Calendar Changes

Integrated Pathways

CSGS 2425 3 D1

Moved and seconded (G. Dover, M. Medraj). Carried.

Dr Diamantoudi provided an overview of the proposed calendar change which would permit undergraduate students to take up to 16 credits of graduate courses and count them towards a future graduate degree at Concordia.

Presentations

7. Budget Discussion

Denis Cossette, Chief Financial Officer

Mr Cossette presented the highlights, significant financial challenges and strategic responses facing Concordia in the 2024-25 fiscal year. The university is experiencing a declining student population, shifting provincial funding policies, and broader economic pressures. A major issue is the Quebec government's reduction in higher education funding, with Concordia receiving the largest cut among Quebec universities. Additional financial strain arises from the government's tuition policy changes, particularly affecting out-of-province and international students.

Despite these financial challenges, the university remains committed to long-term sustainability. Its strategy includes careful budget adjustments, operational efficiencies, and structural transformations to ensure continued institutional strength and student support.

Reports

8. Graduate Curriculum Committee Update
Rachel Berger, Associate Dean, Academic Programs and Development

Dr Berger reported that the *Bureau de la coopération interuniversitaire* (BCI) had conducted its review of the Competency-Based Teacher Qualification Graduate Diploma and requested that it be split into two separate diplomas: Preschool and Elementary Teaching, and Second Language Teaching.

Other

9. Adjournment

Moved and seconded (C. Lesage, S. Ullah). Carried.

Next Meeting: February 6, 2025 from 10:00 am – 12:00 noon in EV 2.309

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Jordan
Recording Secretary
Council of the School of Graduate Studies