“Removing Barriers: Designing the Future of SFU”

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Phase 2 Task Force on Academic Structure Discussion Paper

Presented to the University Community
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from the members of the Phase 2 Task Force on Academic Structure

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Executive Summary

Introduction and Context

The Phase 2 Task Force on Academic Structure was established by Senate in November 2006 with a threefold mandate: (1) to review and recommend an overall academic configuration for Simon Fraser University; (2) to review and recommend a strategy that will provide definitional clarity, administrative effectiveness, and appropriate differentiation among the structural building blocks; and, (3) to recommend structural and/or policy changes that will enhance interdisciplinary innovation in the future. This Task Force builds upon the work of the Faculty Structure Task Force (2005/2006) which examined the question: “Is Simon Fraser University’s current academic structure one that best reflects our qualities and strengths and one that will enable us to most effectively and visibly advance our strategic goals?”

The growth of the University has been extraordinary over the past decade, and we have witnessed dramatic changes in the range and scope of academic activities including the expansion of our activities to four campuses. We have also experienced significant changes in the external social, political, demographic, fiscal and intellectual contexts. During this time we have, consistent with our legacy, ensured that we are able to make meaningful contributions through our research, teaching and outreach to society and the world in which we live.

After extensive consultation, interaction and engagement with all levels of the University community, the Phase 2 Task Force has concluded that we must design a University for 2025 that can be described by four key qualities. We note that many of these attributes are currently in evidence in various areas of the University. We recognize these strengths and aim to build upon them.

(1) Faculty members will see Simon Fraser University as a place where they can effectively pursue disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge discovery, application, and practice of their art; where they can easily share their discoveries, applications and arts with colleagues and communities; where they are able to identify and engage with colleagues with whom they wish to collaborate; where their energy and creativity for programmatic and research innovation will find incubation, support and development; and where this environment will lead to the attraction and retention of a world-class academic complement.

(2) Graduate students will see Simon Fraser University as a place where they are afforded an expanded range of outstanding programmatic options; where there is a diverse range of opportunities for disciplinary and interdisciplinary courses of study; where they are intimately connected with the research agenda and activities of the University; and where

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1 Campuses include Burnaby Mountain campus, Surrey Campus, Vancouver campus (which includes Harbour Centre, the Wosk Centre for Dialogue, the Segal Graduate School of Business, and the various Contemporary Arts studio facilities in the downtown eastside) and the Kamloops campus. We also have a presence at the Great Northern Way Campus, but due to the joint institutional nature of this development we have not claimed it as an SFU campus in this report.
this combination will continue to be attractive to outstanding students interested in pursuing advanced disciplinary and interdisciplinary study.

(3) The design of our undergraduate programs will be recognizably distinct and of exceptional quality providing students with life-changing experiences, a wide range of opportunities for study, and which therefore, will continue to attract students of the highest caliber from local, national and international origins.

(4) Our communities, both locally and internationally, will see Simon Fraser University as a place where we fulfill our social responsibility to provide learning opportunities to all members of society through a comprehensive collection of programming that spans non-credit and credit learning; where we actively pursue and contribute to understanding and knowledge development concerning the social and environmental problems of the world; and where we provide our students with opportunities to learn with individuals, and participate in initiatives in communities around the world.

Our recommendations build upon our existing strengths and accomplishments and ensure that, throughout the University, these qualities are showcased. We propose structures and policies that are more flexible and responsive, that provide for expanded permeability between disciplinary boundaries, that create an environment for enhanced collaboration, that more clearly highlight strategic directions, that demonstrate our emphasis on, and commitment to, a distinctive educational experience for our students, and which recognize that we take seriously our role and obligation to address issues that are of pressing concern to citizens around the globe.

**Process and Structure of Report**

In January 2007, the Task Force issued a call for proposals to the University community. This call produced 25 proposals from a broad cross-section of the University. Given the number of proposals received and the need for detailed investigation and evaluation of each, the Task Force created five Academic Structure Working Groups to consider these proposals. Each Working Group was chaired by a member of the Task Force and augmented with several faculty members from the University community who had interests in the proposals being considered but who were not from any of the units identified in the proposals. A student representative, either graduate or undergraduate, was also a member of each Working Group.

The Working Groups engaged in extensive consultation with the units and individuals from whom proposals were submitted and met with interested members of the University community who wished to discuss proposals with the Working Groups. Working Group 3 which considered proposals from the broad areas of environment, development and sustainability, also held an Open Forum on the Environment for all interested members of the University community. In total, more than 260 members of the University community were consulted as part of the Working Groups’ activities. In June 2007, each Working Group submitted a report to the Task Force containing their assessment of the submissions they considered and their recommendations.
Upon receipt of the Working Group reports, the Task Force held five open forums - one on each of the Working Group reports. In total, approximately 225 members of the University community interacted with the Task Force and provided their views and insights on the recommendations and contents of the Working Group reports.

As the Task Force considered the Working Group reports and the feedback to them, it implemented several follow up processes. This included soliciting further information from the Schools of Engineering Science and Computing Science; seeking a formal indication of interest and commitment to a new Faculty from the Schools of Communication, Contemporary Arts, Interactive Arts and Technology and the Master of Publishing Program; initiating an independently led facilitation and visioning process around a potential initiative in the environment; engaging in a further collaborative development process for a vision statement of a new Faculty of Environment and Sustainability; and consulting with stakeholders in the TechOne Program.

The large scope and tripartite nature of the Task Force mandate have resulted in a lengthy report in which we have laid out the structural framework for the University, examined issues and recommended new structural configurations, and considered and devised ways to enhance interdisciplinarity. To facilitate accessibility of our report we have decided to organize it into volumes. These are necessarily interrelated, but can also stand as topic focused sub-reports.

Volume I – Introduction and Background: The first volume of the Task Force report provides a contextual backdrop to the work of the Task Force, identifies the four key qualities that we seek to achieve in the future design of Simon Fraser University, and provides an overview of the activities, consultation processes and ways in which the Task Force has sought to engage the University community over the past year.

Volume II – Major Structural Change: This volume provides the core recommendations of the Task Force with regard to changes in the academic structure - the creation of three new Faculties, the disbanding of the Faculty of Applied Sciences, the creation of a new College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning, and a proposal for the development of a Simon Fraser University Institute for Advanced Scholarship.

Volume III – Interdisciplinarity: In this volume, the Task Force identifies the successes of Simon Fraser University to date in supporting interdisciplinarity, highlights existing barriers to effective pursuit of interdisciplinary teaching and research, and lays out a multifaceted strategy for improved facilitation, nurturing and incubation of interdisciplinary initiatives.

Volume IV – Programs, Processes and Other Activities: In this volume, the Task Force presents our recommendations related to specific programs such as a new IT/ICT Program, TechOne, the Cognitive Science Program, and consolidation of Publishing programs and initiatives. In addition, this volume recommends the creation of several process reviews designed to enhance the student experience. Finally, Volume IV speaks to additional issues raised by various areas of the University community in submissions to the Task Force.
Volume V – Academic Structural Elements: Notable in this volume is the definition and conceptualization of a new entity – the College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning – and a sub-category of structure, the College Program. Also of critical importance in this Volume is a re-conceptualization of the Centres and Institutes R40.01 policy that envisions a considerably more expansive taxonomy (3 categories of Centres and 2 categories of Institutes).

Volume VI – Implementation and Process Forward: This final volume of our report speaks to issues of implementation, costs analysis, impact on individuals, and administrative process. It also importantly identifies the consultation path for the consideration and debate of this report and its recommendations.

The remainder of the Executive Summary will provide highlights from each of Volumes II – VI.

**Volume II – Major Structural Change:**

The major changes that are being recommended by the Task Force are as follows:

- the elimination of the existing Faculty of Applied Science
- the creation of three new Faculties:
  - Faculty of Contemporary Arts, Communication and Design (exact name to be determined) consisting of the Schools of Communication, Contemporary Arts, Interactive Arts & Technology, and the Master of Publishing Program
  - Faculty of Engineering and Computing, comprised of the Schools of Engineering Science and Computing Science.
  - Faculty of Environment and Sustainability / Faculty of Environment (name to be determined) initially comprised of the following units and a Faculty Interdisciplinary Programming Committee to develop future integrated programming:
    - School of Resource and Environmental Management
    - Department of Geography
    - Environmental Science Program
    - Centre for Sustainable Community Development
    - Graduate Certificate Program in Development Studies
- the relocation of the School of Kinesiology to the Faculty of Science
- the establishment of a College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning comprised of two divisions:
  - Experiential Learning Division initially including an amalgamated Semester in Dialogue and the Centre for Dialogue, and a Foreign Language Studies Program
  - Lifelong Learning Division comprised of the existing Continuing Studies activities, and Distance Education
- the future development of an Institute for Advanced Scholarship.

**Faculty of Engineering and Computing**

With a current combined complement of over 70 faculty members, an ongoing program of expansion initiated through the provincial government Doubling the Opportunity (DTO)
initiative for computing and engineering programming, a positive reversal to recent enrolment declines, the continued witness of technological and computational transformation of society, and the potential for Simon Fraser University to lead innovative disciplinary and interdisciplinary graduate and undergraduate programming innovation and expansion, we conclude that the units of Computing Science and Engineering Science offer a compelling case for distinction within the overall academic organization of the University.

Faculty comprised of Contemporary Arts, Communication, Interactive Arts and Technology and the Master of Publishing Program

The Task Force finds the arguments of Working Group 4 compelling for the creation of a new Faculty. “The creation of a Faculty of Contemporary Arts, Communication and Design is intellectually and socially appropriate and timely. Significant innovations in technology and media historically have exerted tremendous influence on human societies and cultures, and have created new possibilities for communication, self and other understanding and expression, and interaction with the biophysical world. Applications of new technologies and media permeate every facet of contemporary life, and have enabled forms of communication, art, and design that are significantly restructuring our forms of life, understanding, and agency.” The Task Force further endorses the view by Working Group 4 that there are unique opportunities and contextual factors for each of the units that support their enhanced profiling and the commitment by the University to articulate them as part of the strategic strength of the University to the external community. With the world’s attention on Vancouver for the 2010 Olympics and a new venue in the downtown Eastside of Vancouver, the School for the Contemporary Arts at its new Woodward’s site in 2009 can help realize President Stevenson’s vision for Simon Fraser University as an international destination for arts and culture, and as a flagship for multifaceted and diverse social interaction within an urban community. Further, the Task Force believes that the University has a social responsibility to preserve and promote the arts and art making as a societally important activity.

Environment Faculty

The environment has emerged as a dominant global issue that permeates our society at all levels. Environmental concerns will increasingly influence the way people live on the planet and shape global aspirations for improving human wellbeing and health. The university is uniquely positioned to contribute to the global environmental challenge. This is because of its a key role in education and research as well as its inherent quality of universality which puts the university in the unique position of housing expertise in the many areas of sciences and humanities relevant to addressing environmental problems. Furthermore, universities recognize that to remain relevant and receive broad support from all aspects of society, it is important to respond to the need for engagement in the area of the environment.

In response to the global environmental crisis and the actions of governments, organizations, and professional councils, North American universities are restructuring, refocusing, and revisioning, their focus on environmental research and teaching.
The field of the environment is clearly a high priority for Simon Fraser University, featuring in the President’s Agenda, the Strategic Research Plan, in the award of six Canada Research Chairs (three of whom are in area of Climate Change), a B.C. Leading Edge Endowment Fund Chair, and a Chair in Coastal Studies. We have an internationally recognized School of Resource and Environmental Management, strength in environmental research and teaching across campus, and a developing nexus of researchers in environmental health and in the areas of sustainable development and urban studies.

The Task Force has identified a series of pillars that we believe should form the foundation of a vision for a new Environment Faculty:

- The Faculty will result in the emergence of strong interdisciplinary research and programming occurring in the presence of strong and dynamic disciplines.
- The Faculty will develop new integrative programming bringing together the arts, humanities, social, natural and applied sciences around problem-centered topics at both the graduate and undergraduate level.
- The Faculty will be a model for collaborative engagement of faculty members in research and programming initiatives across the University.
- The Faculty will be inclusive by design.
- The Faculty will be a model of programming innovation offering cohort-based degree programs, capstone “big environmental issues” courses, first year interdisciplinary courses, non-degree cohort based seminar program on the “big issues” (perhaps one course per year) leading to a supplementary environmental designation for non-environment majors, environmental literacy courses, and non-credit and certificate programming for the external community.
- The Faculty will contribute activity to Simon Fraser University’s engagement with its community, seeking to actively participate in policy debates, citizen education, and hosting forums, speaker’s series and other forms of outreach to the community.
- The Faculty will develop significant international programming partnerships with countries around the world, thus forming a pivotal part of Simon Fraser University’s international agenda. Such programming will provide students with unparalleled educational and research opportunities to study issues of development, sustainability and environment within international settings. Joint programming, field schools, international exchange programs, dual degree programs, are a few examples of the types of partnerships that can be imagined.

Given the diverse types of structural elements – Departments, Independent Programs, integrative curriculum programs, and perhaps other types of curriculum initiatives in the future, the structuring of interrelationships is critical. We envision a Faculty that will be comprised of core departments plus interdisciplinary programming of various types. The initial core departments/schools will be the School of Resource and Environmental Management and the Department of Geography. The first two interdisciplinary programs will be the Environmental Science Program and the Graduate Certificate Program in Development Studies. The Centre for Sustainable Community Development has also expressed initial interest to join the new Faculty as one of its’ signature founding members. The Urban Studies Program declined our invitation to participate as one of the founding members of the new Faculty due to concerns about asymmetry
in the organizational structure. New interdisciplinary programs will be developed by the Faculty Interdisciplinary Program Committee as per the Task Force proposal. Additionally, there will be some Research or Research and Teaching Centres within the Faculty.

**College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning**

Our view of Simon Fraser University for 2025 calls on us to ensure that undergraduate students have an unparalleled learning experience. We believe that one component of this is the value that can be added to the student learning process through the contribution of an experiential learning component. We conceive “experiential learning” in its full breadth, envisioning experiential learning opportunities in at least three categories of experience: an international experience (such as learning a foreign language, participating in a field school, an international exchange program, or a study-abroad experience, etc.), an integrated work and learning experience (such as a co-op program, an internship, a research assistantship, a program related volunteer experience, etc.), or an interdisciplinary experience (such as a semester in dialogue, an interdisciplinary capstone course, an integrative first year program, an environmental literacy initiative, etc).

Over the past five years, the University has introduced the concept of a semester of study in a problem-centered area that changes from year to year. We have further introduced cohort based first year experience programs for undergraduate students. We have also mounted a new multidisciplinary graduate certificate program in Development. Despite their different foci, subject matters, and target audience, all three have two qualities in common: they seek to deepen the experience of students at the University, and they are highly interdisciplinary by design. All have been highly successful, attract excellent students, and are well received. But each has encountered considerable administrative difficulty within a structural system that is designed around disciplines.

The Task Force believes that our strengths in this area are hidden. We also believe that we should expand the opportunities for students to engage in experiential learning as part of their study at Simon Fraser University. We believe this vision will require a coherent and easily navigable path for students, as well as a portal opening to a clear directory of choices that is supported by an effective structure to support, stimulate, incubate and nourish experiential initiatives that will emerge and be developed both within disciplines and within a new College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning.

The Task Force also firmly believes that the University of the future must be actively engaged with its communities and must take a leadership role in addressing the pressing issues confronting society.

Continuing Studies will be a critically important vehicle for community engagement by the University. Shifting demographics, changing educational needs of professionals and adult learners, engagement with diverse communities internationally, all will draw upon the expertise and activities located within our existing Continuing Studies umbrella. We believe, however, that there needs to be some shift in the perception of this arm of the University’s activities. We think it imperative that Continuing Studies offer, and be seen to offer, services and courses of
comparable academic quality to those offered within the disciplines at Simon Fraser University. We believe that part of the solution lies in a more effective integration of our outreach activities with our traditional programming activities. There should be more articulated pathways between non-credit and credit-learning and our service to diverse communities should be built upon the foundations of our research and teaching expertise. We also believe that there is a need for more direct involvement in the teaching activities of Continuing Studies by our faculty and for us to more effectively capitalize on the expertise of highly trained professionals and practitioners. Further, we feel that both lifelong and experiential learning represent unique pedagogical approaches to learning for both seasoned academics and professionals alike. Bringing together the expertise of Program Directors in Continuing Studies with faculty members in disciplines will create a vibrant and exciting new research Centre.

When we take the above observations, opportunities and vision of the future together, the Task Force believes there are four areas that deserve special attention: interdisciplinarity, experiential learning, community engagement and lifelong learning.

The Task Force believes that these four areas can form the cornerstones of a new “College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning”. The College would be comprised of two divisions – the Experiential Learning Division and the Lifelong Learning Division.

The Experiential Learning Division would have the following responsibilities:

- develop, incubate, nourish and house credit (but not degree granting) programming of an interdisciplinary, cross-Faculty character within College Programs;
- develop a portal to showcase experiential programming and learning opportunities across the University;
- serve as a reference and support centre for members of the University community seeking to develop new experiential programming;
- coordinate experiential credit administration and adjudication processes in the future; and,
- integrate our mission of internationalization into the language programming of the University.

The Lifelong Learning Division would have the following responsibilities:

- develop programs that provide opportunities for coherent pathways between non-credit and credit learning; and,
- house continuing studies, distance education, and diverse population outreach activities.

The Task Force believes that the creation of the College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning will effectively profile and ‘brand’ Simon Fraser University as a unique place that institutionalizes its commitment to excellence in student learning experience.

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2 See Volume V – Academic Structural Elements – for a detailed discussion of a College Program.
Institute for Advanced Scholarship

Modeled after Institutes for Advanced Scholarship at Princeton, Harvard, and others, the goal of a Simon Fraser Institute for Advanced Scholarship (SFU-IAS) would be the pursuit of research excellence at the leading edge of pressing global issues. The SFU-IAS is envisioned as one of the pre-eminent Institutes for the exploration of critical interdisciplinary research questions that would bring together leading world scholars from the arts, humanities, applied, social and natural sciences within and beyond Simon Fraser University around a thematic project for a two year period. With state-of-the-art facilities, an internationally acclaimed conference, and proceedings of the highest quality, the SFU-IAS would bolster Simon Fraser University’s place on the international stage for research excellence. The Institute is also envisioned to have significant graduate educational and community outreach components.

Volume III - Interdisciplinarity

The Task Force believes that we must excel in both disciplinary and interdisciplinary activities. Successful interdisciplinarity can, and will only, occur in the presence of strong, vibrant, and dynamic disciplines. We must value the research being undertaken within disciplines and understand its importance to interdisciplinary research and we must recognize that interdisciplinarity occurs both within disciplines as well as outside of disciplines. As such, the University’s structures and policies must be designed to support innovation, knowledge advancement and the pursuit of opportunities in both disciplinary and interdisciplinary directions. We must recognize that both disciplinary and interdisciplinary advancement will occur at all scales and in all settings.

The Task Force further believes that, as with other areas of the University, interdisciplinarity can, and will, flourish if there is a vision for its future, a strategic plan to guide its development, the leadership to champion it, and the resources to implement the vision.

While there is an expansive literature speaking to the definition, qualities, hierarchies, and activities of interdisciplinarity, the Task Force finds that the most straightforward and compelling operational definition of interdisciplinarity is that offered by Professor Cathy N. Davidson, Vice Provost for Interdisciplinarity Studies, at Duke University:

“Interdisciplinarity is any productive research or teaching that occurs across, between, and among two or more areas of knowledge that typically have different histories, methodologies, or objects of study. Interdisciplinarity can occur across schools or it can happen within a single department; it can involve collaborations of many researchers or it can be embodied in the work of a single researcher.” (“Why Interdisciplinarity?”, in InterConnection, Volume 5.1, Fall 2006, {Newsletter on Interdisciplinarity Studies at Duke}).

3 While the Task Force did not conduct a thorough literature review of the theoretical classification and definition of Interdisciplinarity, we did read a number of works that we understood to represent dominant thinking in the field. The sources we consulted are identified in Appendix H - the Bibliographical references to our full report.
And although there is an equally extensive literature on the differences between inter-, trans- and multi-disciplinarity, and the nuances of these differences are important to the academic field defining them, we believe it important for Simon Fraser University to act to support and enhance activity in all of these areas.

Despite considerable successes in fostering interdisciplinarity that have been achieved by Simon Fraser University and which are exemplified in our full report, participants in a day long Interdisciplinarity Charette identified a substantial number of barriers. These barriers exist in a variety of ways for students and faculty members. We were surprised to find the extent to which these barriers were seen as obstructing the research capacity of faculty members and discouraging the development of new programming. The Task Force recommends that a multifaceted strategy be adopted to successfully enhance, nourish, promote, and stimulate interdisciplinary collaboration in teaching and research at Simon Fraser University. We note that in this area of our work in particular, our solutions extend beyond structures of the University and focus on leadership, support, policy revision and process review.

The Task Force recommends the creation of a new Office for Interdisciplinary Collaboration (OIC). Reporting jointly to the Vice President, Research and the Vice President, Academic, the Office would be responsible for championing interdisciplinarity, development and implementation of a strategic plan, developing communication structures, advising, coordination, “bushwhacking”, managing a new Centres and Institutes support centre, developing structures to support university wide initiatives (eg. the SFU Health Network), and administering funding envelopes to support interdisciplinarity in conjunction with the Vice President, Research and the Vice President, Academic.

The Task Force believes that a key element to a multifaceted strategy in support of interdisciplinary is the reformation of the Centres and Institutes policy.

As the final pillar to our multifaceted strategy on interdisciplinarity, the Task Force recommends that a number of policies and processes in the University be amended. It should be noted that a number of the recommendations made will be a matter of negotiation between the University and the Simon Fraser University Faculty Association and may result in different provisions than what we imagine here. Nonetheless, we felt it important to indicate the issues that we feel need addressing within the academic policy environment at Simon Fraser University. We further note that while the amendments we recommend are designed as ways to enhance interdisciplinarity, the proposed changes will, in many instances, serve disciplinary research and teaching equally effectively.

Revisions are recommended to the Joint Appointments policy to facilitate increased flexibility in the nature and extent of joint appointments, differential percentage contributions by category of work activity, extension of these appointments to Centres and Institutes, and better mechanisms for the review of interdisciplinary activities.

Two new policies are recommended to be developed – internal secondments policy and team teaching policy.
A new Internal Secondments policy is imagined to provide a temporally limited period of engagement in another unit or Centre/Institute. We believe that this tool can serve as a new mechanism to encourage faculty member participation in interdisciplinary teaching and research activities that are developed through Centres and Institutes.

The Task Force understands from members of the University community that there is considerable variety across the University in the extent to which team teaching is recognized in annual workload calculations and is assessed within performance review processes. It is our view that a fair and equitable process of application, review, and recognition is not only a fundamental component of a positive culture, but also is necessary if all areas of the University are to be participants in initiatives that would integrate the strengths of disciplines across the University.

A frequently cited obstacle to interdisciplinary participation and success at Simon Fraser University, as with institutions elsewhere, is the lack of effective review processes for interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching. In part this stems from a lack of defined parameters for effective review of interdisciplinary work generally; in part it stems from the diverse nature of interdisciplinary work that often makes comparisons across faculty members, and standards of assessment extremely difficult. It is an issue that all Universities struggle with. We believe that Simon Fraser University has a reputation for progressive academic policies that is often cited as a best practice example. The customized nature of criteria and standards for promotion, tenure and salary review should provide a vehicle under which interdisciplinary assessment criteria can be effectively developed. The Task Force believes though that the University should consider the establishment of a framework for individual interdisciplinary review committees, an expansion to the Faculty College to include interdisciplinary expertise, and specific guidelines for disciplines on how to incorporate and evaluate interdisciplinary expectations for renewal, tenure and promotion into departmental criteria documents.

**Volume IV – Programs, Processes and Other Activities**

This Volume examines four additional areas that came before the Task Force in the submissions we received: specific academic programs, existing structures, process reviews, and infrastructure support.

We have recommended that the arrangements underlying the Cognitive Science Program be formalized and that adequate commitments be given by participating units. We have also recommended that the External Review of the Program scheduled for Spring 2008 will be critically important and will provide the University with the opportunity to have an independent assessment on the issues brought forward to the Task Force.

In addition to being an important proposal for the future collaborative relationship between Computing Science and Interactive Arts and Technology, the proposal for a new IT/ICT Program draws expertise from, and extends partnership involvement to, Engineering Science, Business Administration, Cognitive Science, and potentially others. Students from all of these programs would benefit from the expanded collaborative environment, and it is envisioned that specialty streams could be developed within the undergraduate IT/ICT program such that students could then further specialize at the graduate level within the partnership disciplines or perhaps even in
a graduate IT/ICT Program. Collaborative opportunities would also be highly likely with industry and the program would be extremely compelling as an object of external financial support, industrial collaboration, and coop and career placement for students, thus serving our external community and our students in a highly effective way. In recognition of this program’s potential to position Simon Fraser University as a world leader in this emerging field of knowledge (there are currently no other competing programs in Canada and an initial review suggests no direct competition within North America), and in developing a culture of effective collaboration among disciplines within the University, the Task Force supports the development of an IT/ICT program.

The Task Force believes that the interdisciplinary, cross-Faculty, nature of the TechOne program makes it an ideal candidate for inclusion within the College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning. Headed by a discipline-based academic steering committee, the program would find a nourishing and supportive home that would encourage interdisciplinarity. Notwithstanding this view and desire by the Task Force, the Steering Committee of the TechOne program has requested that the Task Force instead provide the TechOne program with the opportunity to stabilize its newly designed program and leave it in a familiar environment for a temporary two-year period.

In some cases, we felt that revisions to the process or policy framework of Simon Fraser University would prove more beneficial to the issues in need of resolution and to the overall cost and administrative efficiency of the institution. Many of these are intimately connected with our recommendations for a multifaceted strategy to enhance interdisciplinarity that we have described in the previous volume. During our various consultation processes we heard of a number of interrelated concerns with regard to the presence of obstacles for effective interdisciplinary study by students. We do not have a sense, nor the expertise, of what the exact scale of the problems reported are or the extent to which the problems noted intersect with other areas of student learning. As a consequence, we believe that those who are expert in the undergraduate student learning experience should engage in an evaluation of these issues.

In many areas of the Task Force report, we have noted the critical need by the University to increase its profile and activity in graduate education. We applaud President Stevenson’s ambitious goal to have 25% of Simon Fraser University’s student population be comprised of graduate enrolments. Achieving this goal is recognizably an important component of the overall institutional objective to secure Simon Fraser University’s reputation as an outstanding comprehensive research institution. We have recommended elsewhere that graduate students should have a direct and enhanced connection to the research activity of the University through membership in Centres and Institutes. We have also recommended a number of structural recommendations that we believe will set the seeds for an expansion of graduate education in both disciplinary and interdisciplinary venues. We also believe that the changes to the Centres and Institutes policy as well as other structural elements will more effectively enable graduate certificate programs to be imagined and developed. Notwithstanding these important changes to the benefit of graduate education, the Task Force supports the submission by the Dean of Graduate Studies to mandate him to research further the ways in which interdisciplinary programming for graduate students might be fostered.
Volume V – Academic Structural Elements

The Task Force considered deploying only the term Department within the academic structure rather than having both the terms Department and School exist as synonyms within the structural framework. Ultimately, however, we felt that there are particular areas of the University where the term School has significant meaning within the larger international context of the discipline.

The Task Force believes that a new entity – a College – needs to be added to the academic structure of the University. We do not propose this as part of the structural templates to be deployed in other circumstances. Rather, we imagine the creation of a single College – the College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning. The College may house College Programs, and may offer credit courses, (as is the case now for Continuing Studies) program components (eg. Semester in Dialogue), for-credit certificate programs, and non-credit programming. All programming within the Experiential Division must be of an experiential or interdisciplinary nature. The College will not be degree granting. Programming is envisioned to occur at both graduate and undergraduate levels. We wish to be clear that it is not our intention to create a parallel curriculum or synonym for Faculty and we would further note that any credit program developed within the College would, as is true for discipline-based programming, require Senate approval.

As part of its examination of structural elements and its mandate to identify ways to enhance interdisciplinarity, the Task Force examined the role and definitions of Centres and Institutes and has devised an expanded conceptualization of the types of and powers of Centres and Institutes including: Departmental Centre, Faculty Research Centre, Faculty Research and Teaching Centre, Research Institute and Research and Teaching Institute

A Centre is defined as a structural mechanism established for the purpose of promoting collaborative engagement among its members in the areas of research or research and teaching that primarily falls within the framework of a single Faculty. Such research and teaching activity must extend the disciplinary or interdisciplinary research and teaching provided within the contexts of Independent Programs, Departments, Schools or non-departmentalized Faculties. The majority of membership within a Centre will be from within a single academic Faculty.

An Institute is defined as a structural mechanism established for the purpose of promoting collaborative engagement among its members in the areas of research or research and teaching that crosses the boundaries of Faculties or which involve other Universities and/or Institutions. Such research and teaching activity must extend the disciplinary or interdisciplinary research and teaching provided within the contexts of Faculties. Significant membership must be drawn from each of two or more Faculties, or involve a University or Institution outside of Simon Fraser University.

The Task Force envisions more extended ways of faculty participation in certain categories of Centres and Institutes. We recommend the ability of temporally and numerically limited joint appointments and internal secondments and suggest processes for appointment, workload determination and performance review. We also recommend graduate student membership to encourage enhanced participation of graduate students in the research activities of the University,
though they would remain full members of their disciplines for admissions, degree programming, and credentialing.

A final significant area of change to the Centres and Institutes policy put forward by the Task Force is an increase in quality review. The Task Force believes that Centres and Institutes at Simon Fraser University must be viewed as important vehicles for advancing research and enhancing the research profile and agenda of the University. To ensure that we are successful in this regard, the Task Force believes that there needs to be increased rigor introduced into the adjudication of the application of Centres and Institutes and the renewal processes that will occur in the final year of the term of the Centre or Institute. We also believe that those Centres and Institutes that do not meet the expected standards of quality should not be renewed.

**Volume VI – Implementation and Process Forward**

The recommendations contained throughout this report are recognizably both substantial and ambitious. As a consequence, we have attempted to carefully think our way through at least some of the issues that will arise with the implementation of the initiatives and structural changes we have identified.

*Impact on Individuals*

The most important implementation issue arising from our recommendations is the potential impact of our proposals on students, faculty, and staff.

We see the following as implementation issues for students:

- the need for a seamlessness in the implementation of new Faculty alignments, unit relocations, and new governance relationship and that these occur in a way that ensures that educational programming remains stable and of the highest quality
- the need for degree credentials in which students are currently registered to remain intact, highly respected, and internationally recognized
- the need for students registered in the Bachelor of General Studies, Applied Science, to be able to complete their program of study despite the dissolution of the Faculty of Applied Science

We believe that the various processes of engagement we have undertaken prior to making our recommendations are the reason why the recommendations for new Faculties have been nearly unanimously supported by faculty members in all of the directly affected units. We take this as a very positive endorsement of the merit of our proposals and the view by the academic complement that our proposals will ensure a productive, creative, and stimulating research and teaching environment for faculty members’ careers at Simon Fraser University.

Nonetheless, we also recognize that there will be a very few faculty members within directly affected units who will not see the proposed Faculty location for them as being the opportune environment for their intellectual research and teaching development and career. We believe it
imperative that the University work with these individuals to ensure that suitable academic homes are found.

The dissolution of the Faculty of Applied Science is the one recommendation of the Task Force that has a direct impact on administrative, professional, technical and clerical staff. This undoubtedly has led, and will continue to lead, to a period of anxiety and uncertainty for staff members in this area. We believe, therefore, that it is fundamentally important that the should Senate and the Board of Governors approve the recommendations in this report, that the University immediately establish a process of engagement, opportunity assessment and review with all affected staff.

*Costs and Implementation Timeline*

When the Vice-President, Academic initiated the work of the first Task Force in the Fall of 2005, he did not do so in a context of financial crisis, crisis of reputation, or crisis of vision, that is typical of restructuring exercises at other academic institutions. He did so with the objective of designing the best University for the future: a University that would be seen as a leader in the liberal arts and sciences, in areas of great societal concern such as environment, education, and health, in areas of professional and applied fields. The Task Force sees our recommendations as having built on our strengths. We aim to move our research and graduate education substantively forward, to facilitate the development of one of the most distinguished and exciting undergraduate student experiences, and to create the conditions to attract the world’s leading scholars and educators to our institution. We identify initiatives and programming to enhance engagement with our communities, contribute to revitalizing art and culture in society, open our doors to diverse communities locally and internationally, and be an institution that, by its actions, demonstrates it is “thinking of the world”.

At present, we are clearly feeling the forces of tight fiscal realities and the Task Force has been critically concerned with the current reality and the recommendations that we are proposing. We believe, however, that to stop investing in the University’s future would be a “poisonous dart” for our institution. Over the past twenty years, the University has met with fierce resilience and pragmatic decision-making, several occasions of tight budgetary times. Yet despite these belt-tightening periods, we have always continued to move the University forward. The Task Force believes this we must continue this fundamental spirit of advancement.

We have attempted to outline the estimated costs of each of our major structural recommendations and to identify potential strategies for financing them. The primary funding vehicle identified is the Vice President, Academic’s Strategic Initiatives Fund which has been used in the past to finance such items as the creation of the Faculty of Health Sciences, develop the Student Learning Commons, and implement the Undergraduate Curriculum (WQB) Initiative. It has also supported new program development and the First Nations Strategic Plan. The combination of this fund and unexpended funds from the Double the Opportunity initiative would be directed to the creation of the three new Faculties, the establishment of the College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning, and the Office for Interdisciplinary Collaboration. The Institute for Advanced Scholarship would be developed through external fundraising activities.
A phased implementation strategy may be required in consideration of the current budgetary climate. New programming planning initiatives, policy revisions, and further processes would commence upon approval of our report by Senate and the Board of Governors. Ideally, the new Faculties, the realignment of Kinesiology, and the establishment of the College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning would occur on April 1, 2009. The Office for Interdisciplinary Collaboration would be established in September 2010.

Process Forward

The Phase 2 Task Force on Academic Structure will now engage in a broad consultation process with members of the University community. We have scheduled three Open Forums and invite all members of the University community to join us in a discussion about the future of Simon Fraser University as outlined in this report.

Open Forums will be as follows:

**Friday, January 4 (9:00 - 11:00 am) SFU Surrey, Rm 5380**
**Monday, January 7 (1:00 - 3:00 pm) IRMACS Theatre**
**Tuesday, January 8 (1:00 - 3:00 pm) SFU Vancouver, HC Rm 1600**

All Open Forums will feature live broadcasts with the ability of those who are connected to email questions and comments to the Task Force during the broadcast. Additionally, Open Forums will be videotaped and placed on the Task Force website within a few days after the Open Forums.

In addition, we invite written feedback on our report until **January 15, 2008**. Please send your input to us by email at *task_force-feedback@sfu.ca*. All responses will be automatically placed on the Task Force website feedback page.

Our plan following the Open Forums and receipt of written feedback is to prepare a Final version of our report for submission to the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP). It is our intent to submit a Final Report to SCUP in February 2008. A copy of the Final Report will be made available to the University community. Should SCUP recommend the approval of the Final Report to Senate, we plan to have a discussion of the whole of Senate at the March 2008 meeting of Senate, followed by a motion to approve the Final Report at the April 2008 meeting of Senate. Should Senate approve the Final Report we would forward it for final approval to the Board of Governors at their May 2008 meeting.