

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

This document specifies the conditions under which Special Arrangements (SAR) can be made for a potential graduate student.

General Principles

Special Arrangements will be made only when:

- 1) (a) a student is applying to pursue a doctoral degree;
(b) the applicant is exceptionally able, normally evidenced by a CGPA at the Master's level minimally 3.67; demonstrated scholarly achievements in the form of first authored papers or conference presentations of research at National or International meetings; completion of a thesis; and awards signifying academic excellence
(c) the applicant's proposed course of studies cannot be pursued in any existing program.

Normally the following reasons for a student wishing to pursue a PhD by SAR are not acceptable:

A student wishes to pursue a PhD with a faculty member from a program that does not have a PhD program. The reason for this decision is that faculty members can take on PhD students through an affiliated department should they hold an associate appointment.

A faculty member argues that the student does not have the background to pursue a PhD in the primary disciplinary program. The reason for this decision is that the student could be admitted as qualifying students as is the case now.

A student wishes to pursue a PhD in a department which has the requirement that minimally two faculty members from that unit must be suitable for the supervisory committee but the department does not have the required faculty members with the necessary expertise or interest to act in this capacity. The reason for this decision is that University regulations only require that two faculty members from SFU be members of the supervisory committee. Should a department insist that both members must be from their department, the proposed supervisor of the potential SAR student should nominate the other SFU non-departmental faculty member as an associate member of the supervisor's department.

A student wishes to pursue an interdisciplinary PhD via SAR. The reason for this decision is that many graduate students are currently pursuing interdisciplinary graduate programs within the parent discipline.

- (d) there is little need for additional expenditure of University funds
- (e) expected financial support for the student has been identified.

2. The Special Arrangements made for each individual student must be approved by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, and be periodically reviewed by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. (SGSC has delegated their duties to the Special Arrangements Steering Committee.)

3. The Special Arrangements made for an individual student do not set a precedent for other graduate students with similar interests.

Satisfactory Progress Guidelines for Special Arrangement Students

These satisfactory progress guidelines (SPG) are designed to make clear what is normally expected of doctoral students. All students will be evaluated according to the SPG criteria at the end of each semester. Students in noncompliance of the SPG will have their cases reviewed by the SAR Steering Committee. The penalty for noncompliance may entail a suspension of financial support or withdrawal from the graduate program.

General Guidelines

- 1) All students are expected to maintain a CGPA grade point average of minimally 3.5 (doctoral) with a minimum letter grade of B in each course.
- 2) Students are expected to complete minimally 60% of their coursework during the first year of their program and the remainder by the end of the second year.
- 3) Students are expected to have minimally two committee meetings per academic year and progress reports must be filed with the DGS office normally within one month of those meetings.
- 4) Thesis or dissertation proposals are expected to be presented orally during within 24 months of enrolling in the program and can be done during one of the regular committee meetings.
- 5) Doctoral students are expected to pass all comprehensive exams within 18 months of enrolling in the program.
- 6) Students are expected to register every semester unless an “on leave” semester has been approved. Students who fail to register for a semester may apply for re-admission and will normally be approved if a valid reason for not registering is provided. Failure to register for a second semester during the program will normally result in an application for re-admission being denied unless exceptional circumstances prevail.
- 7) All degree requirements are expected to be completed within 12 semesters.

Failure to achieve any of these guidelines will normally result in a student’s progress as being deemed unsatisfactory. The penalty for unsatisfactory performance may be withdrawal from the program.

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