



**ENGAGE  
PREPARE  
AND CONNECT**

CONCORDIA

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
ANNUAL REPORT

2019 -2020









# CONTENTS

## 4 A MESSAGE FROM THE INTERIM DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES

## 5 HOW WE CULTIVATE A GRADUATE STUDENT-CENTRED ENVIRONMENT

WE SHINE A LIGHT ON OUR NEXT-GEN AWARDS RECIPIENTS

WE DEVELOP PROGRAMS AND IDEAS THAT FOSTER OUR STUDENTS' INNOVATION IN RESEARCH

WE PROVIDE UNIQUE FUNDING PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS

## 7 HOW WE PREPARE AND TRAIN NEXT-GENERATION LEADERS

WE INVEST IN OUR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW'S FUTURES

WE PROVIDE RELEVANT ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## 9 HOW WE REACH BEYOND OUR WALLS

WE ENGAGE WITH OUR COMMUNITY

WE INFORM AND LEARN FROM OUR PEERS

WE COLLECT AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

WE PROMOTE OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS

WE ATTRACT THE BRIGHTEST MINDS

WE GIVE BACK

MEETING THE PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

## 15 QUALITY CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY

EXAMPLES OF ON-GOING ACTIONS AND NEW INITIATIVES

MEET OUR 2019-2020 EMPLOYEES OF THE TERM

## 16 THE YEAR AHEAD

## 17 2019-2020 IN NUMBERS



**Faye Diamantoudi,**  
**Interim Dean of Graduate Studies**

The 2019-2020 academic year was an exceptional year on every level. What began as year filled with excitement and dreams for our graduate students and postdoctoral fellows turned into an unimaginable series of personal, academic and professional challenges for everyone.

The resilience and creativity that are cornerstones of educational institutions and its members proved to up to the challenge of finding ways for students to complete their academic year and for most postdoctoral fellows to continue with their research careers.

Our local, national and international communities were all affected by the global pandemic that became known around the world as COVID-19.

At the School of Graduate Studies (SGS), we found new ways of managing our services and processes, and adapted along the way. SGS affirmed its commitment to ensuring that graduate students at Concordia experience stimulating academic programs and superior research facilities, whether in-person or virtual. We strive to provide the necessary academic and professional skills to contribute to society in a positive and rewarding manner upon graduation.

Our students, postdoctoral fellows, supervisors, and Faculties can depend on the professional and academic staff at the School for advisory and regulatory guidance in their navigation of the development, administration and delivery of our graduate degree programs and postdoctoral appointments.

A recognized pillar in the Research sector, the School collaborates with Faculties and services to promote a positive and rewarding student experience.

In 2016, as part of the Strategic Directions plan, we developed a five-year plan entitled **Engage, Prepare and Connect**. We update our plan every year to make sure that we stay on track, being adaptive to changing circumstances and nimble enough to explore new opportunities and sometimes shifting priorities. In 2016, we identified three overarching goals that continue to help us all align our activities every year.

### **CULTIVATE A GRADUATE STUDENT-CENTRED ENVIRONMENT**

### **PREPARE AND TRAIN NEXT-GENERATION LEADERS**

### **REACH BEYOND OUR WALLS**

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to contribute to the continuity of the School's planning, as developed under the leadership of dean Paula Wood-Adams who was named as the University's Interim Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies in February 2020.

In Fall 2019, the School of Graduate Studies was featured as Concordia Magazine's Faculty Spotlight. We invite you to further explore the School through this 2019 Annual Report and discover the many initiatives and collaborative projects we addressed in 2019-2020.

**Faye Diamantoudi**  
*Interim Dean of Graduate Studies*  
*Concordia University*



## HOW WE CULTIVATE A GRADUATE STUDENT- CENTRED ENVIRONMENT

Graduate student success is holistic in nature and a core mission of our institution. SGS understands that graduate studies encompasses not only what students learn within the academic program, but also their overall experience, including research and professional development. Last year, we worked closely with Departments and Faculties to develop academic and non-academic programs, as well as opportunities to enhance the graduate student experience at Concordia.

## WE SHINE A LIGHT ON OUR NEXT-GEN AWARD RECIPIENTS

As a way to share and take pride in our high-achieving graduate students, we regularly feature their accomplishments in our communications with the Concordia community, whether it be through NOW stories, an enhanced web presence or social media. Here are a few examples from this past year:



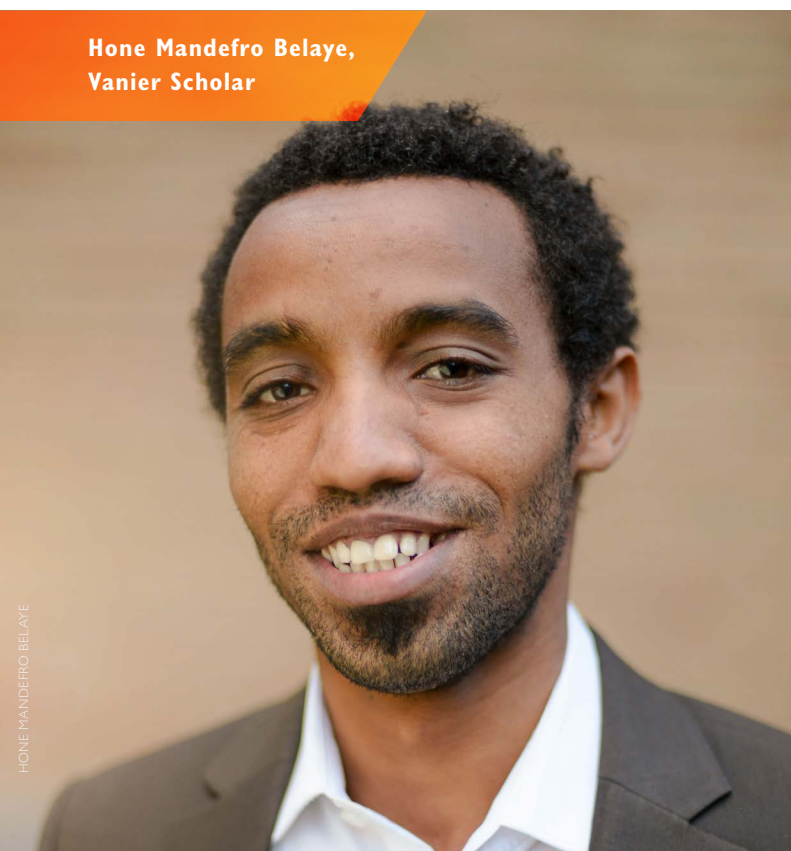
**Geneviève Grégoire-Labrecque**, an INDI PhD student and SSHRC Doctoral Canada Graduate Scholarship (CGS) recipient, received one of the 10 national Nelson Mandela honorary mentions from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council. Ms. Grégoire-Labrecque's research interests are in youth, participation, diversity, and wellbeing, and she is working on the transformational potential of everyday participation (family, school, and community) for immigrant youth in Montreal through participatory ethnographic methods.

**Anne Lafay, PhD** and **Élise Olmedo, PhD**, are the latest Concordia recipients of the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship. Lafay is a speech language pathologist and Horizon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Education, working under Helena Osana, associate professor of education. Dr. Lafay will be looking into the use of manipulative objects in math teaching for children, both typically developing (TD) and those with mathematics learning disabilities (MLD). Dr. Olmedo is a geographer from the universities of Aix-Marseille and Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne and she will be joining Sébastien Caquard, associate professor of geography, planning and environment, at the Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling (COHDS) to help document the life stories of Rwandan refugees.



**Élise Olmedo, PhD**  
Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship recipient

ÉLISE OLMEDO



**Hone Mandefro Belaye,**  
Vanier Scholar

HONE MANDEFRO BELAYE

Two doctoral graduate students began their tenure as recipients of prestigious Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships. **Hone Mandefro Belaye**, a PhD candidate in social and cultural analysis, is examining developments in housing policy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. **Sasha MacNeil**, a PhD candidate in clinical psychology, is studying how adolescents who have experienced adverse childhood events such as trauma or abuse can have difficulty adjusting and integrating socially.



**Sasha MacNeil**  
Vanier Scholar

SASHA MACNEIL

## WE DEVELOP PROGRAMS AND IDEAS THAT FOSTER OUR STUDENTS' INNOVATION IN RESEARCH

In 2019-20, the School of Graduate Studies:

- Advised on several new programs in development: Certificate in Play Therapy, Diploma in Oral History and Creative Practice, MA in Creative Arts Therapies' Dance/ Movement Therapy Option.
- Supported major curriculum revisions: MEng in Industrial Engineering, MA in Religions and Cultures, MFA in Cinematic Arts.



- Worked with several Arts and Science departments to ensure their master's programs meet eligibility criteria for provincial funding agencies.
- Collaborated with the Bureau de coopération interuniversitaire (BCI) on the proposed Master's in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology and the proposed Master's and PhD in Chemical Engineering.
- Worked with the ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES) on changes to the Master's in Supply Chain Management, the Master's in English Literature, and the MBA in Investment Management.
- Supported a project funded by Entente Canada-Québec to evaluate and improve the GradProSkills' Leadership Essential Series to better serve our graduate student community.
- Investigated the processes into developing future interdisciplinary programs based on research centres and potential research master's with a co-op component.
- Encouraged and supported the inclusion of professional development elements into graduate academic curriculum.
- Admitted 22 new doctoral and nine new master's students to the Individualized Program (INDI), bringing our total INDI student population to 142 students who are developing their own innovative academic programs. Examples demonstrating the diversity of research topics include:
  - *Les liens entre l'âge du début de l'apprentissage et l'acquisition du français langue seconde (L2)*
  - *Re-connecting through women's teachings, language, and movement. Culturally adapted yoga for Indigenous women and girls*
  - *Developing Best Practices for Pro-Environmental Sustainability Education*
  - *Going Rogue: Queer Performance and the Political Art of Gender Deviancy*
  - *Integrated Global Aviation Safety Management: Technology Policy, Strategic Change, and Big Data*

## WE PROVIDE UNIQUE FUNDING PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS

### GRADUATE COMMUNITY BUILDING FUND

The Graduate Community Building Fund provides financial support of up to \$5K towards special projects intended to build an intellectual community within graduate programs, by bringing together students and faculty for events, lectures, symposia, or related activities. In 2019, the community building fund supported 11 projects in eight different departments. In response to COVID-19, the Fund was expanded to support pandemic-related initiatives.

### CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION AWARD

Registered graduate students can receive funding to present at major scholarly conferences, or artistic exhibitions in a peer-reviewed or juried context. The purpose of this award is to encourage students to disseminate their research, acquire professional and practical experience as well as to enhance Concordia's profile in the external research community. The award remains available for virtual conferences.

## HOW WE PREPARE AND TRAIN NEXT-GENERATION LEADERS

*Whether they choose academia or non-academic careers, our next-generation leaders require knowledge and skills beyond traditional disciplinary boundaries. SGS, via GradProSkills, collaborates with internal and external content experts, such as the Student Success Centre and University Communications Services, to ensure students and postdoctoral fellows are equipped with the necessary tools to contribute in substantial ways to the worlds in which they work.*

## WE INVEST IN OUR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS' FUTURES

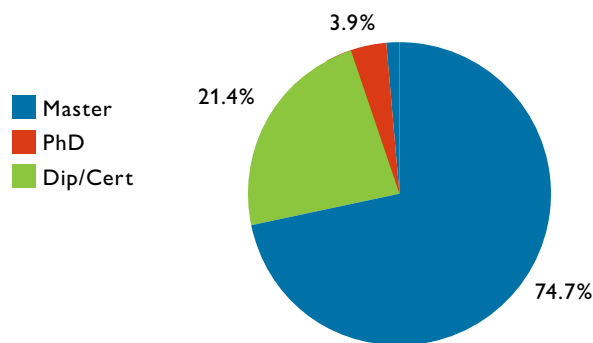
The School of Graduate Studies launched a platform for postdoctoral fellows to access Individual Development Plan (IDP) online tools as of Fall 2019. The IDPs help postdoctoral fellows identify their career-related skills and interests, short-term research and professional development needs, long-term career goals and progress toward their objectives. Postdocs have access to two different IDP tools, depending on their field of study. The myIDP portal is for researchers in science, technology, engineering, and math, while ImaginePhD is for scholars in the humanities and social sciences.

## WE PROVIDE RELEVANT ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

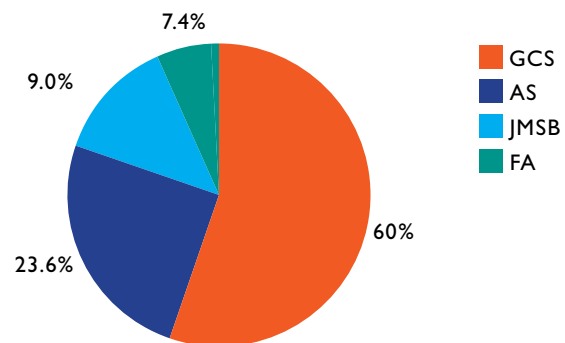
### GRADPROSKILLS (GPS) BY THE NUMBERS

2019-20 was GradProSkills' most active year for workshops and enrolment, despite campus closures! Between May 2019 and April 2020, GradProSkills offered 375 in-person workshops and webinars resulting in 7.2K enrolments, an increase of 10 per cent on the previous year. This increase was the result of new offerings but also more new students taking our workshops. This year, GradProSkills made a concerted effort to do more outreach to faculty members, which in turn better prepares them to refer their students to the program. In April, GradProSkills quickly migrated its content to online delivery, and the response from students was very positive.

### GPS Enrolment by Degree



### GPS Enrolment by Faculty



### GRAD SCHOOL BASE CAMP

GradProSkills hosted three sections of its Base Camp in fall 2019. Base Camp condenses critical workshops into a three-day event to ensure our students get the best start to their graduate experience. The 2019 event welcomed a total of 183 graduate from all Faculties, Schools, and degree-levels, including postdoctoral fellows. Student feedback was very positive, and students found the time-management and stress-management workshops to be the most beneficial.



### THESIS BOOST WRITING RETREAT

In November 2019, GradProSkills hosted its Thesis Boost: 3-day Writing Retreat at the Concordia Conference Centre. The event welcomed 66 graduate students and provided them with a motivating and peer-support writing atmosphere. The event brought together research and writing assistants from the Student Success Centre, wellness advisors from Campus Wellness, trainers from Recreation and Athletics, and experts from the Ombuds Office, GradProSkills and the Library to offer one-on-one consultations and workshops, all with the goal of helping students create healthy and productive writing habits.





**Erica Pimentel,**  
**Concordia 2020 3MT Winner**



**Vanessa Mardirossian,**  
**Concordia 2020 MT180 winner**

### 3-MINUTE THESIS AND MA THESE EN 180 SECONDES COMPETITIONS

On June 23, 2020, in collaboration with 4<sup>th</sup> SPACE, GradProSkills hosted the first virtual 3MT & MT180 competition at Concordia, wherein students present the entirety of their research in less than three minutes using only one static image. The event was a resounding success with a global online audience of over 250 people. This year, 77 students registered for the orientation, 30 participated in the coaching sessions and 19 accepted the final virtual challenge. Our PhD winner, **Erica Pimentel**, a 2020 Public Scholar and PhD student in Business Administration, will represent Concordia University in the CAGS Eastern Regional 3MT finals. **Vanessa Mardirossian**, PhD student in the Individualized Program (INDI), will be participating in the national MT180 secondes competition hosted by Acfas.

## HOW DO WE REACH BEYOND OUR WALLS?

*Our students represent more than 100 countries, each with its own educational system and culture. To realize the potential of Concordia's international appeal, we continually develop recruitment strategies that recognize the diversity of our targeted populations. We offer clear pathways to graduate degrees that make us an attractive first choice for top students from the rest of Canada and around the world. We collaborate with University Advancement to cultivate lasting and productive relationships with our graduates from across the globe, and we actively engage on the local scene.*

## WE ENGAGE WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Concordia and the School of Graduate Studies hosted the annual Acfas Journées de la relève en recherche on October 24-25, 2019. The two-day professional development conference brought together over 200 francophone graduate students from across Quebec to develop their research competencies and career preparedness. Concordia students participated in a record numbers, and the event featured four different presenters from GradProSkills, the Library and District 3. Acfas was delighted with the success of the event and their representatives expressed their pleasure at Concordia having taken this leadership role in an important francophone event.







**The 2019-20 Public Scholars, from top left: Lea Kabiljo, Emilie St-Hilaire, Matthew-Robyn Nye, Aryana Soliz, Heather Herriot, Amir Molaei, Sherif Goubran. From bottom left: Naghmeh Bandari, Zeina Allouche, and S. Mohammad Mirjalili**

## WE PROMOTE OUR GRADUATE STUDENTS

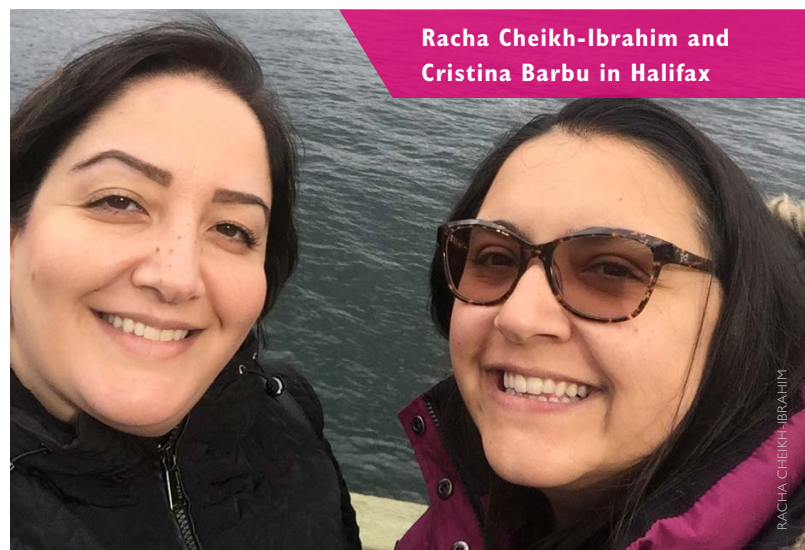
### CONCORDIA PUBLIC SCHOLARS

From developing tactical sensors for minimally invasive surgery to designing sustainable buildings, Concordia's Public Scholars continued to make an impact through cutting-edge research. Representing the university's diverse graduate community, and in partnership with the Montreal Gazette, ten PhD candidates are selected annually from across Concordia to engage and share our graduate research with the public.

In the spring, the 2019-20 cohort, pictured here, switched things up a little for their year-end research exhibition. The traditional in-person annual event, hosted by 4<sup>TH</sup> SPACE passes the torch to the incoming year's cohort. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the scholars instead collaborated with 4<sup>TH</sup> SPACE to host an online forum on June 12. The lunchtime event was introduced by Faye Diamantoudi, interim dean of graduate studies, and featured brief presentations by the Public Scholars. The audience was able to engage with the graduate researchers during a lively Q&A session and the event was rounded out with closing words from Lucinda Chodan, editor-in-chief at the *Montreal Gazette*.

## WE INFORM AND LEARN FROM OUR PEERS ACROSS NORTH AMERICA

In November, GradProSkills team members **Racha Cheikh-Ibrahim** and **Cristina Barbu** contributed to the Graduate Professional Development Network annual conference in Halifax. Cristina presented the results of her inclusiveness assessment of GradProSkills workshops, while Racha presented the results of a benchmarking survey of best practices in Canada for linking graduate professional development to academic programs.





## WE COLLECT AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE

The School of Graduate Studies hosts an annual Supervision Event to discuss and address important issues relating to the graduate supervisory role. The 2019 event included two panel discussions: Graduate Students Mental Health and Wellness, moderated by Peter Pawelek, Associate Dean, Student Affairs and Postdoctoral Studies; and Graduate Supervision, moderated by Paula Wood-Adams, former dean of Graduate Studies. In addition, Kim Sawchuck (Professor, Communication Studies), the recipient of Concordia's Graduate Mentoring Award, provided her insight on successful graduate mentorship.

## CONCORDIA'S ANNUAL JOURNAL OF ACCESSIBLE PSYCHOLOGY

A group of nine graduate students in the university's Department of Psychology helped to launch Concordia's annual Journal of Accessible Psychology led by editor-in-chief and Psychology PhD student **Alexa Ruel**. The graduate students are Getting their Hands Dirty by inviting undergraduate students to submit their thesis work in blog-style posts. The journal's mission is to teach undergraduate students about science communication by giving them the opportunity to write about their own psychological research, and to train graduate students by giving them experience with the review process. The journal's founding graduate students, including Public Scholars **Heather Herriot** (2019) and **Milan Valyear** (2018), run workshops to teach students how to write about their research in a more accessible manner, along with other skills for science communication, like how to use social media effectively to engage the public.

## THE CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY INTERDISCIPLINARY SUMMER INSTITUTE (CUI SI) 2019: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in STEM: Achieving research excellence by adopting new perspectives

Led by Dr. Tanja Tajmel (GCS) and Dr. Stefanie Ruel (JMSB), and taught by seven professors with expertise in the field, the School's 2019 Summer Institute brought together 19 students from various academic backgrounds from both national and international universities, to learn how to critically think of science, technology, engineering, mathematics (STEM) fields in the context of gender, diversity and inclusivity.

## WE ATTRACT THE BRIGHTEST MINDS

In 2019-20, our recruitment team travelled the world to find the best graduate students and promote Concordia as a first-choice university. We also worked to keep our own top talent here at Concordia. This year, the School of Graduate Studies:

- Refreshed digital recruitment content to enhance our marketing efforts to attract high quality students to graduate studies at Concordia. We developed bilingual video and web copy; and reworked the web funnel to better attract new students in new and existing markets.
- Worked with external recruitment providers NOMAD Education and QS Enrolment Solutions to showcase Concordia internationally. NOMAD Education provides a platform to advertise Concordia and to collect targeted leads in key French markets, while the QS solution aims at converting globally-sourced leads through personalized touchpoints.

From left: Heather Herriot, Milan Valyear and Alexa Ruel







- Participated in 10 international student fairs to promote Concordia and our graduate programs to undergraduates all around the world.
- Collaborated with University Communications Services, to launch a strategic international awareness campaign in preferred markets running November 2019 – April 2020, resulting in 5.6M potential graduate students reached in key markets with over 150K+ interactions.
- Launched a second, nimble digital campaign May-July 2020 to bolster fall recruitment and retention, resulting in 3.2M impressions and nearly 25K clicks. Both digital campaigns ran in French and English to reach a broader talent pool and encourage Concordia's growing francophone presence.
- Enhanced the Top Students initiative, which encourages Concordia's best undergraduates to pursue their graduate studies in one of our programs. This year, the Top Students event spanned two days and attracted 200 potential graduate students.

## WE GIVE BACK

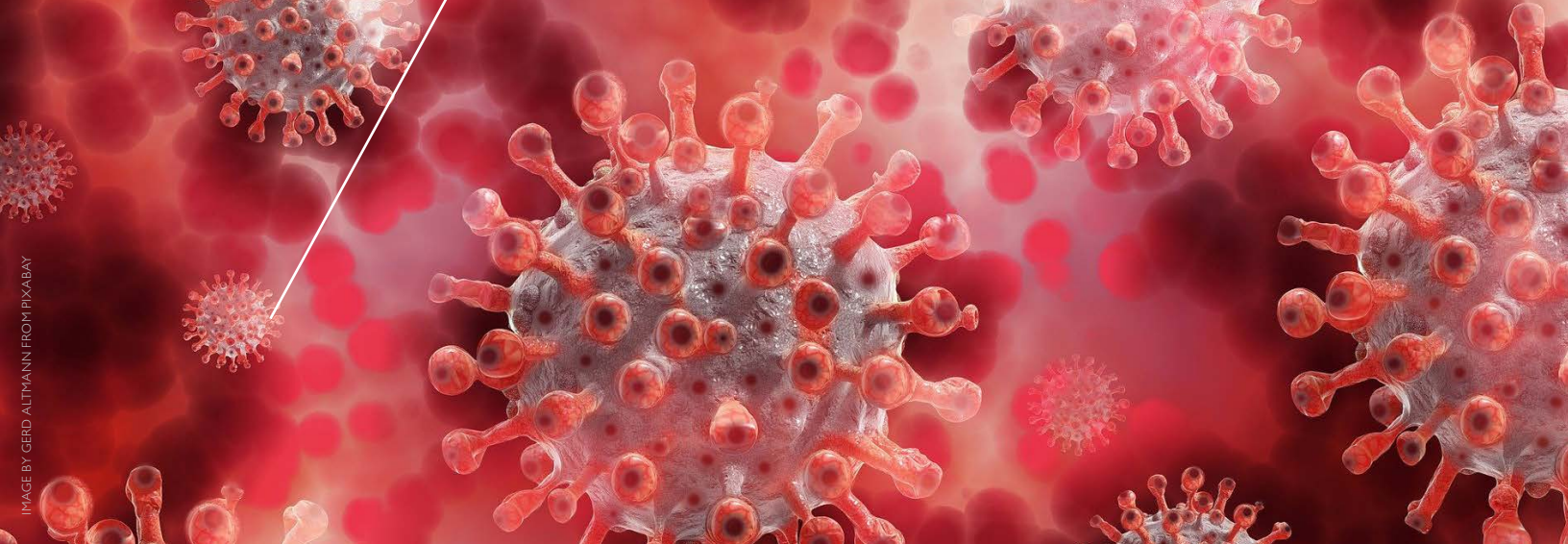
### THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES VOLUNTEERING PROGRAM

The academic and administrative staff continued their partnership with the Montreal Diet Dispensary. The School has committed to providing volunteer support to the Dispensary from deliveries to gift sorting and wrapping, as well as helping at events like their annual fund-raising "baby race". Their annual holiday party in December was a boisterous and joyous occasion, with "Santa" doling out gifts to over 100 participating children. The SGS team provided elf support and worked the crafts tables with the little kids! The Montreal Diet Dispensary is a downtown community organization that *"promotes infant health through social nutrition interventions with pregnant women in precarious situations, one pregnant woman, infant and family at a time."*

From left: Virginia Bruce, Gina Beltran, Joanne Beaudoin, Erika Macfadden, Lorena Marzitelli and Jenn Sachs







## MEETING THE PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

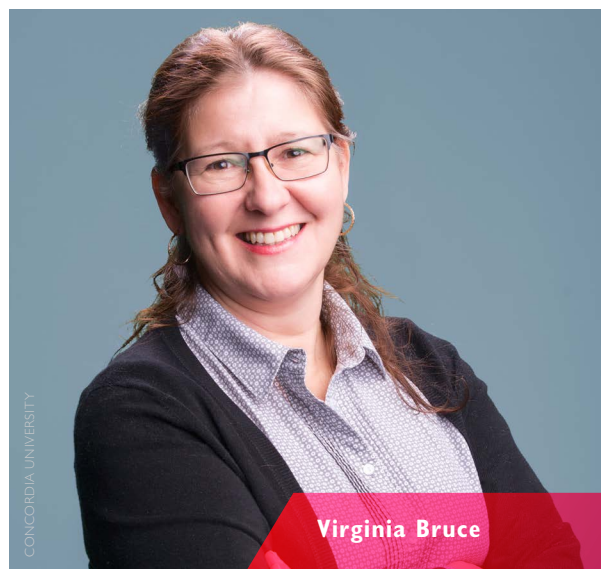
The global health crisis created a social and economic upheaval that will be felt for the foreseeable future. Concordia, as did other universities around the world, moved quickly to save the academic year for our spring 2020 graduating students, allowing our current students to complete their winter courses online. We also began the daunting challenge of looking ahead to the summer and fall semesters that were just around the corner. The term “heroic” rightfully belongs with the courageous and unwavering actions of front-line and medical personnel world-wide, but we are nonetheless proud of the team at the School of Graduate Studies who dove in with unwavering commitment to making things work for our graduate students.

In the late days of March and throughout April and May, changes were occurring frequently with new updates from governments and around immigration.

Here is a snapshot of some of the changes made during the spring of 2020:

- Drafted and posted online FAQs specific to graduate and postdoctoral studies, updating them daily as new information became available.
- Immediately and successfully implemented on-line thesis defences
- Developed a revised entrance fellowship plan to recruit Concordia's top undergraduate students which resulted in 31 additional new high-quality acceptances
- Improved our tools to connect with prospective graduate students with the launch of CRM. This platform increased our capacity to communicate information more effectively with our audiences, including prospective and current students.
- Integrated our new Connect with a Graduate Recruiter webpage which allows future students to book appointments to talk online with a graduate recruiter
- Assisted the Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science in hosting program specific virtual events
- Modified our Top Students event to focus on internal awards and external scholarships. These events, in collaboration with the Graduate Awards Office, were essential in attracting our own undergrads to research-based graduate programs, especially during COVID-19.
- Revised regulations on:
  - Course discontinuation and provided a tuition impact analysis
  - Grading (Pass/Fail, In-Progress)
  - Comprehensive exams
- Converted over 40 GradProSkills workshops to an on-line format
- Developed tools to enable virtual meetings for external agency fellowship nomination processes
- Established an online communication channel with over 100 graduate program directors and assistants
- Established regular online social outlets for all personnel (a “Banter” channel on Teams, Zoom cocktail hours and drop-in rooms, weekly summary, and motivational newsletters)
- Enacted a regular contact protocol for managers and the executives to stay connected with their teams and established an informal process to regularly check-in with staff

- Implemented a revised Graduate Community Building Fund application and selection process to encourage student-led community-building initiatives related to COVID-specific circumstances. The fund now accepts projects that either support the graduate student community with adaptation to the COVID-19 environment; or allow graduate students to offer their services to the Montreal community. Between April and July 2020, four projects received up to \$5K in funding including. The projects supported:
  - *Enhancement of Concordia's indoor physical distancing and occupant density control through Wi-Fi data*
  - *Providing consulting to small Montreal business to move their business processes online*
  - *Communicating adolescent mental health and well-being concerns during coronavirus pandemic*
  - *Launching the "The Blooming Human: Living sustainably in an Era of changes" podcast*



## CELEBRATING RETIREMENT IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

On May 1, 2020 we bade a very fond farewell to **Virginia Bruce**, our Director of Graduate Admissions, Student Affairs and Thesis, after a remarkable 37-year career at Concordia, with the past 22 having been with the School of Graduate Studies. The circumstances prevented us from having a party worthy of the occasion, but we celebrated COVID-style with deliveries of flowers, treats and gifts, and added a drive-by

past Virginia's home, with horns blazing, in front of a secretly decorated front-yard (with help from Virginia's family!). We were able to extend our warm wishes in a front-yard party amid ribbons and balloons. In addition to the small in-person gathering, present and former colleagues joined us for a Zoom party to mark the occasion. We wish Virginia a long and happy retirement, with many exciting new adventures.





## QUALITY CONTROL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY

*Throughout the student's journey, the foundational goal is academic excellence. We strive to be administratively efficient and responsive to students' needs. We continually revise and update our regulations and processes, as well as introduce new initiatives to help continually our students' experience and to work in an efficient and responsible way. How can we ensure academic quality and improve our processes?*

## EXAMPLES OF ON-GOING ACTIONS AND NEW INITIATIVES

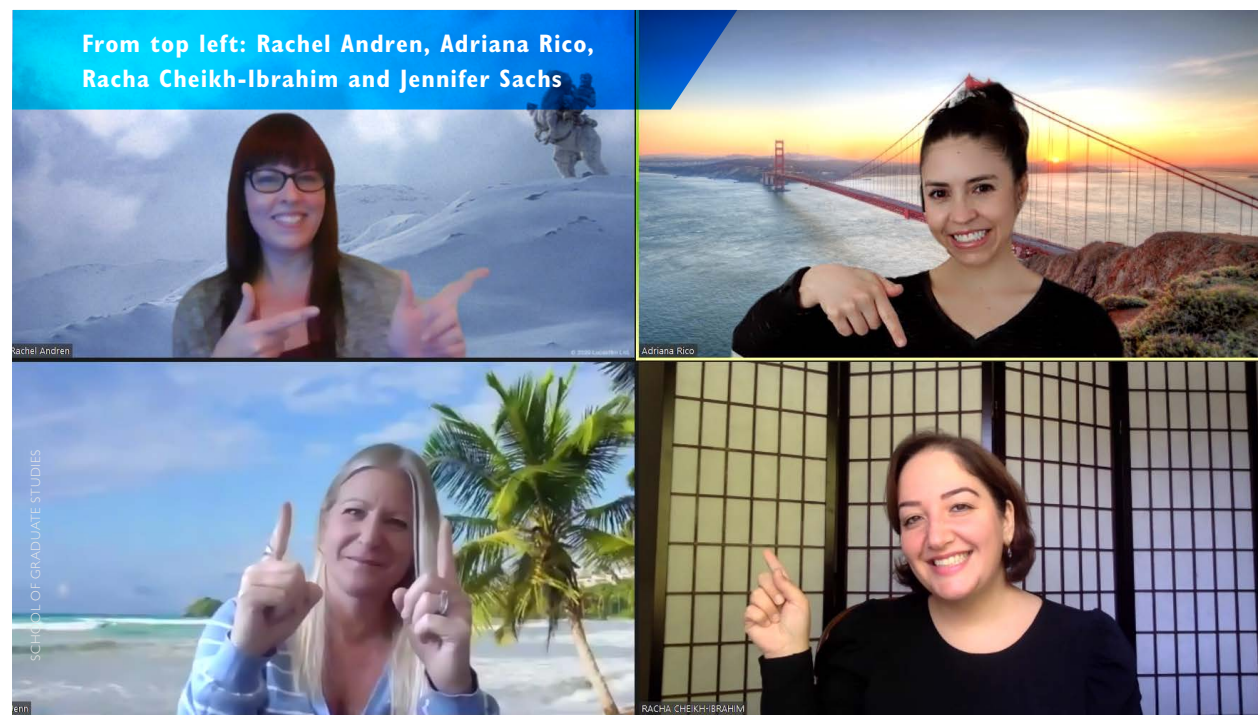
In 2019-20, the School of Graduate Studies:

- Convened four meetings of the Council of the School of Graduate Studies and seven sessions of the Graduate Curriculum Committee.
- Collected data through surveying students accepted into our graduate programs to better understand their decision to register or not register to Concordia. The responses provided key information on the factors that influenced their decision, their chosen university (if not Concordia), and nearly 300 comments. The high response rates (47% for new registrants; 33% for refused offers) and valuable feedback assure us that the survey was successful and is to be repeated each term.
- Hosted six graduate program director information exchanges and workshops.
- Invited graduate program assistants to a workshop on Milestones, an important SIS feature that helps research students stay on track.
- Established a working group on the Indigenization of graduate studies at Concordia
- Collaborated with GradProSkills to develop a workshop that focuses more on the moral and ethical issues related to academic misconduct and academic dishonesty, and less on citation rules.
- Defined a clear advertising strategy in line with recruitment events and objectives.
- Modernized and digitized the thesis process.
- Recognized exceptional contributions from our staff, with three "Employee of the term" awards.

## MEET OUR 2019-2020 EMPLOYEES OF THE TERM

**Rachel Andren**, our communications advisor, was recognized in the summer of 2019 for enthusiastically taking on numerous extracurricular projects with positive energy and with a great collaborative approach. Rachel's drive to improve our web content and strategy demonstrated her engagement to SGS, and she always strives to deliver her best.

In the fall of 2019, **Jenn Sachs**, office of the dean assistant, was recognized for her role in assisting the recruitment team for the Top Students event, tackling many administrative tasks, and most importantly providing amazing service to students. In addition, Jenn helped the Thesis Office following a staff departure and worked with the team to streamline processes, as well help update forms and flowcharts, also with enthusiasm and a fundamental desire to be help the team.



Winter of 2020 brought a myriad of COVID-related challenges, and efforts were impressive all-around. However, our colleagues agree that **Adriana Rico**, Web and Calendar Coordinator, and **Racha Cheikh-Ibrahim**, Academic Programs and Development Coordinator were instrumental to our success. Adriana tackled an exceptional level of upheaval, as our website became the primary means of communication with our students, staff, supervisors, and administrators, via FAQs and sudden announcements about changing regulations.

Racha, at the request of our colleagues in the Centre for Teaching and Learning, converted and delivered the entire Graduate Seminar on University Teaching course to an online platform. Within a couple of weeks, she reworked the whole course and then spent two weeks full-time delivering it (with great success), all the while continuing with her regular, but also altered, daily tasks.

For these efforts that went above and beyond, we congratulate our four Employees of the Term for 2019-2020.

## THE YEAR AHEAD

There is a lot of uncharted territory ahead in 2020-21. Pandemic planning and regular planning are converging as time moves on and we normalize many new paradigms. Does it make sense to plan parallel approaches, or should we see the health crisis as a transformative agent that will pull us into a technological environment that was not catching on with the speed and intensity as so many had predicted? As we strive to address these complex and profound questions, we have projects for 2020-2021 that have captured our imagination as we move deeper into the unknown:

- Re-design the tuition structure to encourage and reward timely degree completion
- Perform an impact analysis of the Horizon Postdoctoral Program
- Benchmark best practices for doctoral comprehensives
- Implement a graduate supervision agreement
- Develop a blended learning framework for GradProSkills workshops
- Roll-out new U/X enhanced program pages for all programs
- Chart process-maps and timelines for all mission-critical activities
- Implement the relevant components of UNITY for the School of Graduate Studies and train all users





# 2019-2020 IN NUMBERS

**14,810** APPLICATIONS

**2,767** ADMISSIONS

**123** COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

**9,124** ENROLMENTS

**5,021** INTERNATIONAL ENROLMENTS

**2,661** RESEARCH STUDENTS

**1,805** PHD STUDENTS

**2,387** GRADUATED

**\$3,995,721** FROM TRI-COUNCIL

**\$1,480,500** FROM FRQ





**SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**CONCORDIA.CA/SGS**