

CON U'S NEXT TOP ADMINISTRATORS

What you need to know: Leadership Reshuffle for 2025-26



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FAYE DIAMANTOUDI



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**Their Mission: Securing Research Funding and
Preventing Student Protests from Making Concordia
Look Like a Risky Investment**

CROWNS CHANGE HEADS AND PRIVATIZATION ACCELERATES: LEADERSHIP FOR THE YEAR THREE OF THE BUDGET CRISIS

Knowing who governs a university and why they occupy their job is crucial for understanding internal politics at any institution. Concordia is no exception. As universities across Quebec and Canada are squeezed for public funding and rapidly looking to develop new strategies for staying financially viable, the administrative appointments they make are particularly revealing of what the university leadership is hoping to prioritize.

In the final weeks of August 2025, Concordia University released a surprise announcement: Anne Whitelaw, university Provost and Vice-President Academic was stepping down after occupying the position since 2019. With such short notice before the beginning of the 2025-26 academic year, rumours swirled that Whitelaw had perhaps been fired from the post (such rumours remain, of course, unsubstantiated). Whitelaw first took on the position of Provost and VP Academic in 2019 when Graham Carr, (who had previously occupied the post of Provost) was appointed as President of Concordia. Carr was reappointed for another 5 year presidential term in 2024, but Whitelaw, his close counterpart has now been replaced by Effrosyni (Faye) Diamantoudi, professor of Economics and formerly the Vice-President of Research and Graduate Studies and Dean of Graduate Studies.

While the President of the university is both a real leader and a diplomatic figurehead, the Provost is arguably the most important administrator: the highest administrative authority of the university's primary function: academics. Looking towards another year of heavy budget cuts and deficits, Concordia has swapped an art historian for an economist. Diamantoudi's appointment is technically 'interim' but with the university looking to raise research funding and her relevant professional experience as a facilitator of that funding, there is every indication that she will stay in the job. Her promotion has come in the middle of many other new appointments or reappointments at the upper levels of Concordia's administration.

At the same time as this leadership reshuffle, on November 4th, 2025 President Carr released a “Fall update on Concordia’s budget” introducing a number of new cost cutting measures the administration is taking that collectively represent a major escalation in austerity. Among them are a voluntary retirement program for faculty, and the cancellation of the annual call for limited-term appointments (the effective firing of several hundred professors who teach large volumes of courses at the university without the security of a permanent or long-term position).

Concordia’s admin had already announced that the university would be implementing a policy of attrition, meaning that any job that becomes vacant will not be filled – including professors who retire or who are not rehired on short term contracts. It remains unclear who will teach the courses that these professors were responsible for or how students will be forced to adapt to meet graduation requirements. The university now also admits they are considering further “limiting, suspending, or reducing operating hours for some services,” and “leveraging AI to automate repetitive, high-volume tasks.”

Amid all of these changes and lay-offs, the question remains: who is getting promoted at Concordia and why? This pamphlet gives you a who’s who of new leadership - orienting you to understand better where Concordia’s current priorities lie, where there is new money currently flowing into the university’s budgets, and how the university is responding to the turbulence of student unrest at a time when Concordia is under intense internal scrutiny for its handling of the budget crisis and for continued academic ties to Israeli institutions during the campaign of genocide in Gaza.

As you read this, you might find yourself asking questions like: why is the Provost now also the “Executive Lead on Business Development and Revenue Generation”?... why is the Dean of Engineering on the board of the Canadian Police College?... or perhaps, why has the new Vice-Provost of Student Life and Experience done research for counter-terrorism programs in Lebanon funded by the Canadian government?



Golf Classic swings big with record \$625,000 for Concordia students

September 4, 2025

Pictured: President Graham Carr liaises with Concordia's corporate and private donor class in Mirabel, September 2nd, 2025. This year's fundraiser tournament included the Deputy Chairman of the Power Corporation of Canada among its honorary co-chairs. Co-presidents included senior executives from National Bank, TD, RBC, Scotiabank, Banque Laurentienne, BMO, and CIBC. Government funding may be down but there is no shortage of corporate interest in Concordia.

EFFROSYNI “FAYE” DIAMANTOUDI

Provost and Vice-President Academic



Current Job Titles:

- **Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic**
- **Executive Lead on Business Development and Revenue Generation**
- **Professor of Economics**

Positions Held:

- Interim Vice-President of Research and Graduate Studies,
- Dean of Graduate Studies
- Associate Dean of Recruitment and Awards (School of Graduate Studies),
- Graduate Program Director (Dept. of Economics)

Effrosyni "Faye" Diamantoudi, is Concordia's new Provost, the primary seat of administrative power in the academic sphere of the university. Her new job titles also include "Executive Lead on Business Development and Revenue Generation," making it crystal clear that her job is to bring in money by making the university seem safe and attractive for corporate investment and profit-driven government spending. As a professor she specialized in coalition and cartel stability. Her recent speaking appearances at *The Walrus* Talks Power Economy in May 2025 (a forum on Canada's changing power grid landscape presented by Concordia's Volt-Age) and as a guest at the Canadian Science Policy Center (CSPC) Conference in 2024 give us clues to understand what that her professional experience is really about. Her job is to balance the constraints of the university environment with government policy restrictions and the interests of private corporations. If she does this successfully then Concordia can make the cash flow for science and tech research. As Dean of Graduate studies, she performed the role of (in her words) "fueling the Canadian economy with human capital." Now its time to do that for the university at large. The public service aspect of higher education for students of all backgrounds will take a back seat to letting market logic lead.

MOURAD DEBABBI

Dean of Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science



Current Job Titles:

- **Dean Gina Cody School of Engineering and Computer Science**
- **Director of the Security Research Centre (SRC)**
- **Hydro Quebec Hitachi Partnership Research Chair**
- **Professor, Concordia Institute for Information Systems Engineering**

Positions Held:

- Founding Member and Executive Director of the National Cybersecurity Consortium, Cybersecurity Innovation Network Program (\$160 million in funding)
- President National Cyber-Forensics and Training Alliance
- Senior Scientist: Panasonic, General Electric
- Board Member: Canadian Police College, CATAAlliance Cybercrime Advisory Council

In June 2025, Concordia's BoG reappointed Debbabi for another 5-year term as the dean of Gina Cody School. During his first term Debbabi made Gina Cody the motor of financial growth for Concordia. Announcing his reappointment, Concordia emphasized that under his leadership Gina Cody's "enrolment grew by more than 55%" and "external research funding increased by 85%, thanks to strong partnerships with industrial and governmental partners." The school also hired "47 new faculty members," "invested more than \$95 million in infrastructure" for engineering, "launched, Volt-Age, a seven year, \$200 million Canada First Research Excellence Fund program on electrification," and launched the "Applied AI Institute." Debbabi promises to bring in more public private research partnerships, and "entrepreneurial initiatives" "aim[ing] to double [the school's] research output and funding, strengthen its innovation ecosystem and create effective pathways to real-world impact – from intellectual property licensing to startup creation." Concordia may be in debt, but in national security research there sure is a lot of money to be made for industry and the armed forces.

BRADLEY NELSON

Deputy Provost, Vice-Provost, Student Life and Experience



Current Job Titles:

- Deputy Provost
- Vice-Provost, Student Life and Experience
- Professor of Spanish Studies

Positions Held:

- Chair of Classics, Modern Languages and Linguistics
- Associate Dean of Graduate Studies
- Graduate Program Director, Individualized Program
- Counter-terrorism Researcher

Bradley Nelson's Spanish Studies' background makes him seem like an unlikely candidate for upper admin compared to his colleagues with experience bringing in large scale research funding. Despite starting his career as an expert in Baroque Spanish literature, Nelson's recent publications have focused on studying "radicalization," "disinformation," "social media narcissism," "violent extremism," and even "counter-terrorism." In 2018, he was a "co-investigator" for "Development, Implementation and Evaluation of Capacity-Building Initiatives from the SOMEONE (Social Media Education Every Day) Initiative to Counter Terrorism and Violent Extremism with Lebanese Stakeholders in Education, Public Policy and Social Service," a project completed with \$1.2 million in funding from Global Affairs Canada, the federal government's diplomacy arm. Strange for a Spanish Studies professor. Concordia's leadership seems to be hoping that his experience in "Anti-Disinformation Pedagogy" will help the university continue to crack down on student protests and claim that anger at the university's position on Israel's genocide in Gaza is just 'social-media-fuelled hatred.' Nelson's new role as Vice-Provost of Student Life and Experience is also a newly created position in the upper administration suggesting that his role will involve making it easier for the highest levels of administration to intervene in student life and politics.

EMAD SHIHAB

Associate Vice-President of Research, Policy, Entrepreneurship and Impact



Current Job Titles:

- Associate Vice-President of Research, Policy, Entrepreneurship and Impact
- Professor of Computer Science and Software Engineering
- Founder, Gina Cody School Innovation Fund

Previous Positions Held:

- Associate Dean of Research and Innovation, Gina Cody School
- Concordia Research Chair with Ericsson, National Bank, Société Générale, Desjardins, Motsai, Galilei, Ivanhoe

Just like Faye Diamantoudi and Mourad Debabbi, Emad Shihab's promotion to a new administrative position in October 25 is directly related to his expertise in transforming Concordia's university environment into a provider of research for profit rather than an institution of public education. Shihab founded Gina Cody School's Innovation Fund, an organization that uses donations from companies like Bombardier Inc. to "[support] innovative student-led projects that have significant potential for commercialization." They work alongside District 3 Innovation Hub, Concordia's "premier incubator for budding entrepreneurs and innovators." Concordia states that his mandate as an associate vice-president will encompass "strengthening Concordia's research policy capacity, advancing entrepreneurial research strategies in sustainability and health, and supporting the university's transition to impact-driven scholarship," as well as "developing strategic initiatives in artificial intelligence and quantum computing." The announcement of his promotion also mentions that Shihab "has also secured significant research funding from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada and Industry Partners."

GEOFF DOVER

Interim Dean of Graduate Studies



Current Job Titles:

- **Interim Dean of Graduate Studies**
- **Associate Professor of Health, Kinesiology, and Applied Physiology**
- **Certified Athletic Therapist and Trainer**

Previous Positions Held:

- Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Student Academic Matters and Postdoctoral Studies
- Director, Graduate Athletic Training Program, University of Florida

Promoted from his position as an Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Geoff Dover is an unremarkable pick on the surface. "Dover's research explores why some individuals feel more pain than others and how increased pain perception affects recovery from injuries and daily function..." – inarguably uncontroversial. His appointment, however, points to another area where Concordia is changing its business model: The School of Health. Created in 2021 out of the pre-existing PERFORM Centre "(Prevention, Evaluation, Rehabilitation and FORMation/training)" the School of Health has a vision to "develop key internal and external partnerships that foster collaboration and growth." It seems to be working. In a May 2025 university budget update, President Carr wrote that "due to the additional revenues it is generating, the school [of health] is costing the university less than the PERFORM Centre did on its own." The school operates a biomedical science and engineering research hub –a lucrative research field for private investors. The school has attracted funding from donors like Lady Mireille Gillings, founder of HUYABIO. She is known for "pioneering" the "cost-effective" model of negotiating international commercial licenses for Chinese biopharmaceuticals. In plain English that means she takes drugs developed at a low cost by Chinese researchers and sells them at an inflated price in other countries.

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"To ensure the future sustainability of the university, we must focus on limiting our deficit exposure. I recognize we have all made sacrifices, and I am grateful to all of you for that.... But I am under no illusions, and neither should you be. So far, we have carried out the most obvious economies, making the easier of difficult choices. Inevitably, we have reached the point where harder decisions and more forthright actions lie ahead."

**– Concordia President and Vice-Chancellor Graham Carr,
November 4, 2025**

Thankfully, Carr and Concordia's senior leadership team agreed to freeze their salaries this year. Students can only hope that Carr will be able to survive on the [over \\$500k/year](#) that he currently receives for his role.



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