The Continuing Studies program started in 1971. Students, professionals and senior citizens could take credit, non-credit, or correspondence courses. If they couldn't get to the mountain, the mountain came to them – through television. Partnerships were pioneered with KCTS/9 and the Knowledge Network to televise courses specifically developed for distance education.

How did SFU expand beyond its Burnaby borders? The answer is in the Archives.

Over the airwaves

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Down from the mountain

In 1980, SFU opened a storefront location in downtown Vancouver. Suddenly SFU was right next door to working professionals who realized they could keep a job and improve their credentials at the same time. Jack Blaney, Dean of Continuing Studies, cast his eye on developing a permanent downtown campus for SFU. In May 1989 Harbour Centre opened with a parade through downtown Vancouver led by the renowned SFU Pipe Band.

Off to jail

The unique Prison Education Program (PEP) was launched under contract with the Federal government in 1984. For ten years, Continuing Studies administered the program at four penitentiaries – Kent, Matsqui, Mountain, and William Head/Metchosin – and offered inmates courses in the Liberal Arts leading to certificates, degrees and diplomas in several disciplines.

Across cultures

In 1988, SFU formed a partnership with the Secwepemc Cultural Education Society to develop a university program for native students. The Kamloops-based program emphasized First Nations studies, anthropology and sociology. In 1991 an Archaeology Field School was established and it is the only Canadian First Nations university program that provides hands-on experience in site identification, surveying, excavation and cultural resource management.

Onward and outward!

In 1998, SFU launched a new campus in Surrey (formerly the Technical University of British Columbia) offering courses in interactive arts, information technology, business administration, and education. In 2006 SFU will open a new permanent campus in Surrey at Central City, an award-winning architectural complex.

Your Archives. Your University.

The SFU Archives hold collections from the Office of the President, Continuing Studies, and the Technical University of British Columbia. Do you have more questions about the dynamic history of SFU’s campuses and outreach programs? The answers are in the Archives.