A. Background

The commissioning of this report stemmed from discussions within Simon Fraser University (SFU) in the winter and spring of 2008 concerning major academic restructuring that would include the establishment of three new faculties. Those discussions raised some concerns, particularly within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS), regarding the additional costs that would be associated with the faculty restructuring and the impact of those costs on the funding of existing faculties. These concerns were aggravated by the perception within FASS that it was already underfunded, both in absolute terms and relative to other faculties at the University.

The Vice-President, Academic and Provost, Dr. John Waterhouse, agreed to commission an individual to examine this situation and produce a report that speaks to the equity of funding across faculties. In this context, equity implies the distribution of fiscal resources to the faculties in a manner that reflects their relative academic responsibilities, including both teaching and research. The consultant was further directed to take into account the differential impact of market, demographic and other factors that might affect costs within the faculties and, if possible, to benchmark the situation at SFU relative to one or more other similar universities. In the event that it was concluded that a meaningful imbalance exists between the faculties, the report was to include recommendations as to how this might best be addressed. The full Terms of Reference for the project are included in Appendix A.

Professor Greg Moran of the Department of Psychology, previously Vice-President (Academic) and Provost (1995-2005), at the University of Western Ontario agreed in early May, 2008 to take on the commission.

B. The SFU Site Visits, Consultation, and Documentation

I first visited SFU on May 12-13, 2008, spending a day and a half in conversation with a wide variety of concerned individuals and groups representing the senior academic leadership and administration as well as deans and chairs from all faculties of the University. The detailed itinerary of the visit, including the identity of those with whom I met, is included in Appendix B. A second, similar 2-day visit took place on September 15-16, 2008, to discuss an interim draft of this report that had been circulated a week prior to the visit. The itinerary of this second visit is also included in Appendix B.

During and following these visits, I studied a wide variety of documents related to the funding of the faculties, enrolment, and other aspects of academic activities, including research. Some of this documentation was provided to me during the site visits, other material was obtained from publically available SFU websites. Where appropriate, references to specific documentation are made in this report.

In addition, through the cooperation of the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost at the University of Victoria and the Office of Institutional Planning and Budgeting at the University of Western Ontario, it was possible to perform some limited comparisons of funding

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As might have been expected, less detailed information was available regarding relative research activity than teaching.
distributions across faculties using the same methodology commonly employed in discussions at SFU and another approach developed at the University of Western Ontario.

C. FASS’s claim of an inequitable distribution of resources

My visits to SFU left no doubt that there is serious discontent within the FASS regarding the distribution of resources. That is, Dean Lesley Cormack, her associate deans and chairs — and, by extrapolation, members of the Faculty - believe that they do not have the resources to perform the teaching and research that is expected of them by the University at the level of quality that they expect of themselves. Further, although acknowledging the straitened circumstances of the University as a whole, they believe that their resource situation is considerably poorer than that of other faculties. This latter assertion is the perception of inequity that underlies their dissatisfaction. Others at SFU, including the senior administration and some members of other faculties respectfully disagree with the conclusions of their colleagues in FASS. That is, they do not believe that FASS is disadvantaged relative to other faculties. Before turning to my observations that speak to this disagreement, I will describe my sense of the nature and basis of the perceptions and realities that surround this sharp difference of opinion.

i. Perceptions

Meetings with members of the FASS left the consistent impression of a group that sincerely feels under-resourced in both absolute and relative terms.

Put most generally, their belief is that FASS carries a disproportionate share of the teaching at SFU, particularly at the undergraduate level. There is a widespread belief that the marked growth in enrolment at the University in recent years has been possible only because of the efforts of FASS. Other faculties were portrayed as often being unable to meet annual enrolment targets and that FASS was then expected to take up the slack at the last minute with no time for planning and inadequate additional funding. At the same time, the members of faculty view FASS as making important contributions to graduate education and as being as active and productive in research as any other unit at the University. FASS believes that its share of the budget does not adequately reflect these responsibilities and contributions.

These perceptions of resource shortages were described as having a particularly acute impact on teaching circumstances. Because the budget is seen as not providing for adequate numbers of full-time faculty, undergraduate classes were felt to be too large and too often taught by part-time members of faculty. Necessary cutbacks in funding of teaching assistants was seen as having aggravated this problem of inadequate teaching resources while at the same time taking away a crucial source of financial support for attracting and retaining high quality graduate students in the Faculty’s programs.

The concerns that funding of FASS does not adequately reflect its contributions in educational activities have parallels in the area of research. I was particularly impressed with the depth of disappointment and even resentment reflected in the comments of many regarding support of FASS research by the University and the attitude of the University Research Offices to research in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Comments included the description of particular interchanges with members of the Office of the Vice-President.

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2 The challenge of collecting comparable data from the three universities in the summer months has delayed these analyses.
Research that suggested a lack of interest in research that was incapable of attracting financial support in the range of $1 million or more. This comment was taken as indicating, more generally, a failure to recognize that much research in FASS, although needing and worthy of the support of the University, could be promoted with grants that are much smaller than those in the natural or biological sciences. More generally, the University was seen by some with whom I spoke as failing to adequately appreciate or recognize the extent to which SFU research is driven by faculty in FASS. There is a concern that the University’s attention has been drawn to the more dramatic and easily publicized research activities in the sciences and engineering.

Members of the Faculty painted an equally dismal picture of administrative and support staffing and non-staffing elements of the budget. Here, the number of staff in the Office of the Dean and in the departments is seen as inadequate to support the basic academic functions of the Faculty. For example, several cases were cited where staff on long-term disability leave were not replaced because of inadequate funding, despite the fact that the remaining staff members could not cover their important contributions. Despite the perception that levels of academic and support staff are inadequate, members of FASS describe a Faculty budget consumed almost entirely by salaries and leaving very limited or non-existent non-salary lines to cover the cost of supplies and service necessary to support their work. Some reported that they have been functioning for many years without funds to cover basic office supplies, copying in support of teaching and research, equipment of any kind, computers, and even telephones. Start-up funding to new members of faculty is regarded as grossly inadequate and substantially less than that available to new appointments in other faculties - even in those cases where it might reasonably be expected that such costs would be similar to those in the sciences, e.g., Archaeology vs. Earth Sciences. One individual described the conditions in the Faculty as “Dickensian.”

When asked to identify the roots of the perceived financial inequities, members of FASS appeared unsure of the details of the planning and budgeting process at SFU. Although several members stressed that the senior university leadership appeared willing to discuss these issues, they expressed disappointment and some cynicism regarding the outcome of such discussion, either in terms of a better understanding of financial decision-making or in actual changes to the situation.

Despite this general lack of clarity, a number of quite specific concerns did arise from these discussions of the causes of the fiscal problems in FASS. Many believe that the activities at the newer downtown Vancouver Campus and the Surrey Campus (previously Technical University of BC) are subsidized heavily by the teaching performed by those at the Burnaby Campus and, particularly, by FASS. There also is a sense that the creation of the Faculty of Health Sciences has drawn heavily on resources that otherwise would have been available to FASS. The development of three additional new faculties is, then, seen by some as a continuing and larger threat that will divert funding and worsen the current circumstances.

A singular topic that most reliably emerged in any discussions of the mechanisms responsible for the perceived inequitable funding situation for FASS was the Weighted Activity FTE or WAFTE. The basis of the WAFTE metric and its application are not well understood, nor is its application. This said, there is a widespread conviction that the weighting applied to different levels of courses is invalid and that the application of a single WAFTE’s weight across all courses in FASS (even when acknowledging the several existing exceptions) is inequitable. Feelings appear to be especially strong regarding this latter point where it is believed that many courses in areas such as Archaeology require the same level of science-based resources that exist in, for example, the Faculty of Science, but do not draw the heavier WAFTE weightings associated with such courses.
These perceived inequities were widely seen as reflecting a lack of understanding of the nature and contributions of teaching and research in the arts, humanities and social sciences and a failure to value this work relative to that in other areas of the University. For some, the situation seems to suggest an unstated plan within the University to diminish substantially the relative importance of arts and social science. Many expressed concern that the University leadership had forgotten the roots of SFU and its origins as a liberal arts university. Even setting aside the specific concerns regarding budget, the more general mood of my conversations with members of FASS in May 2008 contrasted sharply with those with other members of the SFU community. My discussions during both visits suggest a real problem of morale within FASS.

ii. Beyond perceptions

These impressions, based on conversations and anecdotal accounts of incidents arising in meetings during my visit in May 2008, left me with a compelling portrait of the beliefs and perceptions of members of FASS that are the basis of their discontent. Dean Cormack, her associate deans and staff also provided me with a brief document that made much the same case but argued more on the basis of empirical evidence rather than impression and anecdote.

The data-based arguments in the document covered a number of specific areas:

a. *Ratio of budget to teaching responsibilities.*

The case that increases in FASS’ resources have not kept pace with teaching activity was argued with data from the Office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP). These data show that from 2002-03 to 2006-07, the operating budget of FASS (normalized for salary differences) had declined by 3.9% (from 39.0% to 35.1%) whereas teaching reflected by the WAFTE metric had increased by 0.6% (from 36.6% to 37.2%). Other faculties, excluding Science, had all shown an increase in budget share; in two cases (Applied Science and Business Administration), accompanied by a decline in enrolment share. In the case of Science, both enrolment and budget share declined during this period.

The Faculty document emphasizes that the discrepancies would have been greater had raw rather than weighted FTE changes been used in the analyses.

b. *The impact of part-time students.*

The document makes the case using enrolment data that, as a consequence of the relatively large number of part-time students in FASS, the headcount or actual number of students that must be served in the Faculty is relatively greater than that in other units. Because every student, full- or part-time, requires the same level of advisory and other staff support, the use of FTEs in most analyses is seen as underestimating some aspects of the resource crisis in the Faculty.

c. *Inadequate numbers of non-teaching staff.*

Again using IRP data, the document argues that the number of non-teaching staff in the Faculty is low compared to that in other faculties relative to its teaching activities in the University. It further argues that this situation is worsened by the substantial increase in research activity within the Faculty in recent years and that it is likely to worsen if plans go forward for direct admission to programs within a faculty.
d. Reliance on part-time faculty.
The document presents data indicating that in 2006-07, 40% of courses (55% of lower division and 37% of upper division) in the Faculty were taught by part-time instructors. The Faculty is concerned that this level of reliance on course instructors who do not hold a full-time position threatens the quality of pedagogy for its students. Members of FASS reported that the challenge of relying on part-time instructors is aggravated by the fact that the bulk of the $6M needed annually to support sessional and limited term instructors comes from salary recoveries and other soft budget funds that change from year to year.

e. Revenue generation.
The document cites data that suggests that teaching done within FASS is the basis of a substantial share of SFU’s government funding (more than 50% of undergraduate-related grants) and tuition revenue (47% of undergraduate and 33% of non-premium graduate tuition). By implication and related to data cited elsewhere in the same document, the case is made that the Faculty’s share of University budget revenue falls substantially short of reflecting the income attributable to the teaching activity of the Faculty.

D. Some Observations and Conclusions

1. Is there evidence of an imbalance between FASS’s academic responsibilities and performance and its financial resources?

Comparisons within SFU
As mentioned previously, my conversations with members of FASS included persistent references to resource shortages of all kinds, including substantial shortage of supplies and services, instances of unfilled staff and faculty appointments, shortages of teaching assistants, and a heavy reliance on part-time faculty instructors in their classes. Although my meetings with other faculties included criticisms and complaints regarding various aspects of life at SFU, the conversations were not at all dominated by this sense of a crisis of resources. In fact, the general impression was that needs were adequately met by the budgeting processes at both the faculty and university level. Although there are any number of reasons why one would want to be cautious about the reliability and validity of these impressions, my discussions were consistent with the suggestion that the members of FASS are toiling under more difficult circumstances than those in other faculties at SFU.

The data on budget and teaching activity available at SFU is extensive but did not in itself hold an unambiguous answer to the question at hand. I reviewed analyses performed by the Office of the Provost that examined budget allocations per weighted teaching unit (WAFTE – calculation explained in Appendix C) relative to teaching activity in 2006-07 for all faculties. This raw data was then adjusted to account for factors that vary across faculties, including budget recoveries associated with Continuing Studies and Online Distance Education, premium fee revenue, one-time funding, and variation in average salary levels across some faculties. If one accepts the WAFTE weightings and the validity of these adjustments, this analysis concludes that, rather than being disadvantaged, FASS is modestly over-resourced and that some other faculties are both considerably under-supported (Business and Education) and over-supported (Applied Sciences) relative to their teaching activity.

This approach to a quantitative analysis of resource allocation, however, involves assumptions that are open to reasonable challenge, most notably, the weighting used to compute the WAFTE unit. If the same analysis were repeated using simple activity FTEs
(AFTE), the results would be quite different. Not surprisingly, the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences, Business and Education would then be seen to receive substantially less budget per AFTE than the Faculties of Science and, particularly, Applied Sciences.

The details of the adjustments made in these analyses in order to standardize the comparison across Faculties might also be debated. For example, it could be argued that Premium Fee revenue provides real advantages to those Faculties who receive such funds, irrespective of the fact that it is by design not available to other units. This argument seems especially pertinent once one has controlled for the higher salaries typically characteristic of the faculties benefiting disproportionately from Premium Fees. Moreover, this comparative analysis fails to take into account Canada Research Chairs and other externally funded faculty positions that, again, represent real resource advantage. Given the nature of such programs, this advantage most often disproportionately favours the sciences and engineering relative to the arts, humanities and social sciences. Although such funds are not within the control of the SFU budgeting process, their presence or absence in the budget of a Faculty has a real impact on their operations.

Data such as that presented by these within-SFU analyses provide essential and informative input to budget and planning decisions. It is critical to remember, however, that - somewhat paradoxically - equality in ratios of resources to teaching activity is as likely to reflect an inequitable as an equitable distribution. That is, different programs and different courses require varying resources to be taught properly. Weighting schemes, such as the WAFTE, cannot reasonably hope to capture these variations beyond a useful but limited “rough justice” approximation. Moreover, although the assessments discussed here reveal significant variations across faculties, parallel variation can be found within faculties. So, in FASS in 2006-07, although several departments featured budget/teaching ratios in the range of the overall Faculty figure of $3946/WAFTE, the figure for several programs was much higher: Contemporary Arts, French, and Geography and Archaeology at $9,863, $7,057, $4782, and $4,712, respectively. At the other end of the range, the figures for Psychology and History were considerably lower: $2,710 and $3,387 respectively. This variance was not limited to FASS. In the Faculty of Science, with an overall allocation of $3,835/WAFTE, the ratios within its departments varied from highs of $5,779 and $4,823 in Earth Sciences and Physics, to lows of $2,662 in Mathematics.

My point here is not that these data suggest that there are disparities across departments. Such variations are often a function of any number of valid factors including, for example: the small sections necessary for language teaching, studio instruction, and laboratories; the efficiencies associated with well-taught large sections in many subjects; low enrolment in priority programs that must be maintained for strategic reasons; or, a unit that that makes disproportionate contributions to research. On the other hand, in the absence of a systematic and routine review of such matters, these differences can reflect less legitimate factors that could include: the prevalence of small enrolment classes maintained more as a function of instructor-privilege than strategic priority; a reluctance to make difficult decisions regarding the trade-off of full-time faculty positions against courses taught less expensively by part-time instructors; or a failure to equitably assign resources according to strategic priority and the legitimate costs of teaching activity.

In summary, the available within-SFU comparisons failed to provide evidence that resolved the question of resource allocations across faculties. As my comments in this section indicate, however, I would argue that no simple quantitative indicator could adequately assure that resources within the University are allocated according to priority and legitimate needs. It is equally important to stress, however, that such indicators provide invaluable information to the university administration and to the planning and budgeting process by
directing our attention in a systematic manner. For example, the existence of a substantial difference in the budget/teaching ratio between two faculties or departments invites an examination and discussion that, in the absence of a reasonable explanation based on priority or costs, should produce planning and budgetary action.

**Comparisons with other universities.**

In addition to examining the resource distribution patterns within SFU, some comparisons also were made with the University of Victoria (UVic) and the University of Western Ontario (Western). The former was chosen because it is in the same province as SFU and has a broadly comparable structure and mission; the latter provides an out-of-province comparison with which I am quite familiar. Although helpful, it is critical to stress that the validity of any such comparisons is limited by a wide variety of important distinctions, including variations in the disciplinary composition of faculties, differences in the distribution of strengths and priorities across units in different universities in teaching and research, and the relative size of graduate vs. undergraduate programs and government funding mechanisms.

With this caveat, the comparisons with UVic and Western proved useful. For example, at Western, the publicly available University Budget for 2008-09 reveals that the ratio of budget to weighted teaching activity (the Western WTU – involving quite different weightings than the SFU WAFTE) in the Faculty of Science in 2006-07 was $3,293, while only $3,009 in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, and $2,874 in the Faculty of Social Science. This amounts to a budget allocation per unit teaching to the Faculty of Science that exceeds that of the Faculty of Arts by 9.4% and that of the Faculty of Social Science by a quite considerable 14.6%. Between-unit distinctions are even more striking when considering faculties offering professional programs: for example, Dentistry ($7,834/WTU), Medicine ($5,425/WTU), and Engineering ($3,980/WTU). Although these figures and the related distinctions continue to be the subject of debate at Western, the planning process does not seek cross faculty equality but rather the measure is a reflection of real operational and priority-based distinctions in program costs. This said, the availability of such information prompted budgeting discussions that resulted in substantial shifts in resource allocation over the 10-15 year period that the University has published the data as part of the planning process. For example, in 1995-96, the already mentioned funding differential in the Faculty of Social Science was associated with a $21.9 Million difference between expenditures supporting the Faculty and revenue attributed to its activities (largely tuition and government grants). In the subsequent 11 years, the figure has been reduced to $14.1 Million (see Western’s Budget, 2008-09, [http://www.ipb.uwo.ca/operating.php](http://www.ipb.uwo.ca/operating.php)).

As is discussed at some length in a later section of this report, the use of weighted teaching units - although useful for certain planning purposes - inevitably elicits heated debates regarding the validity of relative weightings across units. An unweighted measure of all teaching activity in each faculty provides a less contentious and perfectly valid basis for comparisons of the pattern of resource allocations across faculties between universities. As long as the same measurement is used in each university, issues of the relative resource-intensity of teaching in different faculties can be set aside: the comparison does not tell us if

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3 We are awaiting data necessary for additional comparative analyses.

4 The weightings of the Western-WTU are as follows: all undergraduate FTEs 2.0; Education, Law FTEs 2.0; Medicine (MD) FTEs 4.0; Medical Residents 1.0; Dentistry (DDS) FTEs 4.0; Master’s FTEs 3.5; PhD FTEs 7.0. The weightings have been simplified relative to the originals and increased weight has been added over time to graduate FTEs to reflect a University strategic priority. Discontent over details of the weightings is muted by the fact that the Enrolment Contingent Funding program is only one aspect of a broader annual planning process where funding needs and priorities can be addressed. Details of the ECF process can be found at: [http://www.ipb.uwo.ca/documents/BudDoc2008_ECF_Description.pdf](http://www.ipb.uwo.ca/documents/BudDoc2008_ECF_Description.pdf)
the relative distributions within each university is appropriate but it does tell us if it differs from that in the others.

Table 1 makes such comparisons using selected faculties from SFU, UVic and UWO. The table illustrates the ratio of such a measure of teaching activity (AFTE at SFU) to faculty instructor resources. The latter variable is expressed as both full-time members of faculty (CFL FTEs at SFU) and as total full-time faculty equivalent including part-time instructors (this latter variable was unavailable at UVic). In the case of UWO and UVic, the best approximation of FASS at SFU was created by combining data from 2 or 3 faculties (referred to as ASS faculties below).

Using arts and social science units as the reference, several characteristics of the three patterns of relative student/faculty ratios are worth noting. First, in all cases, ratios are in the range of 50% to 100% higher in ASS faculties than those in engineering faculties. Second, the relative size of the ratio for ASS faculties and science faculties at UWO and UVic are very similar: student/faculty ratios in ASS faculties are only marginally higher than in science. Third, in contrast to the patterns at UWO and UVic, the student/faculty ratio of FASS at SFU is markedly higher than that in Science, approximately 25% to close to 50% higher depending on the measure used.

This suggestion of relative underfunding of FASS at SFU is supported by another cross-university comparison. Data provided by the Office of the Provost suggests that the base budget allocated per full time equivalent student taught (AFTE at SFU) is approximately 34% less than that in the Faculty of Science; whereas, at Western, ASS faculties are funded at a level only approximately 6% less than that of Science. Parallel data from UVic is not yet available.

A variety of other comparisons reinforce the picture suggested by these contrasts between SFU and UWO and UVic even though the metrics available in each case differ somewhat. The York University website describes student-faculty ratios as higher in the Faculty of Science than in the Faculty of Arts. At Brock University, calculations based on data available on its website indicate that student-faculty ratios in AAS faculties are similar or marginally lower than to those in its Faculty of Science.

To summarize these comparisons across universities, although differences in the composition of the units compared and of the detailed construction of the metrics might account for some of these contrasts, the comparisons suggests that FASS at SFU may be conducting its teaching with less faculty resources reactive to other faculties than is the case for equivalent faculties at a number of other Canadian universities.
<table>
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<th>SFU (07-08)</th>
<th>AFTE/FT Faculty</th>
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<th>AFTE/FTE Faculty</th>
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**Some related matters.**

As previously discussed, the departmental and faculty leaders in FASS raised a number of important issues in our discussions, some supported by documentation, that they believe justify a claim of an inequitable distribution of resources to the Faculty. Most of this claim pertains to the question of allocated budget to teaching activity that has been discussed at some length already in this section of the report. I will attempt here to address some of the other diverse issues raised.

The Faculty made the case that a disproportionate number of part-time students enrolled in its programs aggravated their resource shortage, that it is only able to afford relatively few non-academic support staff, and that it is involved disproportionately in costly service activities to the wider community. It is clear that concerns reflect challenges to FASS, but a limited review such as this cannot reasonably be expected to fairly comment on their validity or the extent to which they might be limited to FASS. These matters need to be routinely examined as part of a comprehensive University planning and budgeting process.

FASS also presented data indicating that resource shortages had necessitated an overreliance on part-time vs. full-time instructors: in 2006-07, full-time members of faculty accounted for 60% of total teaching equivalents while the portion is 80% or more in many other faculties. A proper assessment of these figures requires information and familiarity with the university and its priorities that exceed the resources of a report such as this. The question would be more appropriately the subject of on-going consideration within a planning process at SFU. It should be noted, however, that the figures seem consistent with a trend across the country for an increasing percentage of classes in the arts, humanities and social sciences to be taught by part-time rather than tenure-track faculty. Few universities make such figures as easily available as does SFU. At the University of Western Ontario, however, a perusal of the University’s on-line databook suggests that only approximately...
45% of its undergraduate classes in Arts and Humanities are taught by full-time members of faculty while the same figure is 59% in Social Science. In contrast, the figure in the Faculty of Science was approximately 74%. The relatively higher reliance on part-time faculty in the arts and social sciences thus is acute at Western as it is at SFU.

Discussions during my visits to SFU also featured repeated references to dissatisfaction with the level of support and recognition provided by the University to research in FASS and, more generally, disciplines in the arts humanities and social sciences. In contrast, documentation of spending on internal granting programs and discussions with others, however, reflected a sense of commitment in the Office of the Vice-President Research and from the senior SFU leadership to such research. Tangible examples of support include the SSHRC small grants competition and other internally funded programs aimed at stimulating and supporting research outside of the sciences, including: a travel grants fund, grants to support research proposal preparation, grant management and publications. The majority of these latter funds are apparently directed exclusively to work in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Senior SFU leaders also pointed to a variety of other significant program developments and investments in recent years that have directly or indirectly promoted such research, including: protection of the SFU library acquisition budget and investment in electronic access, the construction of the new Arts and Social Science complex, and the development of graduate programs on the Vancouver Campus. Some university leaders expressed an honest frustration and incomprehension concerning the FASS community’s belief that their scholarship and research was not adequately supported or recognized given these tangible actions and programs.

Those in FASS and elsewhere cited the Community Trust Endowment Fund (CTEF) as both symbol and substance of the University’s inadequate support of their non-resource intensive research. They argued that, although in principle available to all, the CTEF is targeted at very large scale, resource-intensive projects that are much more likely to arise within the sciences than the arts, humanities and social sciences (even acknowledging that one of the earliest successful CTEF programs was based in FASS). They further argue that the University could easily, at little expense, have carved off some portion of the endowment to support the smaller scale interdisciplinary research more characteristic of their domain of scholarship.

A second similar important area of conflict contributing to the current malaise in much of FASS relates to the expansion to the Surrey Campus and the creation of the Faculty of Health Sciences. Members of the Faculty see these initiatives as drains on University resources and as demanding a tax of FASS resources. They also fail to see the place of such initiatives in a larger strategic vision or, at least, in their vision of SFU. On the other hand, members of the University leadership describe a system of government funding that would not have led to a drain on FASS resources to support these new directions. That is, they argue that enrolment increases and associated funding supporting both the Surrey Campus and FHS would not have been available to existing faculties on the Burnaby Campus. They also are able to place the developments within a clear strategy for the transformation of the University.

In both these areas – support of research and the funding of new major initiatives – the dissatisfaction among a significant number of the arts, humanities and social science community at SFU threatens to undermine the objectives of these same initiatives. That is, the effectiveness of the programs supported by the Vice-President Research is compromised if they fail to fully engage this important and sizable segment of the SFU research community. Similarly, the Surrey Campus, the Faculty of Health Sciences and, indeed, the recent faculty restructuring initiative were deliberately designed to involve collaboration
with existing programs and units at Burnaby, including FASS. An observer cannot help but be struck by the irony of the current circumstances where some in FASS are not inclined to such collaboration and, indeed, moved even to resist cooperation with the Office of the Vice-President research. Sadly, at least for some, initiatives that should have increased the permeability of faculty and campus boundaries have instead produced an increased balkanization.

As I have tried to indicate in this brief summary, the ingredients for success appear to exist on both sides of these debates. A number of my recommendations, thus, urge the SFU community and leadership to identify actions and arenas for discussion and communication that may help identify such conflicts, resolve misunderstandings, and help avoid similar future impasses. In addition to a specific reference to research support, these recommendations in large part involve processes of annual budgeting and strategic planning initiatives.

As will now be apparent, evaluating the equity of resource allocations as a function of teaching activity has proven to be a challenging task. It was even more difficult to evaluate with confidence the research contributions of FASS relative to other faculties. There seems no basis, however, for suggesting that any underfunding of the Faculty could be justified on the grounds of a weak performance in research or graduate studies. Simon Fraser has a justifiable reputation as one of Canada’s most research productive comprehensive universities. An examination of measures of research productivity, efficiency and effectiveness compiled by Research Infosource and other organizations indicates that those involved in research in the arts, humanities and social sciences form a considerable part of the foundation of SFU’s excellent reputation.

To conclude this rather lengthy section of my report, the available evidence, particularly from comparisons with other universities, suggests the possibility that FASS is underfunded relative to other faculties at SFU. It is critical to stress, however, that no review of the sort I have been able to perform here is capable of answering such a question with complete confidence. As my commentary suggests, decisions regarding the allocation of funds to academic units can never be a function of a simple algorithm that seeks to achieve numerical evidence of an equitable balance. Such decisions must certainly take into account such quantitative information but also must consider more subtle measures and issues that cannot be captured by even the very best performance indicators.

It would be imprudent to suggest the possibility of a pattern of underfunding of FASS without a few caveats. First, although the anomalous pattern of funding discussed previously in this section arises in comparisons of funding levels of faculties of arts and social science relative to faculties of science, it is impossible to draw conclusions regarding the appropriateness of the levels of funding in these two faculties without further investigation. One possible direction that is worthy of consideration relates to the fact that the Faculty of Science at SFU accounts for a smaller percentage of the overall undergraduate enrolment than is the case at comparison universities. Given the understandable desire to maintain a viable, diverse, research-intensive Faculty of Science with a strong graduate program, the relatively lower undergraduate enrolment could have produced something of an “over-capacity” that could contribute to the pattern observed here. Of course, it is important to stress that this relative pattern of funding between FASS and Science could also be the result of a more complex mechanism involving the funding levels and responsibilities of other faculties at SFU. A second caveat - should it be concluded that a FASS is underfunded relative to its responsibilities, it might be addressed either by an increase in funding or by a reduction in teaching duties. The latter option is particularly relevant given recent developments at SFU. That is, some with whom I have spoken have
suggested that the creation of new Faculties and the diversification of programs and campuses inevitably must lead to a decrease in the relative size of FASS. Although one could imagine a period of transition where FASS, of necessity, was required to carry more than its share of the teaching load of the University, it would be unreasonable for FASS to sustain its previous level of teaching as those newer units reach maturity and their planned levels of enrolment.

2. **What part have broader contextual changes played in creating the atmosphere of discontent in FASS?**

*Context 1: Simon Fraser is a university in transition*

Simon Fraser University, like many of its counterparts across Canada, is in the midst of a transition, one that has particularly unsettling implications for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

The University’s not-so-distant origins in 1965 were firmly based in the North American liberal arts and sciences tradition. As many members of the Faculty indicated in their conversations with me, this model placed FASS comfortably at the heart of SFU and its mission. In the intervening years, the University built a reputation as one of Canada’s leading comprehensive institutions, with a continuing emphasis and pride in the quality, broad-based education it offers its undergraduate students. A recent expression of the continuing importance of the liberal arts and science model to SFU was the implementation of the Undergraduate Curriculum Initiative that included the provision that every SFU graduate must meet writing, quantitative, and breadth requirements before receiving their undergraduate degree. Such requirements are often discussed at other Canadian universities but few, if any, have managed to make such a strong and explicit commitment to the concept of a liberal arts and science tradition.

While the University has remained committed to this model, the environment outside SFU has shifted substantially in a number of important ways that have been felt at all of Canada’s universities. These external forces have unavoidably altered Simon Fraser in both obvious and subtle ways.

First, the percentage of young adults attending university has increased dramatically. Some view this increased participation rate as a fundamental shift in the place of post-secondary education in our society - moving from an essentially elite model of a general education to a mass or universal system in which college or university education becomes a natural step in the educational sequence of most citizens. Many have argued that this change is essential to the maintenance of provincial and federal prosperity and to quality of life in a competitive, global economy where knowledge workers are central to innovation and productivity. This change has been particularly rapid in British Columbia where university spaces and participation rates lagged far behind the rest of the country for many years.

The impact of these changes in enrolment on universities, especially on one as wedded as SFU to the liberal arts and science model, has been substantial. These changes include increased class sizes and a much greater reliance on part-time instructors not involved in discovery research and scholarship. In addition, increased participation has brought greater student demand and explicit government expectations of programs that are more employment or vocation focused, rather than offering a more general education in the liberal arts tradition. These pressures have quite reasonably seen the creation of many new programs and the growth of associated academic units. The majority of such growth has been outside of the arts, humanities and social sciences. It should be noted, however, that
several such programs have been created at SFU within FASS, including programs in gerontology, applied legal studies, forensics, public policy and urban studies.

In addition to these participation-related factors, shifts in society’s expectation of Canada’s universities has produced a second force that has also had a disquieting impact on some working in the arts, humanities and social sciences. The federal and provincial governments now look quite explicitly to universities to contribute much more directly than in the past to ensuring the country’s competitiveness in a global economy. These expectations have important implications for both academic programs and research. In a manner far exceeding past policy, provincial governments have targeted funding to the creation and expansion of programs that they believe best serve the competitive needs of society. Such programs have invariably been associated with the natural and biological sciences, engineering and some professional programs and seldom involve the arts and social sciences in anything but a supporting role.

Similarly, in the past 10-15 years, we have seen remarkable increases in research funding support through federal programs that include the Canada Foundation for Innovation, Genome Canada, the Canada Research Chairs Program, Federal Funding for the Indirect Costs of Research and major increases in the budgets of the three federal granting councils. Parallel programs have emerged in most provinces, including British Columbia. Most of these initiatives require much closer engagement and collaboration with the private sector than in the past and many require matching funding agreements. Although the arts and social sciences have had some access to such funding, in most cases it has been limited and disproportionately small relative to that available to the sciences and engineering (CRCs, SSHRC budget increases relative to CIHR and NSERC).

In fact, the arts and humanities have had limited benefit or have been excluded from access to recent new resources associated with both educational program expansion and research. The situation is compounded by the justifiable perception that, without very careful planning and monitoring, these resource investments in other areas of the university can draw existing support away from their domains. The possible mechanisms by which such a shift might occur are many but include inadequate funding to provide arts and social science courses to students in these new programs and pressures on the University to invest in existing and new academic units to respond to these irresistible external forces.

It is entirely understandable, then, that this shifting national and provincial environment might create a situation where those working within FASS will feel guarded, alert to threat and defensive of their place within SFU. The anxiety of FASS has likely been compounded by a number of changes at the University that reflect these broader environmental factors. The Faculty of Health Sciences was created in 2004 and has, understandably, seen investment in staff, faculty members and a building in advance of projected enrolment and associated responsibilities. The creation of the downtown Vancouver Campus and the integration of the former TechBC into SFU as the Surrey Campus represent equally important shifts in the structure, mission and objectives of the University. More recently, the University Senate and Board of Governors approved the creation of three additional faculties: Applied Science; Communication, Art and Technology; and Environment. All of these developments reflect the local manifestation of the forces described above and each evokes an understandable concern of a major shift in the University’s valuing and provisioning of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

These contextual changes that arguably are likely to place particular stress on FASS have occurred in a fiscal context that can only add to that pressure. Despite government funding in support of the dramatic increases in enrolment of recent years and regulated tuition
increases, universities have been hard-pressed to accommodate additional students while at the same time maintaining the quality of their programs of education and research. Reductions in government grants and unavoidable increases in institutional-level costs have required unit budget reductions of 2.5% in each of the past three years. The challenge and uncertainty associated with this situation was underscored in the winter of 2008 by a sudden and unexpected additional cut of approximately 2.6% cut in the announced level of government funding. This reduction occurred so late in the University’s annual planning cycle that it allowed no opportunity to accommodate it systematically within the annual budget cycle. As a result, the circumstances reinforced the impression of some that resource allocation was greatly influenced by unpredictable and capricious factors.

To summarize the conclusions of this section of the report, there can be little doubt that some of the concern and discord in the FASS at this time is a product of a threatening and substantially shifting context. Whether or not associated fears of a fiscal imbalance have substance, there are a number of processes that are likely to be useful to the University in providing real information, a visible framework for consultation and collegial planning. These processes include:

a) **Open and meaningful discussion and debate of both specific proposals and the broader issues.**
   On the one hand, my conversations at SFU and a limited review of the history of related debates indicated that specific proposals for change at the University are accompanied by open and extended consultation and debate. There was almost complete agreement, for example, that the recently completed consideration of major restructuring of the University’s faculties involved an extensive series of open meetings and consultations with more than adequate opportunity for input from all sides of the community. Moreover, the University leadership is widely regarded as accessible and open to the discussion of the rationale for such proposals.

   On the other hand, conversations with individuals at all levels across the University suggested an absence of discussion of the larger context for such specific proposals. That is, individuals from both FASS and other faculties, many of whom were unambiguously supportive of many of the changes now taking place at SFU, were unable to point to the broader institutional strategic vision served by these changes. In the absence of this necessary context, groups have drawn their own conclusions regarding the University’s motivations and plans.

   It was difficult for me to assess the extent to which such consultation and discussion takes place within the FASS itself. It is clear, however, that such processes are as important within the Faculty as they are in the wider University.

b) **Access to information**
   During periods of change, members of an academic community that relies on collegial governance are reassured by access to information that allows them to assess claims and form conclusions regarding the proposed changes and their impact on the community.

   The Simon Fraser community has remarkable access to planning data on both teaching activity and budget allocations at the faculty and departmental level. This was reflected by the fact that analyses based on institutional data informed arguments presented to me by both the Dean of Arts and Social Science and the Dean of Science as much as they informed submissions of the senior administration and the IRP Office.
It was also clear that members of all faculties felt that they could gain ready access to the senior administrators in the Office of the Provost, including the Provost.

At the faculty level, my conversations and questions suggested that information concerning the distribution of resources and budget across departments seems not be as readily accessible or well-understood as at the university level.

c) A planning process and budgeting mechanism
As I have indicated in a previous point, a shared understanding of the academic unit’s or university’s mission and objectives is essential to collegial consultation regarding budgeting and planning and to the acceptance of the resultant distribution of resources. I address my observations and conclusions regarding planning and budgeting at SFU and within the FASS in the following section.

Context 2: The University and Faculty planning and budgeting processes
At the outset, it needs to be emphasized that the senior leadership at SFU and those that support them are extremely involved and knowledgeable about the planning and budgeting process at the University. They were open and candid in their discussions with me regarding these topics. As already mentioned, relevant data was readily available.

At the institutional level, Simon Fraser University has not recently engaged in a strategic planning process. Rather, each faculty is required periodically to construct a 3-year academic plan that is then integrated by the Provost into a broader academic plan. Although there is an intention to integrate this 3-year process with budget allocations, no explicit relationship exists at this time. Strategic direction and priorities are also articulated annually in a publically available President’s Agenda and in the University Research Plan prepared by the Vice-President Research. SFU’s Operating Budget and Financial Plan provides an excellent summary of the resource circumstances and the relation of budget decisions to the strategic agenda. The substance of each of these documents is the outcome of a variety of discussions between the President and Vice-Presidents and with the Deans. Related priorities and directions are regularly reported to Senate through updates and presentation of the final documents.

The budget allocation process at the university level is a well-established part of the annual routine. In fall of each year, the Office of the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) draws up estimates of the next year’s revenues, principally flowing from government grant and tuition income based on enrolment projections. Following the accommodation of fixed institutional-level costs (e.g., increases associated with utility costs, negotiated staff and faculty salaries) incremental increases are allocated in a more-or-less pro rata basis to the vice-presidential portfolios based on the allocations of the previous year. Although this process is discussed at regular meetings of the President and Vice-Presidents and particular priorities are recognized and awarded funding each year, it does not require that formal budget submissions be prepared by the various portfolios. Should they arise, the President resolves disputes regarding funding at this level.

A somewhat similar, largely informal process is followed each year to arrive at allocations among the faculties within the portfolio of the Vice-President Academic and Provost. The largest part of each year’s budget allocation to each faculty is based on the allocation of the previous year. Incremental adjustments, both positive and negative, are determined according to a number of mechanisms. Planned reductions (e.g., the 2.5% in each of the past three years) are passed on across-the-board to the faculties. Each faculty then has its
base budget adjusted according to past enrolment performance. Incremental funds available to the VPA portfolio, when available, are then passed on to the faculties in a number of ways. The Provost retains a Strategic Initiative Fund to support current priorities including, for example, the support of new academic programs, critical new faculty appointments, and spousal appointments. This fund has been in place for some time and in recent years has involved approximately $600,000 per year of the approximately $20 Million VPA portfolio operating budget. The second, more recent mechanism for the adjustment of faculty budgets is based on enrolment targets established for the coming year. The process is generally referred to as “WAFTE” and is dealt with separately in the following section.

Like that at the university level, budgeting across faculties within the VPA portfolio has established elements that are widely understood. The process, however, does not involve structured budget submissions by the deans, regular budget meetings, or a formal response to faculty proposals. The majority of deans interviewed spontaneously expressed some lack of understanding regarding the processes and criteria by which budget decisions are actually made.

Discussions regarding the nature of the budget and planning processes within the FASS suggested that funds are allocated across FASS departments and programs in a relatively centralized manner. That is, the individual chairs and program directors have very little budgetary discretion. I was unable to identify a formal structured process of budget proposal submissions and consultation between the Office of the Dean and the departments. It is noteworthy, however, that Dean Cormack arranged a series of town hall-style meetings to explain and discussion options related to the straitened budget circumstances of the past year. She also has taken a number of steps to provide greater access to budgetary information within the Faculty than in the past. Chairs did not express any substantial discontent with the annual budgeting process although they did not appear to be aware of the actual mechanisms or criteria by which decisions were made, in spite of the Dean’s recent efforts. I was left with the impression that there was a general belief that the budget allocated to the Faculty was too inadequate to justify any more formal budgeting process. That is, there was little interest in considering the pros and cons of the current practice because improvements would not substantially change the circumstances in the absence of additional funds. Several individuals outside of the Faculty, on the other hand, suggested that the budgeting process in FASS was indeed overly centralized and allowed for too little local decision-making. Some also expressed the opinion that the Dean’s office had failed to make difficult, potentially unpopular, but necessary decisions to ensure that priority needs were met. Seen from the Faculty perspective, however, the same circumstances are believed simply you reflect the reality of an inadequate budget and few degrees of fiscal freedom.

A common feature of my discussions of budgeting both with a range of deans and with chairs within FASS was a general lack of understanding of the relation between budget decisions and strategic priorities. In fact, although most individuals had their own sense of the mission and objectives of the University, such notions were based on their own views and inference rather than an explicit established plan. There appears to be a widespread recognition of the importance of establishing some form of formal university and faculty strategic plans and an appetite for establishing a link between the vision and objectives of such plans and the budget process and decisions.

3. What part does the WAFTE factor play in the current disagreements?

The term “WAFTE” was such a pervasive element of almost all my discussions at SFU and of the formal presentations I have received that it is worthy of a section of its own. The
WAFTE or Weighted Activity-based Full Time Equivalent is a unit of teaching activity. It is derived from the number of students actually enrolled in classes in each faculty, converted to a common full-time equivalent student, and transformed according to the Basic Income Unit (BIU) formula established by the Ontario government in the 1960’s. The BIU is used to differentially weight individual students on the basis of course level (lower vs. upper year) and program; science and professional courses receive higher weightings than those in the arts, humanities and social sciences. At the time of their creation, these weightings were thought to roughly reflect variation in the cost of delivering various categories of courses. Although some modifications have been made at SFU (e.g., psychology courses receive the same weighting as science courses), the weighting generally is greater for courses in the Faculties of Science, Applied Sciences, and Health Sciences and lower in the Faculties of Arts and Humanities and Education; weightings for Business courses lie somewhere in between these groupings.

WAFTEs are used in two distinct ways at SFU. The two processes are quite different and appear to be conflated in the minds of many. First, as already mentioned, an enrolment change-based incremental budget allocation process was established in 2006-07 – widely referred to as the “WAFTE process.” Under this process, enrolment targets are established by the Provost’s office for the coming year for each faculty and funds are allocated for achievement of these targets (and removed when not meet) on the basis of WAFTE rather than unweighted FTEs. Although enrolment targets in the past (including non-WAFTE funding for enrolment growth in 2005-06) included a broader range of students, the WAFTE funding in the past two years (2007-08 and 2008-09) has been limited to teaching additional students at the Surrey campus, students associated with incremental funding to the university by the government. When first introduced, the plan was that the WAFTE process would involve a substantial annual funding change. In 2007-08, for example, the fund amounted to over $6 Million. The necessity of budget cuts since that time has seen the WAFTE allocation reduced to only approximately 25% of those levels and restricted to students in these specific programs.

Although the original idea of using increases in teaching activity as a means of allocating incremental resources had merit, its implementation has been undermined by events. First, it is clear that the Ontario BIU-based WAFTE weightings are not widely accepted as valid across the campus. Clearly the greatest discontent is within FASS where courses receive relatively lower weightings but, even in other faculties, there are few willing or able to defend the detailed weightings. The difficulty here, perhaps insurmountable, is that not only are there real differences in the resource requirements of courses across faculties – as reflected in the BIU weightings - but there is also great diversity within a given faculty. It might be argued that the Faculty of Science overall has greater numbers of resource-intensive laboratory courses than programs within the arts, humanities, and social sciences. It could equally be argued, that not only do science-based programs within the FASS (e.g., psychology, archaeology) have laboratory courses but also that many courses in the arts and humanities require small class sizes and intensive essay grading and feedback that draws heavily on teaching resources. Similarly, although it is indeed possible to teach many courses with the FASS programs in large lecture sections, using multiple-choice exams, this is equally true of some courses within the sciences. As has been the case in other universities where similar systems have been applied, the debates are endless, largely

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5 Note that the BIU has been used in Ontario only to determine government grant allocations to universities on the basis of their enrolment. In fact, the weights associated with the BIU essentially describe the pattern of expenditures at the University of Toronto in the 1960’s. As might be expected, then, the validity of the BIU weightings is the subject of the same level of disagreement within the province’s universities as they are within SFU.
irresolvable, and almost always unprofitable. At SFU, the discussions have led to a list of exceptions to the standard BIU-based weightings. One has to ask eventually whether the flame is worth the candle.

A second source of problems in the application of the WAFTE funding system has been that funding changes have required that the WAFTE allocation mechanism be altered from year to year, both in terms of its value and the range of teaching activity to which it applies. These changes seem to have added to the disillusionment among some groups regarding the system’s validity and compounded a general incomprehension regarding its workings.

Another related but independent use of WAFTEs has been in analyses aimed at addressing the issue of funding equity that is the stimulus for this report. The Office of the Provost has used these units of weighted teaching activity as the basis for examining the financial resources available to each faculty as a function of their teaching responsibilities. As already mentioned, the conclusion argued from these analyses is that – if one accepts the weightings involved in the WAFTE calculation – the FASS is not disadvantaged financially relative to other faculties. That is, the FASS does not receive an operating budget allocation per WAFTE that is substantially less than that of other faculties. Not surprisingly, the focus of debate regarding these analyses is whether or not the WAFTE is a meaningful reflection of the variation in the resources necessary to teach students in different programs and at different levels of study.

In this application of the WAFTE, the debates over the fairness of WAFTE weightings undermine the laudable openness of the University administration to conduct an open discussion of resource distribution in much the same way as they have fed a certain cynicism regarding the WAFTE-based annual funding mechanism. In addition, the informality of the annual planning and budgeting system at SFU and the absence of a more explicit, systematic process of regular budget adjustments has, by default, focused much of the debate regarding resource allocation on the WAFTE. It is clear that no one intended that this relatively simple, rough-justice system should bear such a large responsibility in the academic planning process.

E. Summary Conclusions, Suggestions and Recommendations

A report such as this is useful only to the extent that it facilitates the resolution of an issue by the University community by contributing a fresh perspective. Simon Fraser University is a mature and confident institution with leadership and governance processes fully capable of making appropriate operational and strategic planning decisions. Thus, these conclusions and recommendations should be considered in that context and are not offered as a product of some special “immaculate perception.” Of necessity, my perspective is limited by the information available to me and my own background and biases. My assumption is that these final comments will be filtered, modified, accepted or rejected by the SFU community and its leaders in a manner that contributes to a productive resolution of the resource allocation issue.

1) My examination of the available institutional data and limited comparisons with other universities provides some suggestion of an imbalance, relative to other faculties at SFU, between the teaching and research responsibilities of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at SFU and the allocation of resources to the Faculty. In addition to quantitative indicators supporting this conclusion, my discussions at SFU also suggested that the Faculty is experiencing substantial resource shortages in many areas and that its members are facing a challenge to maintain their teaching, research and administrative responsibilities.
The evidence supporting these conclusions is not unambiguous. Every university is unique and the resolution of such complex questions is never possible on the basis of some simple formula or a brief review by an outsider. Rather, such mission-critical issues must be the subject of ongoing examination within a comprehensive system of planning and budgeting. Given the rapidly evolving nature of the modern university, it is reasonable to assume that the extant pattern of budget allocation can be improved to better achieve the institution’s strategic objectives.

A transparent, well-understood planning and budgeting process that involves an integrated examination of unit responsibilities and strategic priorities is critical to building the community’s confidence that imbalances can be redressed and emerging priorities supported.

It is therefore recommended that the allocation of resources to FASS should be the subject of a systematic review within the annual planning processes at Simon Fraser University— as, of course, should the allocations to all faculties. Such consideration might begin with discussion of the data presented here and additional comparative data still being collected under the auspices of this report.

2) There is a perception among some within FASS that the University fails to adequately appreciate or support research within the arts, humanities and social sciences. Even in the absence of evidence of such attitudes or actions by the leadership at SFU, the insecurity of these researchers is readily understood as a reaction to the current national and provincial emphasis on domains of research that seldom includes their own. Although the Office of the Vice-President Research already has in place a number of internal granting programs aimed especially at the arts, humanities and social sciences, there are a number of steps that might be taken to signal the University’s commitment to research in these areas, including:

- an expanded, highly visible program of internally funded research grants of $5,000 or less.
- university-wide awards recognizing research and scholarship in each of the arts, humanities and social sciences, and the sciences and engineering.
- the appointment of officers within the Office of the Vice-President Research with special responsibilities for supporting and fostering research in the arts, humanities and social sciences.

It is therefore recommended that the University consider additional ways to recognize the stature and to support research in the arts, humanities and social sciences at Simon Fraser University.

3) The planning and budgeting processes at Simon Fraser University have served the University well over many years but consideration should be given to their review and revision. No matter what decisions are made regarding changes to the form of these processes, particular attention needs to be given to the challenging tasks of engaging the community and promoting a better understanding of planning and budgeting matters. A number of factors support this recommendation:

- Recent growth in the size of the University and substantial changes in its structure and composition call for a reconsideration of the adequacy of extant planning and budgeting processes.
- In addition to significant structural changes, much of the University’s leadership is new or in transition: all deans except the Dean of Science have been appointed in very recent years, a new provost takes office in September, 2008. The fact that the current President has two years remaining in his term provides the stable leadership and oversight necessary to successfully perform such a review while at the same time preparing a solid functional foundation for the next president.
Consideration should be given to all aspects of the University’s operations in this review. That is, an effective annual planning and budgeting process ideally embraces more than the academic domain but also integrates all support activities falling under the portfolios of the other vice-presidents.

*It is therefore recommended that the University review its annual planning and budgeting processes with the objective of implementing a process that is integrated across all academic and non-academic portfolios and able to support effectively the University’s mission and objectives.*

4) Although the actions and annual statements of priorities of the university leadership clearly reflect a strategic vision for SFU, the University lacks the clear and explicit strategic plan necessary to provide direction and continuity to such the annual planning process envisioned in the preceding recommendation.

- Such a plan is especially helpful at a time such as this when changes to the University’s size, composition and structure and, indeed, to the entire British Columbian higher education sector raise questions about Simon Fraser’s fundamental mission and objectives.
- In addition to the substantive value of an explicit university plan, the actual strategic planning process itself can provide a critically important renewal of the sense of community and common purpose at Simon Fraser University.

*It is therefore recommended that the University consider establishing some form of strategic planning process that will actively engage the broadest possible participation by its community in a planning process. This process would review and re-establish Simon Fraser University’s vision, mission, values and objectives, and would lay out a broad plan upon which to base more detailed planning and budgeting decisions in the coming years.*

5) The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences does not appear to have a well-established or well-understood annual planning and budgeting process or a clear Faculty Strategic Plan.

- In the absence of such structures, it is difficult to ascertain to what extent perceived shortages of resources are the result of a failure to optimize within-faculty budgetary allocations.
- As at the university-level, the absence of a transparent and well-understood planning and budgeting process makes it difficult to foster confidence and trust in its community, especially in difficult budgetary times.
- Moreover, requests for increased funding by a faculty are most likely to be effective when the Office of the Provost has confidence that currently available resources are being used efficiently in support of the Faculty’s priorities.

*It is therefore recommended that the Dean of FASS lead a review of the Faculty’s annual planning and budgeting structure and process and, in parallel, initiate a strategic planning process - including a critical review of its structure, programs, and processes - that involves as broad a segment as possible of the Faculty community.*

6) Although the objectives of the processes employing WAFTE in recent years at SFU have been well intentioned and aimed at supporting the University’s objectives, the end results have been less than ideal. Misunderstanding and confusion around the impact on budgeting of the WAFTE metric have contributed to the disenchantment that lies behind this report.

- The use of a weighted metric for assessing teaching activity is useful and sensible but it should be regarded as one of a number of indicators and not as a single criterion measure.
It makes good sense for the University budgeting process to include a mechanism that allocates a substantial portion of each faculty budget on the basis of changes in teaching activity. The mechanism currently in place at SFU, however, has been significantly impaired by events that have taken place since its design. A careful review and reconsideration is called for. Such an enrolment contingent funding mechanism works most effectively when it applies to all planned enrolment increases, is predictable from year to year, and is associated with funding that adequately reflects the true incremental costs of increases in teaching activity. In the absence of sufficient increases in government funding to support such a program, it is possible to generate the necessary funds by way of an internal reduction in existing budgets, preferably across all units of the University. Finally, although some weighting of teaching activity is appropriate, a widely, even if grudgingly, accepted “rough justice” weighting is much preferable to one which attempts to fine-tune allocations to the details of different categories of classes.

*It is therefore recommended that: i) the use of any weighted measure of teaching activity be regarded as an important input to the planning process but not as a final arbiter or justification of global budget allocations; ii) that the University revise its teaching activity dependent budgeting mechanism to ensure that it is equitable, predictable and substantial.*
Appendix A

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Terms of Reference for the Funding Model Project

The purpose of this project is to advise the senior administration and the Faculty Deans at SFU on the fairness or equity in the distribution of funds relative to workload among the six Faculties. The project is restricted to base budget funding to the six Faculties which, in FY 2008-09, amounted to approximately one hundred and seventy-five million dollars. The project will not consider the division of funds as between the Faculties and other budget units at SFU.

The project will:

1. Examine the distribution of funding among the Faculties to determine if the Faculties are equitably funded with respect to the relationship between funding and workload as determined by teaching activities and other Faculty responsibilities and outputs, especially including research.
2. Take into account the potentially differential impact of market, demographic and other factors on Faculty costs.
3. To the extent possible, benchmark Faculty level funding at SFU relative to funding provided to Faculties at universities of a similar size and composition to SFU.
4. In the event that an imbalance in funding relative to workload is observed, provide advice to the senior administration, including the Deans, on how balance could be restored.

The project report will be filed no later than August 31, 2008. (NB. Since agreed that Final Report will be filed before September 30, 2008. GM)

The project leader will meet with identified deans, chairs and members of the central administration at the beginning of the project in order to identify perceptions of issues relative to the above points. The number of such meetings is expected to be between twelve and fifteen.

Before the project report is filed, the project consultant will meet with approximately the same individuals to test the reasonableness and acceptability of proposed final conclusions. The objective at this stage is to develop a consensus on issues and feasible solutions which are in the best interests of the University.

SFU will make data available to the project leader as requested and in a timely manner. SFU will coordinate local arrangements for the project leader at SFU.

The project leader will visit SFU on at least two occasions. The first is tentatively scheduled for May 12 and 13, 2008.

The project sponsors are the Dean of Arts and Social Sciences, Dr. Lesley Cormack, and the Vice President, Academic and Provost, Dr. John Waterhouse.
### Appendix B

**Greg Moran**  
Visit to SFU Burnaby Campus, May 12-13, 2008

#### Monday, May 12, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHEDULE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
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</table>
| Travel to SFU Burnaby Campus with Jon Driver  
* (pick-up at Vancouver International airport) | 12:00-1:30 pm | SFU Burnaby  
8888 University Drive, Burnaby BC |
| Pat Hibbitts, Vice-President, Finance & Administration | 1:30-2:00 pm | Strand Hall, Rm 3166 |
| Bill Krane, Associate Vice-President, Academic & Vice-Provost | 2:00-3:00 pm | Strand Hall, Rm 3167 |
| Danny Shapiro, Dean of Business Administration /  
Asst: Wendy Unger  
John O’Neil, Dean of Health Sciences /  
Asst: Irene Rodway  
Suzanne de Castell, Associate Dean of Education /  
Asst: Donalda Meyers | 3:00-4:00 pm | Strand Hall, President’s Conference Room (PCR) |
| Michael Stevenson, President & Vice-Chancellor | 4:00-5:00 pm | Strand Hall, Rm 3189 |
| Travel back to hotel (via taxi) | 5:00-6:00 pm | Delta Vancouver Suites Hotel  
550 West Hastings Street, Vancouver BC |
| Dinner with Michael Stevenson, John Waterhouse, Jon Driver | 8:30-10:00 pm | Yew Restaurant, Four Seasons Hotel  
791 West Georgia Street, Vancouver BC |

#### Tuesday, May 13, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHEDULE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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</table>
| Travel to SFU Burnaby Campus with John Waterhouse  
* (pick-up at Delta Vancouver Suites Hotel) | 8:00-9:00 am | SFU Burnaby  
8888 University Drive, Burnaby BC |
| Chairs, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences | 9:00-10:00 am | Strand Hall, Rm 3171 |
| John Waterhouse, Vice-President, Academic & Provost | 10:00-11:00 am | Strand Hall, Rm 3191 |
| Mike Plischke, Dean of Science | 11:00-12:00 pm | Strand Hall, Rm 3191 |
| Lunch | 12:00-1:00 pm | | |
| Lesley Cormack, Dean of Arts & Social Sciences  
Tom Perry, Associate Dean, Arts & Social Sciences  
Mary Ann Gillies, Associate Dean, Arts & Social Sciences  
Paul McFetridge, Associate Dean, Arts & Social Sciences  
Valerie Rose, Assistant Dean, Arts & Social Sciences  
Bonnie Yeung, Director, Faculty Finances  
Jane Fee, Director of Recruitment, Enrolment and | 1:00-2:00 pm | Strand Hall, Rm 3171 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel to SFU Burnaby Campus (via taxi)</td>
<td>9:00-9:45am</td>
<td>SFU Burnaby - 8888 University Drive, Burnaby Strand Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel via VPA escort to Academic Quadrangle</td>
<td>9:45-10:00am</td>
<td>Strand Hall SH3163 to AQ6156</td>
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</table>
| Lesley Cormack, Dean, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences  
  Tom Perry, Associate Dean, FASS  
  Paul Budra, Associate Dean, FASS  
  Paul McFetridge, Associate Dean, FASS  
  Valerie Rose, Assistant Dean, FASS  
  Bonnie Yeung, Director, Faculty Budgets, FASS  
  Diane Gibson, Director, FASS HR & Curriculum  
  Jane Fee, Director of Recruitment, Enrolment and Retention, FASS | 10:00-12 Noon | AQ 6156 |
| Travel via FASS escort to Strand Hall | 12-12:15pm | AQ6156 to SH3163 |
| Lunch with Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and Provost | 12:15-1:15pm | SH 3163 to Himalayan Peak – Cornerstone Building |
| Travel via FASS escort to Academic Quadrangle | 1:15-1:30pm | SH3163 to AQ6106 |
| Chairs/Directors, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences | 1:30-3:00pm | AQ 6106 – Refreshments provided |
| Travel via FASS escort to Strand Hall | 3:00-3:30pm | AQ6106 to SH3171 |
| John O’Neil, Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences  
  Suzanne de Castell, Dean, Faculty of Education  
  Colin Jones, Dean, Faculty of Applied Sciences | 3:30-4:30 pm | Strand Hall, Room 3171 |
<p>| Travel back to hotel (via taxi) | 5:00-6:00 pm | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHEDULE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Travel to SFU Burnaby Campus (via taxi)</td>
<td>7:30-8:30 am</td>
<td>SFU Burnaby, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby Strand Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic &amp; Provost</td>
<td>8:30-9:30 am</td>
<td>Strand Hall, Room 3171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesley Cormack, Dean, Faculty of Arts &amp; Social Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pat Hibbitts, Vice-President, Finance &amp; Administration</td>
<td>9:30-10:00 am</td>
<td>Strand Hall, Room 3171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill Krane, Associate Vice-President, Academic &amp; Associate Provost</td>
<td>10:00-11:00 am</td>
<td>Strand Hall, President’s Conference Room (PCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Shapiro, Dean, Faculty of Business Administration</td>
<td>11:00-12 Noon</td>
<td>Strand Hall, Room 3171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch with Lesley Cormack</td>
<td>12:00-1:00 pm</td>
<td>Cornerstone (Lesley will pick-up Greg from SH3171)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mario Pinto, Vice-President, Research</td>
<td>1:00-1:30 pm</td>
<td>Strand Hall, Room 3171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Plischke, Dean, Faculty of Science</td>
<td>1:30-2:00 pm</td>
<td>Strand Hall, Room 3171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairs, Faculty of Science</td>
<td>2:00-3:00 pm</td>
<td>Strand Hall, Room 3171 – Refreshments provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacy Lee, Director of Institutional Planning &amp; Research</td>
<td>3:00-4:00 pm</td>
<td>Strand Hall, Room 3171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Stevenson, President &amp; Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>4:00-5:00 pm</td>
<td>Strand Hall, President’s Conference Room (PCR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dinner – Jon Driver, Bill Krane, Lesley Cormack and Tom Perry</td>
<td>6:00-9:00 pm</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix C

**WAFTE WEIGHTS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Schedule of Weights:**

These are the weights for converting AFTE's to WAFTE's. Weights vary, depending upon the course level, faculty, graduate/undergrad, course delivery mode, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower Division</th>
<th>Special Departmental Weighting: Lower Division:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Education = 1.0</td>
<td>Psychology = 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business = 1.5</td>
<td>Fine Arts Studio Courses = 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, Health and APSC = 2.0</td>
<td>Communications = 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Upper Division:</strong></td>
<td>Distance Ed. = 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Education = 1.5</td>
<td><strong>Upper Division:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business = 1.5</td>
<td>Psychology = 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, Health &amp; APSC = 2.0</td>
<td>Fine Arts Studio Courses = 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Masters</strong></td>
<td>Communications = 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Education = 3.0</td>
<td>Distance Ed. = 1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business = 3.0</td>
<td><strong>Masters</strong> as shown on left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science, Health &amp; APSC = 4.0</td>
<td><strong>Doctorate</strong> as shown on left</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Doctorate</strong></td>
<td><strong>Graduate Diploma</strong> - GDB (3.0), GDE (1.5) GDURB (3.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All programs = 6.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definitions:**

- **FTE** Full-time Equivalent Enrollment, where 1 FTE = 30 credits.
- **AFTE** Activity FTE or FTE course enrollments.
- **WAFTE** Weighted Activity FTE. This is Weight * AFTE (see schedule of weights above).
- **Pgm FTE** Program FTE's are full-time equivalent student enrollments, where one FTE student takes 30 credits.
- **ICLM** Induced course load matrix. This is a standard display of rows and columns used in higher education showing course FTE's delivered by academic units (faculties) and consumed by students in programs (or faculties). In the WAFTE calculations, the ICLM is

*Prepared by Joanne Heslop in IRP*