

**MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION  
OF THE MEETING OF SENATE**

Friday, December 13, 2024  
Immediately following the Closed Session  
the Norman D. Hébert, LLD Meeting Room  
(Room EV 2.260) on the SGW Campus  
and via Zoom Videoconferencing

PRESENT

Voting members:

Graham Carr (Chair)	Anne-Marie Croteau	Maggie McDonnell
Duraipaandiyaan	Fabienne Cyrius	Christopher Moore
Anbumani Poongothai (zoom)	Alexandra Dawson (zoom)	David Morris (zoom)
Angelica Antonakopoulos	Niraj Dayanandan	Catherine Mulligan (zoom)
Gabriela Aragon	Mourad Debbabi	Xavier Ottenwaelder (zoom)
Ryan Assaker	Effrosyni Diamantoudi	Véronique Pepin
Sabine Bergler	Ariela Freedman (zoom)	Ian Rakita
Beverley Best	Annie Gérin	Rosemary Reilly (zoom)
Patrice Blais	Andrea Harland	Ramin Sedaghati
Amy Buckland (zoom)	Bonnie Harnden	Anna Sheftel (zoom)
Robin Chemtov (zoom)	Steve Henle (zoom)	Pascale Sicotte
Maria Chitoroaga	Mar Ibrahim	Kamila Sobol
Roy Cross	Asli Isaaq	Ayyappan Subramanian (zoom)
	Michael Lecchino	Anne Whitelaw
	Vanessa Massot	

Non-voting members: Paul Chesser, Denis Cossette (zoom), Stéphanie de Celles, Isabel Dunnigan, Charmian Harvey (attending on behalf of Philippe Beauregard), Stefana Nita, Carlos Santana, Olivia Ward

Also attending: Caroline Baril, Elizabeth Bloodgood, Saul Carliner, Ann-Louise Davidson, Jason Ens, Julie Fortier (zoom), Sandra Gabriele, Kristina Huneault (zoom), Roma Medwid (zoom)

ABSENTVoting members:

Mohamad Abdallah	Arnav Ishaan	Mireille Paquet
Matthew Barker	Mia Kennedy	Kareem Rahaman
Theresa Bianco	Mehdi Kharazmi	Ahmed Soliman
	Moshe Lander	Sofiène Tahar

Non-voting members: Michael Di Grappa, Frederica Jacobs

**1. Call to order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

**1.1 Approval of the Agenda**

*R-2024-6-4 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Agenda of the Open Session be approved.*

**1.2 Adoption of November 8, 2024 Minutes**

*R-2024-6-5 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Minutes of the Open Session meeting of November 8, 2024 be adopted.*

**CONSENT****2. Committee and Tribunal Pool appointments (Document US-2024-6-D2)**

*R-2024-6-6 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that the Committee and Tribunal Pool appointments be approved.*

**3. APC recommendation: Regulations and requirements changes (Document US-2024-6-D3)****3.1 Office of the Registrar (OOTR-OOTR-5680)****3.2 John Molson School of Business (JMSB-JMSB-5668)****3.3 Kaiéri Nikawerà:ke Indigenous Bridging Program changes: Alternative Entry program changes:**

**3.3.1 BSc (AS-ARTSCI-5630);**

**3.3.2 BA Journalism (AS-ARTSCI-5673);**

**3.3.3 BEng (GCS-GCS-5498);**

**3.3.4 JMSB (JMSB-JMSB-5666)**

**3.4 Faculty of Arts and Science: Alternative Entry program changes (AS-ARTSCI-5679)**

**3.5 John Molson School of Business: Program Credit Value Change and Regulation and Requirement Change (JMSB-MANA-5642)**

R-2024-6-7 *Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that, upon recommendation of the Academic Programs Committee, Senate approve the regulations and requirement changes as detailed in the attached document:*

- *Office of the Registrar – Regulation/Requirements Change (OOR-OOR-5680)*
- *John Molson School of Business - Regulation/Requirements Change (JMSB-JMSB-5668)*
- *Kaié:ri Nikawerà:ke Indigenous Bridging Program changes: Alternative Entry program changes:*
  - o *BSc (AS-ARTSCI-5630);*
  - o *BA Journalism (AS-ARTSCI-5673);*
  - o *BEng (GCS-GCS-5498);*
  - o *JMSB (JMSB-JMSB-5666)*
- *Faculty of Arts and Science: Alternative Entry program changes (AS-ARTSCI-5679)*
- *John Molson School of Business: Program Credit Value Change and Regulation and Requirement Change (JMSB-MANA-5642)*

**REGULAR**

**4. Business arising from the Minutes not included on the Agenda**

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

**5. President's remarks**

- Dr. Carr began with accounts of two disturbances to campus life since the last Senate:
  - On November 21<sup>st</sup>, which was the first day of a national two-day student strike, a relatively small number of Concordia's student associations in the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Faculty of Fine Arts voted to strike. The strike was mostly peaceful, however, at one point, approximately 20-30 individuals attempted to disrupt a class where other students had voted against the strike. This led to a confrontation and campus safety had to intervene.
  - Some student groups publicly denounced faculty members who taught courses in departments that voted to strike.

- Dr. Carr noted that both of those developments should be a serious concern for Senate because of how they infringe on the academic life of the University.
- Notwithstanding whether student associations vote to strike, all students have the right to attend classes at all times, and faculty members have an obligation to deliver classes to our students, as per collective agreements. Students who wish to strike are free to not attend class and can demonstrate peacefully if they choose, but any attempts to block access to or disrupt class are unacceptable, as is any effort to intimidate faculty or TAs from fulfilling their responsibilities as instructors.
- Yesterday the leadership of CUFA and CUPFA issued a statement denouncing the blacklisting, intimidation and violence. Dr. Carr noted that he hoped that all Senators agree that those actions have no place in our University.
- In addition to the strike action on November 21<sup>st</sup>, there was a large demonstration in downtown Montreal involving participants from multiple universities and CEGEPS, as well as people with no connections to the University. Early in the afternoon, the protest made its way to the University's doorstep outside the Hall and Library buildings. At one point, a few hundred demonstrators forced their way into the Hall building. Most stayed in the atrium, but some went to the upper floors where they spray-painted graffiti and damaged property. All left the building after about 45 minutes and regular activities resumed.
- It was at this point, after the building had been cleared, that an incident occurred that garnered national publicity: one protester (not a student, faculty or staff member) gave a Nazi salute to police and engaged in antisemitic hate speech. The University quickly denounced those incidents, as did some student organizations, but unfortunately, because of the proximity to the University, the media described the event as happening at Concordia.
- Last week, there was another smaller flare-up in the Hall building when a student group affiliated with the CSU called StartUp Nation had been given permission by the CSU to table on the mezzanine. However, when it transpired that the student group had failed to accurately describe the nature of the event, including disclosing the presence of an external individual, the CSU cancelled the event. Instead of tabling, about 20 members of StartUp Nation gathered on the Hall mezzanine and at the Café Hive along with the external individual they had invited. This provoked a reaction from another 20 other individuals and led to a confrontation on the mezzanine. One individual who is not a student allegedly uttered threats and was escorted off premises by Campus Safety because the situation threatened to degenerate. The SPVM was called to intervene, the groups were kept separate and dispersed after 40 minutes.

- For the information of Senators, earlier this semester, the University added a page on the Campus Safety website that provides point-by-point summaries of these types of incidents shortly after they occur. This reporting provides members of the University community with brief, factually accurate summaries of events that are often inaccurately reported or badly distorted in the media and social media.
- Dr. Carr shared his sense that the University community is increasingly fed up with these events, some of which are clearly designed to be deliberately provocative and damage the reputation of the University.
- Sadly, creating a negative image of the University seems to be a primary motivation for some of the event organizers and participants. Dr. Carr also noted that there was a marked increase in personal attacks against colleagues at the University, including the Interim Dean of Students, who has been subjected to deeply offensive and misogynistic attacks online and disrespectful behavior in person. Others include some of the Campus Safety personnel, as well as attacks against some members of the senior executive team, including the University's Treasurer and Chief Investment Officer.
- Dr. Carr noted that these attacks are disgusting and totally unacceptable. They take an unfair personal toll on members of the University who are acting in good faith for our collective benefit.
- Speaking of moving forward, Dr. Carr reported that the STRIVE task force continues to do its work and is due to submit an interim report to the Provost in early March 2025. From conversations with many members of the working groups, there is no underestimating how difficult the work is that members of the University community are trying to do. In some cases, there are frustrations and many members of the community express reluctance to share their experiences or contribute to STRIVE.
- Unfortunately, since the task force was announced, some individuals internal and external to the University have made it their mission to attack and discredit STRIVE, including again, through personal attacks on some of the task force leaders. Dr. Carr noted that this is unfortunate. The University is a generous community and has always been capable of identifying and solving its problems, difficult as they are. The success of the task forces on Indigenous direction and Anti-Black Racism are examples of this and both are models for STRIVE. He appealed to everyone to give the initiative a chance and to put the University first.
- Turning attention to Bill 74, Dr. Carr noted that the bill passed on December 5, 2024, and it gives the *Ministre de l'immigration, de la francisation et de l'intégration* extensive new powers to set quotas on international student visas with the explicit goal of reducing the number of international students studying in Québec. The bill also allows the minister to establish criteria for awarding visas, one of which could be language.

- Prior to adoption of the law there were hearings at the National Assembly. Heads of the University, including Dr. Carr, testified and all condemned the proposed law, requesting that university students be exempted. Other intervenors included mayors and the Montreal Chamber of Commerce, who also opposed the law. All of the opposition parties voted against the law, but it was adopted by the majority government. There is no clarity on what the quota will be, what criteria will be applied and how quotas may be allocated to institutions.
- The *Ministre de l'Enseignement supérieur*, Mme Déry, held a first meeting with university presidents last Friday regarding the new legislation, but it was inconclusive.
- Dr. Carr restated that, regardless of how the quota system is designed, the damage has already been done. Applications are already down. The combination of the federal and provincial governments' statements about capping study visas has devastated the international student market. The question at hand isn't whether there will be student visas, but whether there will be students to accept those visas, as the reputation of Canada and Québec as a welcoming place for international students has already suffered greatly.
- The Provost, the Deans and all other members of administration are all hands-on deck and are calling on the community at large to contribute to recruitment efforts. The University has set a target of recruiting 1000 more students for 2025-26 than were recruited in 2024-25. Dr. Carr thanked all program directors, advisors, and chairs for their work. He insisted that everyone must ensure that incoming students feel very welcome and supported in their process of considering Concordia as a choice of school.
- Dr. Carr advised Senate that the litigation against the government in the matter related to tuition policy would be heard on Monday. The University continues to believe that it has a good case and that the law firm representing the University has done an excellent job marshalling evidence and arguments. There won't be any public statements about the proceedings until the matter is decided by the court.
- Finally, on some positive news, *Research Infosource* released results on December 5<sup>th</sup> of the top 50 Canadian research universities research income for FY 2023. The University has seen an increase of 47.6% from FY2022 in research funding, \$129M in research funding. This places Concordia ahead of Carleton, York, and UQÀM, ranking fifth among comprehensive universities in Canada. The University placed first in Québec and 21<sup>st</sup> overall, but to note that 16 universities in Canada have medical schools and are typically in the top tier of overall rankings. Since 2014, the University has seen its research income triple, and this speaks to strategic positioning in which the University has invested to support excellence and target emerging areas of research.

**6. Academic update** (Document US-2024-6-D4)

In addition to the academic update included in the documentation, Dr. Whitelaw made note of the award to Dean of John Molson School, Dr. Anne-Marie Croteau of the King Charles III Coronation Medal recognizing her contribution to promoting diversity and excellence in education.

**7. APC recommendation: DISC Deadline regulation change (UCA-UCA-5692)**  
(Document US-2024-6-D5)

Dr. Whitelaw introduced the item and explained that the proposal was to move the DISC deadline to the ninth week of each term. This would be a return to the status-quo that existed pre-COVID and is in line with most universities in the province. The goal was to allow students to make informed decisions with the tool of formative feedback, which would be given by the instructors five days before the DISC deadline.

Senators had a few questions about additional work that this could create for instructors if they had many requests to provide formative feedback and about how formative feedback would be given in cases where there is no grade in a course.

Dr. Whitelaw clarified that there should not be additional work for instructors, as ongoing feedback through graded assignments and other coursework is an expected part of teaching. In relation to courses that only have a single assignment (e.g. capstone courses), there will be other manners of giving the student formative feedback, including in-class feedback and progress updates during office hours.

There was also a question about how the regulation was worded, as it notes “after the ninth week” and doesn’t specify which date in the ninth week. The Registrar confirmed that the intention is to be the first day of the ninth week, as had been the case previously. A precision could be easily made to avoid ambiguity.

*R-2024-6-8 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that, upon recommendation of the Academic Programs Committee, Senate approve DISC Deadline regulation change (UCA-UCA-5692), as detailed in the documentation.*

**8. APC recommendation: Fast Track - Microprogram in Innovation Mindset (AS-INTE-5556)** (Document US-2024-6-D6)

Dean Sicotte presented this program, noting that the goal was to promote innovative mindsets and help students expand their capacity to approach problems in different ways. The program has been two years in the making and emerges from Dr. Ann-Louise Davidson’s work in the Innovation Lab.

E. Bloodgood provided more information that this would be a 9-credit undergraduate program, with introduction to innovative modules. A.-L. Davidson spoke about the development of the program and explained that it was based on their experience as

Concordia University Research Chair and their work in educational technology. They supervised interns who worked with industrial partners and noted that many of the projects needed user centric solutions.

Senators had questions about the metrics used to evaluate the success of microprograms and if the budget for this specific program was vetted for requirements for TAs, as the funds allocated for TA support was slightly more than the standard.

Dean Sicotte clarified that once the program was implemented, TA support would be clearly evaluated, and the budget would be adjusted accordingly. Dr. Whitelaw explained that, as Senate was presented the framework of program evaluation in the summer, microprograms are also evaluated on an on-going basis and, given that they are shorter and have specific metrics on how their success is reviewed, it is a continual process.

There was also a suggestion to have some integration with undergraduate courses in entrepreneurship offered in JSMB, which suggestion was welcomed.

*R-2024-6-9 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that, upon recommendation of the Academic Programs Committee, Senate approve the new program – Fast-track: Microprogram in Innovation Mindset (AS-INTE-5556), as detailed in the documentation.*

**9. APC recommendation: Revision of Program (AS-EDUC-5747)**  
(Document US-2024-6-D7)

**9.1 New Teacher Certification Graduate Programs:**

- **Preschool and Elementary**
- **Teaching English as a Second Language**

**9.2 Deletion of Program: Teacher Certification Graduate Diploma**

This dossier was presented primarily in response to the Ministry of Education's request to separate the two streams of Pre-school and Elementary and Teaching English as a Second Language. The new program, Teacher Certification Graduate Diploma, which was approved in spring 2024, was being deleted and replaced by these modified programs.

*R-2024-6-10 Upon motion duly moved and seconded, it was unanimously resolved that, upon recommendation of the Academic Programs Committee, Senate approve:*

- *the revision of the Teacher Education Graduate Diploma Program (AS-EDUC-5747) into two new Programs: a) Teacher Certification Graduate Diploma in Preschool and Elementary Teaching, and b) Teacher Certification Graduate Diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language; and*
- *the program deletion of the Teacher Certification Graduate Diploma, as detailed in the documentation.*



## 10. Strategic Directions

This session of discussion around Strategic Directions was focused on getting feedback from Senate on the following question: *What are the most important emerging issues and challenges that Concordia needs to wrestle with as we renew our Strategic Directions?*

Eight groups (including two joining remotely via Zoom) were formed, and Senators divided into these groups to discuss for a period of 15-20 minutes. At the end of the discussions, each group came up with suggestions. Some of the key items are listed below: (the list is a summary of items noted by groups, while the long list of suggestions was shared with the Chair separately)

- Concerns around budgetary impact, larger classes, shrinking faculty. The aftermath of COVID is still a concern for many, including the polarized environment on campus, all of which are important to address.
- The role and space of the University within Québec, particularly in the context of government policy.
- Trust, communication and openness of the University.
- That the Strategic Directions should not be limiting and should not come across as advertisement or slogans.
- The University needs to reflect properly on costs and even re-think the University's personal identity. Does the University continue to be an English university or position itself as a more bilingual institution, etc.?
- While research funding is a good indicator and enabler of research, it is one of many metrics. Impact should also be measured and particularly with the advent of AI, how the University continues with research and teaching.
- To explore consolidation, build on the University's strengths and come out strong as the winds change. Focus on retaining good students, faculty and personnel.
- Focus on increasing efficiency and use of AI in the post-secondary framework. Increase attendance, student engagement and continue to use experiential learning.
- Increasing the University's international reputation - reframing how we go about these partnerships.
- How does the University gather support from the public to deal with government policy?
- Certain areas of focus of the Strategic Directions may need to be reevaluated. Redefine the priorities.

- Development and improvement of communication channels.
- Concordia's commitment towards community, a great moment to resolidify our foundation. Aim to change the perception that the University is mostly in firefighting mode when in crises, but is more proactive in dealing with situations
- Focus on student support, office spaces, class spaces, lack of third spaces. The University is seen as an agile institution, so hone in on this strength. It is a breathing organism and as such responds well to change. Coming up with and then enforcing policies that reflect this value. Rather than be a reactive institution, be more reflective.
- Importance of community, fostering a better sense of community. How can the University address and integrate AI to support hands on learning, while also being vigilant and addressing the possible misuse of AI.
- Sustainability is an important element and value shared by everyone, how that can be a great way to bring people in.

#### **11. Question period**

Senators had a few questions around the offering of the bursary support to Rest of Canada students to offset increased tuition costs, and around the selection of a security agency and award of a contract, given some of their reported affiliations.

The Chair confirmed that the bursary support would continue to be offered. On the security contract, he clarified that the company in question is a Québec company, is authorised to do work in the province and as such, legally they are qualified to perform the work that they were given.

The Chair thanked everyone for their work and wished everyone the best for the holidays.

#### **12. Other business**

There was no other business to bring before the Open Session.

#### **13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

*K. Singh*  
Karan Singh  
Secretary of Senate