

**MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION  
OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Held on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, at 4 p.m.  
via Zoom Video Conferencing

**PRESENT**

**Governors:** Helen Antoniou, *Chair*, Françoise Bertrand, Jeff Bicher, Antoinette Bozac, Ken Brooks, William Bukowski, Graham Carr, *President and Vice-Chancellor*, Gina P. Cody, Selvadurai Dayanandan, Pat Di Lillo, Adriana Embiricos, Rana Ghorayeb, Caroline Jamet, Claude Joli-Coeur, *Vice-Chair*, Isaiah Joyner, Claudine Mangen, Frédérica Martin, *Vice-Chair*, Georges Paulez, Suzanne Sauvage, Prasanth Shunmugan, Robert Soroka, Ted Stathopoulos

**Alternate Governor:** Chelsea Okankwu

**Also attending:** Philippe Beauregard, Sylvie Bourassa, William Cheaib, Paul Chesser, Denis Cossette, Michael Di Grappa, Nadia Hardy, Frederica Jacobs, Shelina Housseny, Lisa Ostiguy, Anne Whitelaw, Paula Wood-Adams

**ABSENT**

**Governors:** Roy Cross, Odile Joannette, Philippe Poureux

**Non-voting observer:** Jonathan Wener, *Chancellor*

1. **Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

1.1 **Adoption of the Agenda**

Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously RESOLVED:

R-2021-3-4 *That the Agenda be approved, including the items on the Consent Agenda.*

**CONSENT**

2. **Adoption of the March 10, 2021 Minutes**

R-2021-3-5 *That the Minutes of the meeting of March 10, 2021 be approved.*

3. Professional liability waiver for in-house architect (BG-2021-3-D2)

R-2021-3-6 *Considérant que Shawn Moss, architecte, est au service exclusif de l'Université Concordia;*

*Considérant que Shawn Moss, architecte, ne pose des actes professionnels que pour des édifices destinés à l'usage exclusif de l'Université Concordia et non destinés à la revente;*

*IL EST RÉSOLU de déclarer aux fins du Règlement sur la souscription obligatoire au Fonds d'assurance de la responsabilité professionnelle de l'Ordre des architectes du Québec (chapitre A-21, r. 13) que l'Université Concordia se porte garant et s'engage à prendre le fait et cause et répondre financièrement des conséquences de toute erreur ou omission de Shawn Moss dans l'exercice de ses fonctions.*

4. Finance Committee report (BG-2021-3-D3)

This document was provided for information.

REGULAR5. Business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda

There was no business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda.

6. President's report (BG-2021-3-D4)

As complementary information to his written report, Dr. Carr updated the Board on other matters, summarized as follows:

- Under the leadership of Nadia Bhuiyan, an Innovation Lab has been opened, which constitutes a new space for Concordia students to test ideas and build their skills. The Lab is functionally adjacent to the FutureReady skills development program, which also hinges on advancing innovation capabilities.
- Concordia received two recent gifts, a \$2.5-million gift from BMO Financial Group in honor of former Chancellor Jacques Ménard to establish the L. Jacques Ménard–BMO Centre for Capital Markets and the BMO Fine Arts Internship Program, and a \$1.96-million gift from the Doggone Foundation to expand the Elspeth McConnell Fine Arts Awards and to establish the Bill McLennan Northwest Coast Travel Award.
- Heather Igloliorte, Associate Professor of Art History and Special Advisor to the Provost on Indigenous Research and Teaching, co-created the recently opened new Inuit Art Centre, known as Qaumajug, at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, focused on contemporary Inuit art. Dr. Igloliorte also curated the superb Inuit art exposition in the Lassonde pavilion of the National Museum in Quebec City.

- Student registrations and applications are being watched very closely. 2020/2021 saw an increase of 4.2% of FTEs over the previous year. Applications for the summer and fall terms are very strong, exceeding last year's, notwithstanding all the elements of uncertainty around travel, course delivery, etc. This is very encouraging, but we cannot relax our efforts to convert those applications to registrations.
- Effective 12 April, all Quebec universities must deliver the balance of the semester, including exams, online, in accordance with the government edict. While this has relatively little impact on Concordia, it illustrates the volatility of the situation.
- At the March Senate meeting, Senators overwhelmingly supported two major changes to the organization of our academic year, to introduce a fall reading week during the week of Thanksgiving to create a meaningful break in the semester, and to redesign our semesters as 12-week, not 13-week, teaching semesters. These changes will align with practices at many universities across Canada and will be implemented in fall 2023 to allow time to prepare and adjust to meet accreditation and other requirements.
- Grant season is underway. Results are trickling in, and there will be some highlights to share at upcoming meetings. There was a significant drop in the number of applications submitted by researchers in fall 2020, most likely due to the pandemic and the pressure to focus on teaching but also the uncertainty about what kinds of research activities could be pursued beginning this summer. That said, in some cases, the decline in application numbers was counter-balanced by higher success rates.
- Since the last meeting, the government has issued its budget. There were no surprises for the university sector in terms of what was announced publicly. However, as is always the case, we are still awaiting the details in the *Règles Budgétaires* to come in the next few weeks which will be critical to finalizing the budget which will be presented to the Board at an upcoming meeting.

## 7. Presentation on Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization

Dr. Whitelaw began her presentation by conveying the definitions of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and explained how Decolonization is distinct from EDI since it speaks to the primary relationship we have with the Indigenous inhabitants of the land, as well as to the foundational role of colonization in the creation of nations as well as the institutions that exist within it. It speaks to the unlearning, uncovering and transforming legacies of colonialism and the important and admittedly difficult work of questioning current practices and rethinking how we might do things differently. She noted that as a next-gen university, this is key, and alongside principles of EDI, it opens up possibilities of working differently, learning differently, and engaging with our students, faculty and staff differently.

Dr. Whitelaw noted that Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization (EDID) principles and actions are part of our work at Concordia across the University. One of

the important deliverables over the next months is to further establish the collaboration of units to ensure that we offer the necessary support to our students, faculty and staff. She gave examples of some of the ongoing work done by several units, including the Equity Office, Office of Indigenous Directions, Black Perspective Office, the Office of Vice-President, Research and Graduate Studies, School of Graduate Studies, Advocacy Office, Otsenhákta Student Centre, Sexual Assault Resource Centre, Access Centre for Students with Disabilities, Office of Rights and Responsibilities, Ombuds Office, Faculties, Departments, Libraries, Human Resources, IITS, University Communications Services and student groups.

Dr. Whitelaw summarized some of the EDI initiatives in connection with:

- EDI Working Group, launched in 2018, which released its report in 2020 following two years of consultation with the community;
- Accessibility audit and review of policies;
- President's Task Force on Anti-Black Racism,
- Mandatory anti-bias training for faculty hiring committees;
- BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) course list;
- Canada Research Chair EDI Action Plan;
- Working group on impact of COVID-19 on research capacity of women and racialized faculty members;
- Mandatory sexual violence training for all faculty, staff and students

as well as some Decolonization initiatives:

- Indigenous Directions Office established 2019
- Indigenous Directions Leadership Council, whose action Plan was launched in 2019 and relaunched in 2021
- Otsenhákta Student Centre
- Píkiskwêâtân: Indigenous Directions Learning Series
- Curriculum development and pedagogy support
- Program in development to create pathways to increase Indigenous student access to the John Molson School of Business (pilot)

Dr. Whitelaw provided some in-depth examples of the kind of hands-on approach that is being taken to address the urgent question of racism and racial violence that affect our campuses, while at the same time providing a space for discussion, analysis and debate. The aim is to ensure that Concordia provides an equitable campus where students feel safe and supported in their learning activities and get the best learning that we can give them, while introducing them to difficult subject matter and giving them the tools to analyze and respond to that difficult knowledge.

In terms of next steps, Dr. Whitelaw apprised the Board that new training programs are being developed to help faculty, staff and students know how to teach difficult knowledge but also deal with incidents of racism within the classroom. Support programs will continue to be developed, and awareness raising will also continue. The University will work closely with student associations and groups who are themselves

delivering anti-racism training for their own members and for the larger student population.

Dr. Whitelaw concluded her presentation by making the point that most importantly, the University is listening to and learning from the experiences of students, faculty and staff and using that knowledge so that we can build a more equitable university whose diverse student body thrives. And this is being done because Concordia as an institution is committed to EDID and seeks to be as welcoming and inclusive of all its members.

Following the presentation, Dr. Whitelaw responded to comments and questions of clarification, during which she made the point that the true measure of effectiveness or success of EDID will be when training sessions are no longer needed because students will no longer be sharing concerns. She noted that the biggest hurdles are time, money and personnel, but that the investment is worth it if we are become a next-gen university. Self-reflection will allow us to do things better.

8. Other business

There was no other business to bring before the meeting.

9. Adjournment

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 4:52 p.m.



Danielle Tessier  
Secretary of the Board of Governors