

MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION
COUNCIL OF THE GINA CODY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Friday, October 1, 2021

PRESENT:

Chair: Debbabi, M.

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

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

Observers: Clarke, A.; Fiorentino, N.; Himmo, M.; Martel, C.; Miatello, M.; Pawelek, P.

Guests: Baracos, T.; Lecourt, M.; Valluet, J.

REGRETS:

Voting members: Athienitis, A.; Carr, G.; Charky, K.; Jahanshahi-Anbuhi, S.; Rathore, A.; Reddy, K.; Rivaz, H.; Whitelaw, A.;

Non-Voting members: Allaire, V.; Athienitis, I.; Baptiste-Brown, S.; De Melo, D.; Edwards, J-M.; Gosselin, G.; Edwards, J.-M.

1. Closed Session

2. Call to Order of the Open Session

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

3. Adoption of the Agenda

Motion 2021-05-01 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (T. Stathopoulos/J. Clarke), it was passed that the Agenda be adopted as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

4. Approval of the Minutes of Open Session ECFC 2021-04 – May 14, 2021

Motion 2021-05-02 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (Y. Shayan/A. Bagchi) it was passed that the Minutes be approved as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

5. Chair's Remarks

- The Gina Cody School community was welcomed back to campus. Concordia will continue to monitor the health and safety situation and follow the proper instructions from public health agencies and implement the measures accordingly. The return is progressive and the decision was to have a significant amount of courses in-person, with some classes offered online for international students who are unable to be here in person until their paper work is in order. Staff and faculty have been on campus at 60 percent as of mid-August. The plan will continue to be revised as we move forward and the situation changes.
- Dr. Hua Gue was welcomed as the new Associate Dean of SAS and Dr. Tanja Tajmel as the new Special Advisor on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Dr. Tajmel's portfolio will help accelerate EDI initiatives.
- The new members of the ECSGA were welcomed to the GCS council: Chinipilli Kumar Reddy, President, Rida Rais, VP external.
- The new members of the ECA were also welcomed to the GCS council: Kayla Charky, President, Elsa Younes, BCEE, Aimée Nduwumwe, CSSE, Rinad Saleh, ECE, Joan Afif, MIAE and the continued participation of Sierra Campbell, VP Academic.
- A record number of 25.5 open faculty positions have been allocated and now need to be filled. Two positions are replacements, six positions are failed searches (including the two Gina Cody Chair positions), one CRC position in CSSE, one joint CRC position between CME and Physics on the topic of nanotechnology for sustainability energy storage, seven regular tenure-track positions and eight MES positions, plus one exceptional opportunity position in CME.
- Congratulations was given to everyone involved in the creation of the new Applied Artificial Intelligence Institute as a University recognized research centre. The Institute is led by three founding directors: Kash Khorasani from ECE, Tristan Glatard from CSSE and Nizar Bouguila from CIISE. An acknowledgement of Dr. Emad Shihab's involvement and leadership was made. Projects have already begun, such as professional training with a major telecommunication manufacturer. This institute brings together more than 90 members from the four faculties. Currently, the OVPRGS and UCS are planning an official launch early this winter.
- The Next Gen Cities Institute was launched and is led by Dr. Ursula Eicker from BCEE and Dr. Carmela Cucuzzilla from Fine Arts. It is centered around the topic of smart cities and all of the related themes and topics: energy, energy efficiency, intergeneration of renewable energy, sensing and automation technologies, design and building aspects.
- Internally, the EDI research lab was launched, led by Dr. Tanja Tajmel. It will elevate and enhance EDI in the faculty and at the University.
- Congratulations to Dr. Emad Shihab who received a \$1.65 million NSERC CREATE grant in the area of software engineering for AI systems.
- The faculty has done very well in terms of external funding. We have received \$1.8m of CFI funding as PI, \$2-3m of CFI funding as the Co-PIs, and \$900k of FRQNT team grant funding. We have begun to receive major grants and many others are currently being received, which will be announced in the near future.
- In terms of business development, the faculty is conducting interviews to hire four Research Funding Development Advisors, who will lead business development within the faculty. The ideal candidates will be carefully selected to help build a team to work closely with faculty members and to create partnerships with private and public-sector organizations.
- A thank you was given to all who participated and donated to the Gina Cody Shufflers team. The Shuffle was held last Friday, September 24 and GCS successfully collected a total of \$5,735 going beyond the target goal of \$3,000.
- The homecoming event titled, "From IP to Commercialization: Strategies for Business Success" was

held on September 22, 2021. It was a great discussion moderated by Nadia Bhuiyan, Vice-Provost, Partnerships and Experiential Learning with panelists: Pierre Chamberland, Innovation Catalyst at IPRO, Charlotte Savage, Founder and Chief Innovation Officer of HaiLa Technologies, and Luc Sirois, Chief Innovation Officer, and co-Chair of the Quebec's Innovation Council.

- The first Law Meets Engineering lecture of the semester was held September 30th. It focused on intellectual property rights and was given by Me. Nancy Cleman and Me. Nicholas Bertram and led by Judge Minc. There were 137+ in attendance.
- Project UNITY will go live this November.
- Currently the Government of Quebec does not require proof of vaccination for those seeking to access essential services, which includes access to university education. All Concordians are encouraged to pursue full vaccination not only to protect themselves but also for the university community's collective good. Concordia is making use of Quebec's vaccine passport system, which took effect September 1, by limiting access to non-essential services and activities to those with a Quebec-issued proof of vaccination. As of July, there was at least an 80 percent vaccination rate within the student body.

Action: Dean Debbabi will speak to the chairs to discuss the Fall term accommodation requests for faculty members to work remotely for the Winter term. An effort will be made to make sure that the information will be distributed to all faculty members.

6. CitéStudio Montreal

Presenter: Maude Lecourt, Thomas Baracos and Jeremie Valluet

CitéStudio: <https://www.citystudiomtl.com/>

Ms. Lecourt introduced herself as the senior lead and presented an initiative that began in 2019 with the CitéStudio experiential learning program. The presentation demonstrated how you can integrate a CitéStudio project into your classroom to apply any type of course material to a real urban challenge. Please contact Ms. Lecourt or the Cité staff team for more information.

Mr. Baracos explained that CitéStudio Montreal has had 2 editions of the program and have brought together more than 25 city employees and over 500 Concordia students who have worked together on over 70 projects to date. CitéStudio is an experimental program that bridges city staff and students to benefit society. It is a collaborative approach that seeks to enable systemic change. The process begins with convening city staff, then a match is made with faculty and professors and finally challenges or cases are integrated into classes. A city employee is invited to present the challenge to the class at the start of semester and again mid term. The students are asked to design solutions to the challenges. An event is held to present projects and awards for most innovative and impactful project are granted, and finally the results are shared with outside partners. The benefits of participating are the ability to develop networks, gaining a new perspective on what it is to work in the city, the ability to work on complex problems to develop solutions and an increased sense of civic engagement.

Action: Rhonda will send a copy of the presentation and a short questionnaire to the council members.

7. Associate Dean Remarks

Hua Ge, Associate Dean, Student Academic Services

- Fall admissions are at 1149; a 6 percent increase compared to last year.
- The next cycle of admissions closes on November 1, 2021.
- Recruitment activities have begun to meet the target growth of 3 percent. The open house for the undergraduate students will be held on October 21, 2021 and recruiters have begun visiting the CEGEPs.

- Since November 2020, student requests have been done online thanks to the SAS staff who created online forms which has led to an improvement in efficiency.
- An increase in volume has been acknowledged and the tracking statistics have shown we have 3000 student requests. This is a big workload for all staff. Thank you to staff who helped process these requests. Dr. Ge will work with the departments to look at different ways to decrease the amount of requests and improve efficiency.

Ali Akgunduz, Associate Dean, Academic Programs and Undergraduate Activities

- Faculty and students adapted well to the hybrid system.
- The next step is for the final exams to take place in this new hybrid system.
- The Aerospace Engineering accreditation visit will be taking place at the end of October.
- Please make sure to register for your professional engineering licensing which needs to be done annually and is paid by the Dean's Office.

Emad Shihab, Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies

- Returning international students were scheduled to be in Montreal by September 20, 2021.
- New international students, new MEng students and returning MEng students have until November 8, 2021 to be in Montreal.
- PhD admissions are down. We have 100 students compared to 130 last year. The drop in numbers is due to deferrals because we require students to be in Montreal. The council was encouraged to announce to faculty members to try to admit PhD students until the winter term. Tuition remission awards are available to support admissions.
- Masters admissions are good. The number of MEng students is higher than last year.
- Emails were sent to qualifying students for external awards. Please encourage your students to apply. Faculty members are encouraged to put in time and effort to write good reference letters because it has been proven that this support makes a difference in funding.
- An MOU has been signed with EVADO which will provide more opportunities for researchers and projects that EVADO already holds. The official launch of the AI institute is in the coming weeks.
- It is high grant season. Please encourage faculty members to apply. We have 47 NSERC Discovery LOIs, 14 FRQNT and QS new academic grants and 20 FRQ NOVA awards (250k each). Thank you to the departments and staff for putting in the extra effort at this time.
- The NSERC expert review panel is in place. This will help applicants get more expert review and feedback. Please encourage professors to take advantage of it, particularly first-time applicants and faculty members who did not succeed in the past, but really should have.
- There are any interesting initiatives happening, including presentations at VPRGS for CFI LOIs. Please support faculty members who need help in preparation. Dr. Shihab and Dean Debbabi will make time to support this.
- Work is currently being done to establish a proposal for a UNESCO chair for EDI in STEM.

Action: Dr. Shihab will consider a faculty mentorship program and the possibility of co-supervision of students, partnering junior and senior faculty members

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

- As Dean Debbabi mentioned, this year there has been a record breaking number of faculty hires for a total of 25.5 positions.
- The first batch of hiring has an application deadline of October 31, 2021. Please make a note that prior to the start of reviewing that everyone on the hiring committees is required to attend an EDI training. The first training session is scheduled on October 5, 2021 at 4pm.
- The second batch of hiring has a deadline of December 31, 2021.

- Please remind your colleagues of the critical path for promotion, contract renewal and deferrals. Ms. Fiorentino sent an email with these details.
- As of today, if you wish to access the GCS network from home you must login to the VPN. This is to improve the cybersecurity of our servers.
- A call for nominations was sent out for the seven different committees. Please consider submitting a nomination.
- Dr. Ng welcomed 14 new tenure track faculty members and new LTAs.
- We currently have a total of 237 faculty members and we are heading to a total of 250 with the new positions.

8. Curriculum Changes

- a) Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2022-23 Academic Year
Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering:
Various changes to undergraduate program (ECFC 2021-05-01)

Motion 2021-05-03 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (A. Akgunduz/E. Shihab), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-05-01, be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

- b) Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2022-23 Academic Year
Department of Mechanical, Industrial and Aerospace Engineering:
Various changes to undergraduate program (ECFC 2021-05-02)

Motion 2021-05-04 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (A. Akgunduz/M. Pugh), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-05-02, be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

- c) Undergraduate Curriculum Proposal for the 2022-23 Academic Year
Department of Building, Civil and Environmental Engineering:
BLDG 432, CIVI 432, BCEE 432, BCEE 462, CIVI 390 and CIVI 435 (ECFC 2021-05-03)

Motion 2021-05-05 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (A. Akgunduz/S. Majumdar) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-05-03, be ratified as submitted with the following edits:

- *Minor edits to the cover memo and course descriptions need to be in full descriptive sentences.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

9. Ratifications of Elections (ECFC 2021-05-04)

Motion 2021-05-06 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng/A. Ben Hamza), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-05-04, Representative on the New Competition Review Committee be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2021-05-07 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng/ A. Ben Hamza),), it was passed that document ECFC 2021-05-04, Representative on the NSERC Vanier/PBEEE Selection Committee be ratified as submitted with the following edits:

- *Change to J. Yun to J. Yan.*

Vote: Carried unanimously

Motion 2021-05-08 Upon motion duly moved and seconded (H. D. Ng/ S. Majumdar) it was passed that document ECFC 2021-05-04, Representative on the Faculty Research Committee be ratified as submitted.

Vote: Carried unanimously

10. Other Business

- Additional information will be added to the calls for nomination for committees, including current membership and who is being replaced.
- Dr. De Visscher announced CME will be co-organizing the Canadian Chemical Engineering Conference and it will be held virtually. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- Dean Debbabi thanked everyone who attended the first council and wishes everyone a healthy productive fall term.

11. Adjournment at 3:55 p.m.

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