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Self Evaluation Report

Introduction and Institutional Overview

Simon Fraser University (SFU) was created in 1963 by the government of British Columbia to relieve enrolment pressures on the University of British Columbia by providing basic programs in the arts and sciences and in teacher education. As it happened, the province created SFU by amending the University Act that governed the University of British Columbia, which granted the new University a significant measure of autonomy. SFU’s first Chancellor, Gordon Shrum, was quick to exploit this by expanding its mandate to incorporate graduate education and research. When it opened its doors in 1965, SFU’s 2500 new students included 83 graduate students, 33 of whom were PhD candidates.

Today SFU has grown into one of Canada’s premier comprehensive universities and BC’s second-largest research university. It boasts three campuses in three municipalities, 35,000 students enrolled in for-credit programs, another 19,000 participating annually in non-credit programs, and over 3500 continuing and temporary academic and support staff. SFU’s economic impact for 2009/10 was estimated to be on the order of $3.65 billion.1

SFU’s institutional culture was profoundly shaped by its birth in the cultural ferment of the mid-1960s. From the outset, there was a visionary quality to SFU’s creation, and that vision—in keeping with its moment—was experimental, fluid, and surprisingly and consciously democratic.

In many ways, SFU’s youth shaped its future: newly minted PhDs came to SFU seeking an opportunity to shape the new university in ways not possible at older institutions. They were young and idealistic and their hopes were more than met. Empowered beyond their expectations within the new and quickly developing institution, they brought their youthful energies, creativity and desire for

innovation and built them into the fabric of SFU’s institutional culture. In doing so, they contributed enormously to the boldness and the willingness to try new ideas and approaches that still distinguish SFU. Innovative faculty were matched with adventurous students, who chose SFU precisely because it was new and promised to be different. It was.

Among Canadian universities, SFU was the first to introduce the trimester system (1964), to offer athletic scholarships (1964), to install student representation on its Senate (1967), to create an Executive MBA (1968), to implement computerized registration (1970), and to install a woman President (1974). That tradition of innovation continues into the present day, with SFU becoming the first Canadian comprehensive university to seek institutional accreditation (2009) and the first university outside the USA to achieve provisional status in the NCAA (2011).

This Self Evaluation Report is SFU’s first. It was produced to respond to the revised Accreditation Standards of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) leading to the approval of SFU as a Candidate for accreditation. Recognizing that some members of NWCCU may be unfamiliar with the characteristics that distinguish Canadian universities from their US counterparts, the Report spends more time setting out the Canadian context and detailed governance matters than may be needed in future reports.

Because the Report’s creation required the bringing together of much useful information about the University not previously collected in one place, it also presented an excellent opportunity to explain SFU to government, to the public, and even to ourselves. Although one legacy of SFU’s “radical” past is a unique openness and transparency about its activities, its growth into a major institution has inevitably left many faculty, staff and students only casually aware of the larger institutional context that forms the background to their work and study. This Report should help to remind them of, and reorient them to, the University and its mission.

The Report includes four two-page “interchapters” intended to highlight some key information about each of SFU’s three campuses and the new residential neighbourhood taking shape adjacent to its Burnaby campus (UniverCity).

The Accreditation Team was led by Glynn Nicholls, Director of Academic Planning and Budgeting, and supported by Louise Paquette. Lynda Erickson, Emeritus Professor of Political Science, was primary author for the Education Resources section. KC Bell, Director of Special Projects, was primary author for the rest. The Report was designed and produced through the technical support of Byron Henry and Janis Rutherford in the Communication Services unit of Student Services. Cover photograph by Greg Ehlers, SFU TLC. Printed by SFU Document Solutions.
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Core Theme assessments were carried out by the four Core Theme Teams.

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Chapter 1

Mission, Core Themes and Expectations

The institution articulates its purpose in the form of a mission statement and identifies core themes that manifest essential elements of that mission. It defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it identifies an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.
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Chapter 1 Executive Summary

Eligibility Requirements 2 and 3

Simon Fraser University (SFU) is authorized to award degrees under British Columbia’s *University Act*. Its mission and core themes are appropriate to a research university, are clearly articulated in a mission statement, and are consistent with its legislated authority.

SFU adopted a Statement on Values and Commitments in 2000. In 2010, the President and Vice Presidents approved the incorporation of those values and commitments into an expanded mission statement that articulated the University’s mission to advance knowledge through teaching, research and community engagement. These primary activities represent three of SFU’s four core themes and are consistent with, and appropriate to, a degree-granting institution of higher education. A fourth core theme, student experience and success, forms an integral aspect of the other three of sufficient importance to merit specific institutional attention and measurement. The mission statement has been presented to, and reviewed by, SFU’s Board of Governors on several occasions, including within drafts of this Self Evaluation Report.

SFU’s purpose is to serve the educational interests of its students and all of its credit-bearing programs lead to degrees, certificates or diplomas that are recognized by government, by other degree-granting institutions and by the public as of high academic quality. The University’s resources are entirely devoted, directly or indirectly, to the support of its educational mission and core themes.
Simon Fraser University Mission Statement (2010)\(^1\)

SFU’s mission is to advance knowledge through teaching, research, and engagement with the community.

Simon Fraser University Values and Commitments (2000)\(^2\)

We are an open, inclusive university whose foundation is intellectual and academic freedom. Our scholarship unites teaching and research: we celebrate discovery, diversity and dialogue. Our students and communities can expect teaching that is personal and learning opportunities that are lifelong. We champion the liberal arts and sciences and pioneering interdisciplinary and professional programs. We are a university where risks can be taken and bold initiatives embraced.

Upon these foundations, we will engage all our communities in building a robust and ethical society.

Simon Fraser University’s mission statement began to take form in 1999 with the drafting of SFU’s “Statement on Values and Commitments.” As recounted in its minutes,\(^3\) the University Senate “was advised that, within the context of economic challenges and social/technological changes currently facing universities, it was felt that a basic core mission for SFU should be developed.”

During the subsequent consultation period it was judged that community interest in a mission statement was low and that, if the University’s unique identity was to be expressed in an overarching statement, there was greater interest “in creating a very simple, clear statement of fundamental values . . . than [in] a traditional statement of mission.” Mission statements, it was felt, tended toward “superlatives and hyperbole” and should be deliberately avoided as one was unlikely to speak meaningfully to the SFU community’s sense of itself and its shared sense of purpose.

Extensive consultations resulted in the drafting and approval of the document known over the past decade as SFU’s “Statement on Values and Commitments.” Endorsed by the University Senate and approved by the Board of Governors in the spring of 2000, the Statement has been embraced as a key expression of the University’s culture. It is posted on the President’s website and informs the tone and context for most of the University’s major planning documents and other reports on key institutional matters by administrative and academic units.

The subject of a mission statement did not arise again until the fall of 2009, when it was recognized that addressing the accreditation standards would require a mission statement focused on SFU’s mandate and activities rather than its fundamental values. Because the University was preparing for a

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1 A “preliminary mission statement” was approved by the President and Vice Presidents on January 25, 2010 to provide a structure on which to draft the accreditation Self Evaluation Report.
2 Endorsed by the University Senate on March 6, 2000, and by the Board of Governors on March 23, 2000.
3 Senate Minutes, January 10, 2000, page 2ff.
presidential transition, it was agreed that the outgoing President would not encumber his successor with a mission statement he had no part in crafting.

The need for an accurate and utilitarian, if also generic, mission statement was addressed by the President and Vice Presidents on January 25, 2010. The mission statement is described as “preliminary” and is intended simply to recognize that SFU’s business as a “comprehensive” university centred in teaching, research and community engagement. The institution’s unique characteristics are addressed more fully throughout this Self Evaluation Report.

In spring 2011, SFU’s new President, Andrew Petter, launched the envision>SFU project to develop a strategic vision that reflects SFU’s strengths and that will enhance its reputation as an institution that is student-centred, research-driven and community-engaged. A final report on the results of envision>SFU project is expected before the NWCCU accreditation evaluation visit.
Mission Core Themes

SFU’s primary mission is to advance knowledge, a mission it expresses most fundamentally through its core themes: 1) teaching and learning; 2) research; 3) student success and experience; and 4) community and citizenship. The University Planning Framework (UPF), a document intended to unify and align SFU’s major planning documents and activities, identifies a fifth “theme” in financial sustainability and institutional strength, which are recognized as enabling conditions for fulfilling the four core themes.

The term “core themes” as it comes to us through the accreditation standards is new to SFU, but SFU’s planning documents have consistently focused on the elements of its business identified as core themes here. The key planning documents at SFU are: the three-year academic plans; the strategic research plans; the President’s agendas; and the University budget. Other plans are ancillary to these and support their coherence and effectiveness; major plans are discussed more fully in Chapter 3.

The most recent versions of these plans include the Three-Year Academic Plan (2010-2013) and the Five-Year Strategic Research Plan (2010-2015), which build on the strategic priorities in the President’s Agenda and guide the mission for their respective areas.

Research themes in the Strategic Research Plan and the academic themes in the Academic Plan embody a number of strategic objectives that provide the initial building blocks for the UPF. The UPF highlights the goals from the academic and research areas, merging them with the President’s priorities. Its aim is to consolidate and align all major plans and strategic initiatives within a single planning schema.

Definition of Fulfillment of Mission and, within that Definition, Interpretation of an Acceptable Threshold or Extent of Mission Fulfillment

The extent of Mission Fulfillment will be measured by a combination of qualitative and quantitative factors. Performance in the Core Themes will be assessed by Core Theme Teams composed of senior academic and administrative staff, faculty and students as appropriate to the Core Theme objectives. A straightforward tabulation of outcomes will constitute one aspect of the evaluation.

As with the Core Theme assessments, performance at the institutional level will be categorized into one of three cases:

- Outstanding – performance is excellent
- Satisfactory – performance is acceptable
- Needs improvement – performance does not meet expectations

These assessments will be supplemented by consideration of other available evidence that falls outside the formal assessment process, or the qualitative nature of which renders it indicative rather than definitive. The Report, when complete, will be reviewed and approved by the Accreditation Steering Committee (President, Vice Presidents and Deans). Senate and the Board of Governors received the Report “for information.”
Date and Manner of Most Recent Review of Mission and Core Themes

Simon Fraser University adopted its first mission statement in 2010 to provide a keystone for the accreditation Self Evaluation Report. Its four core themes have existed under other rubrics for many years. Among major planning documents, both the academic and research plans were revised in 2010, and Budgets are approved annually.

The results of President Andrew Petter’s envision>SFU process are expected to be approved and to provide additional strategic guidance to the University by fall 2011.
Chapter 1, Standard 1.B
Core Themes

The University’s mission expresses its central purpose, its reason for being. Simon Fraser University’s mission is to advance knowledge. It carries out this mission through the activities embodied in its core themes: teaching and learning; research; student experience and success; and community and citizenship.

Major objectives for each core theme are articulated in the University’s primary planning documents, and are distilled and aligned through the University’s Planning Framework.

It should be noted that, to the degree that core themes are well integrated within SFU’s various activities, they can—and should—overlap significantly. Effective teaching and learning is inextricable from student success, research from community service, and citizenship from engagement. Therefore, discussions of core theme strategies and objectives will also sometimes overlap.

Figure 1.1: Simon Fraser University Mission, Core Themes and Objectives

Source: University Planning Framework
Core Theme
Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are central to the mission of Simon Fraser University. In order to provide SFU students with challenging opportunities for intellectual growth, and to ensure SFU graduates are well prepared to achieve their career goals, the University pursues excellence in research-informed undergraduate and graduate teaching and learning across a wide spectrum of academic disciplines. SFU’s commitment to excellence in teaching is coupled with an historic commitment to interdisciplinary approaches to learning, and an obligation to respond to emerging areas of demand in higher education.

Teaching and learning are complex activities, and the paths taken to successful learning outcomes vary by discipline. They occur in diverse environments at and beyond the University’s three campuses. At SFU, teaching and learning activities can include combinations of class-based courses and programs, co-operative education and other experiential programs, international field schools, project-based assignments and credit and non-credit programs, all carried out employing a variety of pedagogies.

Students have opportunities to gain disciplinary knowledge, to study their areas of interest in depth and detail, and to learn from faculty who are active researchers. SFU has committed to provide its undergraduate students with the solid foundation of a broad education, encouraging natural learning and curiosity, and equipping them with communication skills and the analytical abilities that provide the foundations for lifelong learning. The University promotes research-informed learning in top-ranking programs at all levels, and mentors its graduate students in an environment that both fosters and celebrates advanced research and learning and provides a variety of learning opportunities for mid-career professionals.

Four entwined elements comprise the Teaching and Learning core theme:

- Students have academic opportunities to become informed and engaged global citizens, well prepared for a variety of diverse future careers;
- Faculty are supported in an environment that promotes teaching excellence;
- Programs and courses are developed with the aim of offering high-quality academic training and education; and
- Where possible, opportunities are provided to interconnect diverse disciplines across Faculties

Objective 1
Students have academic opportunities to become informed, engaged global citizens

SFU strives to create an environment rich in opportunity to engage students. Developing high-quality academic experiences inside and out of traditional classroom settings creates a strong foundation for a compelling university experience.
Outcome 1.1
Students achieve disciplinary program objectives by building knowledge and skills through diverse learning experiences

Outcome 1.1 Indicators
- Graduation rates
- Student opinions of achievement (Baccalaureate Graduate Survey [BGS])
- Range of teaching modalities and pedagogies, such as the tutorial system, writing-intensive learning, and distributed learning using enhanced technology
- Undergraduate involvement in diverse academic program elements, such as directed studies, honours courses and the Semester in Dialogue

Outcome 1.1 Rationale
Measuring graduation rates across academic program options is the most direct measure available of student achievement. Students are required to meet University and disciplinary course and credit requirements for graduation and in doing so are extensively assessed on their learning and skill development at the course level by instructors whose disciplinary expertise qualifies them to make these assessments.

Students voice their opinions of their learning at SFU in the annual Baccalaureate Graduate Survey, supplying an important indirect measure of the knowledge and skills they have gained.4

Surveys on the extent of SFU’s diverse pedagogical environment and the proportions of students who engage in diverse program elements suggest the extent of opportunities for students to engage in diverse learning experiences.

Outcome 1.2
Students participate in credit-bearing interdisciplinary, international and experiential learning opportunities as part of their degree programs

Outcome 1.2 Indicators
- History and contemporary status of interdisciplinary programs at SFU
- Number of students participating in experiential education and international opportunities

Outcome 1.2 Rationale
SFU has a long history of developing and supporting interdisciplinary courses and programs. However, many interdisciplinary courses and programs are not formally labeled as such, although they are recognizably interdisciplinary. As a result, “counting” formally labeled interdisciplinary programs or enrolments necessarily underestimates the extent to which students participate in interdisciplinary learning opportunities. Examining the institutional history of interdisciplinary studies and programming and examining contemporary programs affords a better understanding of its role at SFU.

While they do not constitute a complete catalogue of experiential and international education available to students, enrolments and student experiences in co-operative

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4 SFU participates in several surveys of graduates and current students. These are identified and explained at the beginning of Chapter 4.
education, international study, practicums, internships and field study courses offer a useful index of the extent of student exposure to such education.

Outcome 1.3
Students are well prepared for varied career paths

Outcome 1.3 Indicators
- Post-graduation employment reports
- Perceived relevance of university program to jobs (BGS)
- Student perceptions of the value of the Writing, Quantitative and Breadth (WQB) requirements (Undergraduate Student Survey [UGSS])
- Student assessments of the contribution of SFU to their knowledge, skills and abilities (Canadian University Consortium survey of graduates [CUSC])

Outcome 1.3 Rationale
Students and alumni provide important data about their career status. Their perceptions regarding whether their studies at SFU were relevant to their current employment offer an indirect measure of their preparation for the career paths they intend to follow.

Information on student perceptions of the value of WQB requirements supplies some feedback to the institution about the perceived effectiveness of these relatively new requirements. These perceptions can be balanced by graduates’ ratings of the overall contribution of their university experience to abilities in areas such as writing, abstract reasoning and logical thinking.

Objective 2
Support and promote teaching excellence

Superlative teaching is a key component of any university mandate, and SFU strives to create an environment that produces and supports top-flight teachers, who in turn support excellence in scholarship at all levels of study.

Outcome 2.1
Faculty provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate teaching

Outcome 2.1 Indicators
- Percentage of courses taught by academically and professionally qualified faculty
- Services and support provided by the Teaching and Learning Centre to teaching staff for improving their teaching and for providing high-quality instruction
- Rate of use for such services
- Support for research and innovations related to teaching
- Percentage of students satisfied with quality of teaching (UGSS and BGS)
Outcome 2.1 Rationale
For students to gain knowledge about a subject area, it is important that their teachers have a deep understanding of their disciplines. Tenure-track faculty and other academically qualified instructors are most likely to have the required knowledge to share with their students.

Successful teaching asks that deep understanding of a subject matter be complemented by the skill to communicate it meaningfully. Identifying the sources of support for teaching and learning available for the emerging and established professoriate helps to show the University’s commitment to effective teaching. Attendance at teaching workshops is an indicator of the reach these services have, as well as the extent to which they are appreciated by teaching staff.

Students are provided opportunities to express opinions about the quality of instruction in the UGSS and BGS surveys. Data from these surveys can suggest whether students’ experiences of teaching at SFU are consistent with institutional objectives to provide high-quality teaching.

Outcome 2.2
Faculty are recognized internally and externally for teaching excellence

Outcome 2.2 Indicators
• Internal awards for teaching excellence
• External teaching awards received by SFU faculty

Outcome 2.2 Rationale
A review of the internal awards for teaching can provide an indication of the quality of teaching recognized at the University. External awards can help to locate SFU’s teaching quality within a larger context.

Outcome 2.3
Students express a high level of satisfaction with teaching at SFU

Outcome 2.3 Indicator
• Percentage of students satisfied with quality of teaching (UGSS and BGS surveys)

Outcome 2.3 Rationale
Measures of student satisfaction with the quality instruction received are relevant, albeit indirect, gauges of teaching excellence. They record aspects of students’ personal experiences that are important to the learning process and teaching effectiveness.

Objective 3
Offer high-quality academic programs from a diverse set of disciplines across all Faculties
In Canada, “comprehensive universities” are those whose primary purpose is teaching and research at the undergraduate and graduate levels across a broad range of subjects in the liberal arts and
sciences as well as in business, education and the applied sciences. To remain among Canada’s best comprehensive universities, SFU must strive to keep its programming relevant, responsive and academically sound.

**Outcome 3.1**

**SFU attracts well-respected researchers and teachers to its faculty**

**Outcome 3.1 Indicators**
- Canada Research Council (CRC) appointments
- Other awards received by SFU faculty
- Frequency of citations for SFU faculty members in citation index

**Outcome 3.1 Rationale**
Noting awards and prestigious appointments allows a comparable measure of the quality of SFU’s research and instructional faculty. The rate of citations is indicative of the impact of research by SFU faculty members in a number of disciplines.

**Outcome 3.2**

**Programs evolve dynamically, constantly informed by cutting edge research**

**Outcome 3.2 Indicators**
- Number and variety of programs offered at each of the undergraduate and graduate levels
- New courses and programs introduced
- Process and timeframe for regular, formalized departmental/school external reviews
- Off-cycle curriculum reviews and course reviews

**Outcome 3.2 Rationale**
The number of programs available is an indicator of the range of choice available to students and an indicator of the overall scope of the institution, while changes to the overall curriculum—with the elimination and addition of courses and programs—indicate flexibility and the capacity to respond to the conditions required to maintain quality programs.

**Outcome 3.3**

**SFU attracts diverse and academically well-prepared students, who become part of a vibrant community of learners**

**Outcome 3.3 Indicators**
- Demand statistics (ratio of applicants to registrants) for admission over the previous three years
- Student assessment of programs (BGS, CUSC)

**Outcome 3.3 Rationale**
SFU's ability to attract students is indicated by demand statistics. Giving voice to student opinions on program offerings provides relevant feedback from the consumers of the educational experience offered by SFU programs.
SFU is an internationally recognized research-intensive university where the advancement of excellence in research is a defining feature. Collaboration and synergy are strongly encouraged and supported, and continuing investment in research infrastructure strengthens academic programs and enhances the learning experience for undergraduate as well as graduate students. The University partners with local, national and international communities of all kinds to foster effective knowledge generation and knowledge transfer through research, training and creative learning.

As articulated in SFU’s Strategic Research Plan (SRP), the University’s research priorities are to: increase the level and quality of research; support and sustain leadership through research; increase research-centred undergraduate and graduate education; and further the University’s community engagement in SFU-conducted research.

The SRP also identifies as objectives achieving distinctiveness and excellence through innovative and multidisciplinary research activities grouped collectively under several overarching research themes. These themes are intended to strengthen the research spectrum at SFU, while also building on collaborations within existing programs. The identified research themes are:

- Origins
- Communication, Computation and Technology
- Culture, Society and Human Behaviour
- Economic Organization, Public Policy and the Global Community
- Environment, Resources and Conservation
- Health and Biomedical Sciences
- Pedagogy

The SRP identifies two broad objectives to strengthen SFU’s research performance and effectiveness: to increase the level and quality of research while also promoting SFU’s public recognition as a research-intensive university; and to incorporate research into teaching and learning.

Objective 1
Increase the level and quality of research
and promote SFU’s profile as a research-intensive university

This objective targets increases to the volume and quality of research undertaken at SFU, and to the dissemination of research results produced by SFU researchers.

Outcome 1.1
Establish a strong research infrastructure

Outcome 1.1 Indicators
- Total dollars spent to support research infrastructure including Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) grants, Natural Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) equipment grants, and expenditures on Animal Care and Library collections
- Utilization of shared research facilities (specifically, the Library and Animal Care)
Outcome 1.1 Rationale
The dollars spent on research infrastructure are one important aspect of SFU’s research capacity, while the money SFU commits from its operating budget to research infrastructure reflects its commitment to research activity. Facilities such as the Library are shared by, and central to, all University research, while the Animal Care facility receives use by a more limited segment of researchers. Together their use reflects the collective level of research activity undertaken within University-sponsored research facilities.

Outcome 1.2
Develop well-regarded research programs

Outcome 1.2 Indicators
- Total external research grants
- Number of publications and citations

Outcome 1.2 Rationale
The total external funding received for research is an established input indicator. Publication numbers are an output indicator, and citations are an accepted measure of the impact of published research.

Outcome 1.3
Translate ideas into new and innovative ventures

Outcome 1.3 Indicators
- Total strategic and corporate funding from NSERC strategic grants, SSHRC partnership grants and industry contracts
- Royalties from active patents, disclosures and spin-off companies

Outcome 1.3 Rationale
These indicators form one type of measure of institutional success in developing and translating SFU’s research findings into practical applications.

Objective 2
Incorporate research into teaching and learning
This objective is directed at increasing the University’s success in incorporating research activity into its curriculum and providing an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to learn through participating in the performance of research. The desired outcomes include increasing graduate student participation in research, and engaging undergraduate understanding of, and participation in, research.
Outcome 2.1
Strengthen graduate student research

Outcome 2.1 Indicators
- Total number of students enrolled in research-focused graduate degrees and completing a thesis or dissertation
- Total number of international graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and visiting graduate research scholars
- Total amount of funding to support graduate students

Outcome 2.1 Rationale
The number of students enrolled in research degrees and completing theses or dissertations indicates the engagement of graduate students in research. International graduate students, visiting research scholars and post-doctoral fellows reflect the global recognition of the quality of graduate research training available at SFU.

Outcome 2.2
Engage undergraduate students in research

Outcome 2.2 Indicators
- Enrolment of undergraduate students in research-focused undergraduate courses and the number of completed honours degrees
- Funding for undergraduate research activities from NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA), and from co-op research placements (Vice President, Research funded USRAs)
- Number of undergraduate students hired as research assistants

Outcome 2.2 Rationale
The total number of undergraduate students enrolled in research-focused courses and completing honours programs reflects the engagement of undergraduates in research. Funding support for undergraduate research experience indicates the institutional commitment to, and belief in the fundamental value of, learning through research.
Core Theme
Student Experience and Success

The education of students is the central purpose for any university, and students’ experience while attending a university can enhance or inhibit their ability to learn. Providing a high-quality experience for students attending SFU is a major institutional goal.

The term “Student Experience” refers here to the overall feelings and beliefs students have regarding their time at an institution. It relates to their experiences inside and outside physical classrooms, and encompasses the degree to which students feel “valued” by the University and their corresponding sense of “connectedness” with it. “Student Experience” affects such key operational outcomes as student recruitment and retention, institutional reputation and subsequent alumni support.

At SFU “Student Success” is a corollary to Student Experience, and is operationally defined as success in meeting academic requirements. As the link between experience and success is profound, they have emerged as a single core theme: “Student Experience and Success.” The objectives, outcomes and indicators associated with this core theme inevitably are interwoven with the achievement of the University’s other core themes. Evaluating progress toward core theme goals is subject to ongoing refinement.

Student Experience and Success is built on a foundation of:

- an engaging student experience fostered by
- a supportive learning and living environment, and contributing to
- a vibrant campus community.

Objective 1
Provide an engaging student experience

SFU’s heterogeneous student body has diverse goals, from personal enrichment to the completion of specific credentials. SFU strives to provide an academic experience rich with opportunities to experience diverse pedagogies and compelling learning experiences inside and out of the classroom.

Outcome 1.1
Students develop global perspectives, critical thinking and transferable skills

Outcome 1.1 Indicators

- Participation in diverse pedagogies, including service and community-based learning, the Semester in Dialogue, Study Abroad, and experiential learning-based programs
- Responses to various student and graduate surveys on the value of experiential education

Outcome 1.1 Rationale

The Academic Plan (2010-2013) calls for increased diversification of pedagogy as part of an overall strategy involving a high-quality student experience. Measuring the rate at which students participate in existing non-classroom based programs can highlight existing strengths and identify areas for additional programming. The surveys provide us with students’ opinions about their experiences with SFU’s experiential pedagogies.
Outcome 1.2
Students report gaining applied experience relevant to their academic study and personal/professional goals

Outcome 1.2 Indicators
- Responses to graduate surveys on relevance of University-gained knowledge and abilities
- The participation rate in work-experience facilitated by SFU

Outcome 1.2 Rationale
Graduates’ assessments of the utility of their SFU-related education as reported on various surveys provide a useful, if indirect, measure of the relevance of their experience at SFU. Undergraduate participation rates in experiential learning programs indicate what experiential programming students value as expressed through student choice.

Outcome 1.3
Students progress to complete their identified credential

Outcome 1.3 Indicators
- Course availability rates (access to courses needed to meet degree requirements)
- Time to completion of program
- Navigable curriculum
- Percentage of students with declared majors
- Successful transition to second year (first to second year attrition rates)

Outcome 1.3 Rationale
The Academic Plan (2010-2013) identifies as a goal to develop a more navigable curriculum and improve course access. These indicators provide an accurate snapshot of how students proceed through their chosen programs, and identify structural impediments to timely degree completion.

Outcome 1.4
Students effectively transition to degree-related employment or to further studies

Outcome 1.4 Indicator
- Selected questions on employment and further studies (BGS)

Outcome 1.4 Rationale
A strong indicator of student success is post-degree employment. Upon successful completion of selected credentials, however, some students choose to continue their formal education through the pursuit of advanced credentials. The Baccalaureate Graduate Survey (BGS) provides excellent data on how effectively SFU graduates succeed at their post-degree transitions, whether into the paid workforce or on to further education.
Objective 2
Provide a supportive student learning and living environment

Student experience stretches far beyond the classroom. A supportive learning and living environment provides a strong foundation for the kind of engaging academic experience fundamental to students’ ultimate success.

Outcome 2.1
Students experience a welcoming and diverse campus community

Outcome 2.1 Indicators
- Access to programs, services and supports of diverse needs
- International student statistics

Outcome 2.1 Rationale
Admission data for international students indicate the diversity of SFU’s student body. Identifying the availability of institutional programs and services and student clubs opens a window into the University’s strengths and helps to locate gaps among the programs and services it offers.

Outcome 2.2
Students access transparent and efficient administrative systems

Outcome 2.2 Indicator
- CUSC Survey: Agreement with sense of belonging and smooth administrative functioning

Outcome 2.2 Rationale
Examining how, when and where students are able to access administrative services can highlight an often overlooked aspect of student experience. The CUSC survey asks how students perceive their treatment within administrative settings at SFU, and seeks feedback on students’ sense of belonging in the University community.

Outcome 2.3
Students are provided supportive and healthy environments for study and community activities

Outcome 2.3 Indicators
- Student satisfaction with food, transportation, health services
- Study space with power and Internet access
- Participation in living and learning communities

Outcome 2.3 Rationale
Students experience university as much outside as inside of classrooms. Access to comfortable study and living spaces for commuter and residential students is expected to encourage participation in their learning communities. Measuring levels of student access and overall satisfaction with services will help identify areas that will improve students’ experience and increase their success.
Objective 3
The University creates vibrant campus communities

SFU is a multi-campus environment, and works to provide the same service levels and diverse opportunities at each campus. Active campus communities enhance the University’s reputation and contribute to a positive student experience at university and success after graduation.

Outcome 3.1
Students participate in multiple opportunities to engage in a vibrant campus life

Outcome 3.1 Indicator
- Participation in intramurals, LEAD programming, fitness, clubs, attendance at athletic events

Outcome 3.1 Rationale
Participation in on-campus co-curricular activities identifies areas of strength and reveals opportunities to improve. The co-curricular record was still in development during the assessment process, but will be an indicator for future assessments.

Outcome 3.2
Students and graduates contribute to the social and economic well-being of their communities

Outcome 3.2 Indicators
- Outstanding alumni awards
- Degree-related employment (BGS)

Outcome 3.2 Rationale
SFU’s annual recognition of its outstanding alumni acknowledges their contributions to local, national and international communities and communicates them more widely. The BGS data on post-completion employment provide an indication of students’ contribution to society once their degrees are completed.

Outcome 3.3
Students choose a lifelong relationship with SFU

Outcome 3.3 Indicator
- Alumni financial support

Outcome 3.3 Rationale
Alumni financial support is an internationally accepted standard for measuring satisfaction with student experience and provides a glimpse of student economic success.
Core Theme

Community and Citizenship

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the current literature on community, public, civic and student engagement characterize “engagement” as based on a foundation of “mutuality and reciprocity.” Mutuality and reciprocity emphasize a qualitative exchange between the institution and the community in which the relationship benefits all parties.

An institutional focus on community and citizenship involves building sophisticated and extensive connections able to address shared interests and concerns. These connections are developed through a variety of educational, social and cultural programs that serve both the public and the University’s interests, and from them weave a shared sense of community. The activities described within the community and citizenship theme are placed in two categories: 1) curricular engagement, and 2) outreach and partnerships.

Engagement with the community is an important component of SFU’s mission. Community engagement, as an integrated part of teaching and research in SFU’s mission, creates opportunities to improve teaching and research. Recognizing the role of community in learning and in the production and circulation of knowledge demonstrates the value of the investment in this University to government, other funders, and the broader society.

Objective 1

Engage and involve SFU’s many communities

With campuses in three different communities, and programs in several more, SFU attempts to deliver to each the many benefits that can come from having a major university at hand. These include making available its expertise for formal, informal and non-credit learning experiences and extending its programs to diverse audiences and groups. As its communities benefit from SFU’s presence, they contribute to SFU. A perfect example of the reciprocal nature of engagement comes through the growth of international enrolments at SFU. There, communities are offered the opportunity to be exposed to different cultures, values, beliefs and practices interacting within a shared learning community. Broader cultural interaction can improve mutual understanding, intellectual flexibility and the potential for problem-solving.

Outcome 1.1:

Provide learning opportunities to diverse communities

Outcome 1.1 Indicators

- Enrolment in Continuing Studies non-credit courses
- Number of public lectures and academic departments holding speaker series, public lectures, colloquia, etc.
- Number of Philosophers’ Cafés held and attendance
- Number of First Nations students enrolled
- Number of international students enrolled
- Number of mature students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate programs
Outcome 1.1 Rationale

Non-credit courses, public lectures and Philosophers’ Cafés make the University’s resources available to a much wider constituency and often are tailored to specific community sectors, stakeholders and constituencies with a need for, or interest in, expertise or experience not otherwise available to them. They also encourage the University to broaden its perspectives through expanded contact with the community.

Such public events also enhance interest in, and public support for, the University. Public events provide a broad stage for presenting the contributions of University faculty, students and staff while also providing a locus for the exchange of ideas between the University and the wider community.

In its commitment to diversity and internationalization, enrolment by the following groups is of special importance to SFU: First Nations (a provincial priority, and addresses social responsibility); mature students (for mid-career access to lifelong learning in response to a need in the global job market); and international students (globalization requires students to interact and collaborate in developing solutions to quickly changing global circumstances).

Outcome 1.2

Encourage community service and engagement

Outcome 1.2 Indicators

- Qualitative assessment of community relationships, partnerships and activities by individuals, departments and Faculties
- Enrolment in community-based and service-learning courses, and in internships
- Fundraising dollars received from different communities
- Number of alumni events and attendance
- Number of alumni donors and dollars from alumni donations
- Number of athletic events for which tickets were sold
- Summer camps and attendance

Outcome 1.2 Rationale

Through deep and enduring partnerships with a wide range of community organizations, SFU’s expertise contributes to relevant and important community solutions and enables the reciprocal sharing of knowledge and resources. An initial qualitative assessment of the involvement of individuals, departments and Faculties can provide a picture of the scope of community contributions by the University.

Student enrolment in community-based and service learning courses and internships is one indicator of student involvement in the community through the auspices of the University. Fundraising dollars from various communities reflect an aspect of community engagement and suggest one way in which the community contributes to a shared resource by advancing the University and its priorities.

Alumni are a major part of the University’s communities, and their involvement through events and fundraising is a key indicator of its continued relevance to them.
Athletic events and camps provide opportunities to build a sense of community with SFU and can encourage future and further involvement (for prospective SFU students and the wider area).

Summer camps invite members of the community and their families to experience direct and tangible benefits of SFU’s involvement in community activities. They provide a community connection through young people and their parents and help to raise awareness of SFU within the wider community.

**Objective 2**

**Provide opportunities for international collaboration and partnerships**

The emergence of a truly global economy requires that universities become active collaborators with international partners, and that students have opportunities to explore international perspectives and experiences as part of their advanced education.

**Outcome 2.1**

**Students participate in international exchange opportunities and field schools**

**Outcome 2.1 Indicators**

- Enrolment in identified foreign exchange programs (FEP)
- Number of international co-op placements
- Number of outbound international field school students
- Number of outbound students for international exchange semesters

**Outcome 2.1 Rationale**

International exchanges are excellent models of reciprocity and can contribute to broader knowledge and experience among students and hosts via exposure to other cultures, values and beliefs. International field schools offer students an opportunity to live and work in an international environment, usually while gaining experience in an area related to their disciplinary studies.

**Outcome 2.2**

**Faculty and staff jointly publish articles with international partners**

**Outcome 2.2 Indicator**

- Number of journal articles co-authored by SFU authors with international co-partners

**Outcome 2.2 Rationale**

Co-authoring scholarly articles demonstrates the existence of important international relationships, the exchange of ideas, and collaborative approaches to shared international issues and questions.
Objective 3

Mobilize resources and expertise that reflect regional, national and global interests and that address concerns about environmental sustainability

Through each of its core theme activities, SFU makes substantial contributions to the communities who support SFU. Successfully communicating those contributions helps to disseminate important information of public utility to a wider audience, and strengthens relationships between SFU and those who support it.

Addressing environmental, social and economic sustainability at the institutional level and encouraging understanding of the implications of climate change represent educational and community leadership on a matter of utmost importance.

Outcome 3.1

SFU’s research, teaching and service strengths and impacts are widely communicated and employed

Outcome 3.1 Indicators

- Number of media releases and media tips sent by SFU
- Number of people following SFU on Twitter
- Average daily, weekly and monthly users on SFU Facebook page
- Number of non-SFU media stories about SFU (print media)
- Number of visitors and unique visitors to SFU’s website and percentage of new visits
- Number of page views, average number of pages visited, average time spent on the SFU website
- Percentage of visitors to SFU website from outside of Canada

Outcome 3.1 Rationale

Media and public awareness of SFU activities is important in developing a community profile for SFU. These activities build, maintain, enhance and measure public recognition of and support for the University, can favourably influence decisions about choosing a university, and can increase public and political support. The SFU website is often the first point of contact for potential students and others outside SFU, and knowledge of website traffic is useful to gauge the level of interest in SFU by the local, regional, national and international communities.

Outcome 3.2

The importance of sustainability values and achieving sustainability goals is communicated to, and understood by, SFU’s communities

Outcome 3.2 Indicators

- Number of departments with Sustainability Ambassadors and/or Green Teams
- Number of students in a Sustainability Educators program
- Enrolment for courses involving environment, sustainability and citizenship
- Number of SFU environment and sustainability stories in the media
Outcome 3.2 Rationale

High levels of participation in sustainability-related activities demonstrate that core values of contributory citizenship on an issue of major significance are being demonstrated by members across the SFU community.

Curriculum offerings that provide students with opportunities to focus on citizenship and sustainability are important for developing an understanding of community engagement among students and to support students in becoming active in their social and citizenship responsibilities.

As participation grows among SFU faculty, staff and students, media coverage of this involvement builds SFU’s community profile and encourages broader involvement in, and awareness of, sustainability issues.
Innovative beginnings

In 1965 a new university opened its first campus atop Burnaby Mountain to serve the rapidly expanding population of BC’s Lower Mainland. Ever since, Simon Fraser University has offered contemporary, relevant and innovative degree programs for undergraduate and graduate students, from its charter class of 2500 to the current student population of over 35,000 (in for-credit programs).

Across eight Faculties, from among more than 100 programs, students may choose a single “major,” or may combine elements from two or more disciplines. More than 50 formal “joint major” degree programs combine study and research in more than one subject, and students continue to sample a variety of courses for double majors, minor programs, double minor programs, certificates and post-baccalaureate diplomas.

After 46 years, SFU Burnaby remains the University’s heart, its administrative centre, and by far its largest campus. It houses most of the human, physical and technological infrastructure that supports SFU’s academic activities, and is home to the vast majority of the University’s teaching, learning and research.

Learning through experience

Within a trimester system, students can study all year long, or alternate study semesters with semesters of paid employment in a co-op placement that provides work related to their field of study, available in all academic programs.

Students are also supported for their interests in community volunteering, leadership training, peer-to-peer mentoring and becoming an orientation leader for new students. All student development programs—co-op, volunteer and leadership—blend academic and real-world experience.
Thinking of the world

Students are encouraged to “internationalize” their degrees through international co-operative work placements, exchange programs at universities in over 50 countries around the world, mentoring SFU’s international students, or taking a dual degree program offered in partnership with universities in China and Australia.

SFU International works with global partners to bring the world to the University and provide international learning and work opportunities to students, arranging field schools and exchanges that add real-world experience and value to an academic degree.

Burnaby campus growth, 2008-2011

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<td>Undergraduate AFTEs</td>
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<td>Graduate AFTEs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total AFTEs</td>
<td>18,683</td>
<td>18,847</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Faculty and Staff</td>
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<td>Space (sm)*</td>
<td>324,176</td>
<td>339,270</td>
<td>338,042</td>
<td>336,213</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Gross Assignable Square Metres
By documenting the adequacy of its resources and capacity, the institution exhibits the potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered. Through its governance and decision-making structures, the institution establishes, reviews regularly, and revises, as necessary, policies and procedures which promote effective management and operation of the institution.
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Chapter 2 Executive Summary

Eligibility Requirements 4 through 21

Simon Fraser University is a public post-secondary institution offering a range of courses and programs for credit at the graduate and undergraduate levels as authorized by British Columbia’s University Act, which also guarantees the institution’s organizational and operational independence and accountability.

The University establishes policies and procedures directed at ensuring fairness and natural justice, addressing real or potential conflicts of interest, and prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender, age, ethnicity or physical ability. It adheres to high ethical standards in all of its operations and relationships.

The University has a governing Board comprising 15 members, the majority of whom have no contractual or financial interest in the University. The Board is without limitation to its broad and overarching power to manage, administer and control property revenue, business and affairs of the University. A Senate of 69 members provides academic governance.

The President is the University’s chief executive officer. The President is appointed by the Board and never serves as its Chair; the President does chair the academic Senate. Additional leadership is provided by a complement of senior academic and other administrators appropriate to the University’s size and to the scope of its activities. Each of the University’s core themes is represented at the Vice Presidential level, and senior officers act collaboratively to advance the University’s mission and the achievement of its core themes.

Faculty are appropriately qualified to carry out their responsibilities as teachers and researchers, and are evaluated regularly through the tenure and promotion process, by student evaluations, and through granting bodies. Existing academic programs are subject to regular external peer review. Proposed new programs are considered extensively for their academic rigour, their suitability to the curriculum, and for their appropriateness within the provincial system. Program objectives are increasingly demanding as students progress through undergraduate requirements, and graduate program content and objectives meet the expected standards for each discipline.

The completion of any first undergraduate degree at SFU requires the completion of 30 credits in designated writing, quantitative and breadth courses, and the completion of any credential entails the fulfillment of program requirements specific to and appropriate for the discipline.

Library and information resources are extensive, and provide sufficient currency, depth and breadth to support the teaching and research programs offered by SFU on its campuses and...
at a distance. The physical and technological infrastructure needed to achieve its mission and core themes is provided.

Academic freedom is a fundamental value at SFU and is enshrined in numerous agreements, policies and procedures, beginning with the University’s Statement on Values and Commitments.

Admissions decisions are carried out in a transparent manner on the basis of criteria that are clearly and widely communicated; admissions standards and processes, including processes for appealing adverse admissions decisions, are clearly and publicly stated in numerous and prominent places.

The University publishes a Calendar (i.e., a catalogue) for current students and potential applicants that provides comprehensive information on all rules, regulations, program requirements, grading scales, fee schedules and other basic information concerning becoming or being a student at SFU. The Calendar also includes a complete list of all approved courses and programs current at the time of its publication.

SFU publishes annual budgets, financial plans and other financial reports that provide extensive and thorough data about current and anticipated financial circumstances, as well as the financial planning principles that guide the decisions expressed there. An extensive “risk register” is maintained, reviewed and updated at regular intervals to reflect changing conditions. As a public entity, the University is subject to annual audits by representatives of the province. Audit results, including findings and the management letter, are received and reviewed by the Board of Governors.

SFU accepts the NWCCU’s Standards and related policies, and agrees to comply with them. It accurately discloses to the Commission all information the Commission may require to carry out its evaluation and accreditation functions, and agrees that the Commission may make known the nature of any action, positive or negative, regarding SFU’s status with the Commission to any agency or to members of the public who so request.
Chapter 2, Standard 2.A
Governance

A post-secondary institution relies on three principal resources to fulfill its mission: people, space and money. Chapter 2 provides a high-level account of SFU’s resources and how they are managed to fulfill its mission.

To assist those unfamiliar with the Canadian post-secondary environment in understanding Simon Fraser University’s place in it, this Report begins with an outline of the national and provincial contexts within which SFU operates.

The Canadian Context

In Canada, the constitutional authority for education is vested in provincial and territorial governments. There is, therefore, no Canadian equivalent to the US Department of Education. Each province and territory establishes laws to govern the operation of its post-secondary institutions.

Canada’s system of higher education has been predominantly a public one, and public institutions remain by far the principal providers of university education. Separate legislation and mechanisms have been established in some provinces to govern the operations of private and out-of-province universities and colleges, leading to provincial differences in the post-secondary education environment.

Canada’s post-secondary landscape is composed primarily of universities and colleges. Universities typically offer four-year undergraduate degrees and, in most cases, master’s and doctoral degrees in the arts, sciences and professions. In BC, the 1960s saw significant growth of colleges and technical institutes offering university transfer courses and two-year programs in the technical and trades fields and in the social sciences. Over the past decade, the demand for increased access to post-secondary education has been met in part by elevating some colleges to degree granting institutions. In BC, the former “university colleges” have been designated teaching intensive universities (TIU). The traditional universities, now designated as “research intensive,” are distinguished from the TIUs by their much greater research orientation and a corollary requirement for continuing faculty in most disciplines to hold doctoral degrees.

Quality assurance in the absence of Accreditation

Canada has no national system of institutional accreditation. Instead, Canadian universities derive their authority from provincial legislation. Historically, the appropriate provincial charter plus membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) served in lieu of institutional accreditation. As a result of their long-standing commitment to work within a common framework of standards across provincial jurisdictions, Canadian universities have developed a shared understanding of the value of each other’s credentials. The AUCC also provides the mechanism for inter-provincial co-ordination of inter-university transfer credit and collectively advocates for its member institutions with government.

Canada’s provincial and territorial governments also use legislation, to varying degrees, to establish, govern, recognize and ensure the quality of post-secondary education. Under specific legislation,
programs and their standards may either be established by government or require government approval.

Each Canadian university is autonomous in academic matters, and robust institutional quality assurance policies and processes are the foundation of the Canadian quality assurance regime. Universities use self-assessment methods, usually involving external academic expertise, to conduct reviews of the quality of the programs they offer. In some jurisdictions, the results of institutional reviews may be considered in determining eligibility for public funding.

Despite a common institutional framework, differences exist among universities, differences primarily manifested in the programs they offer, the number of students they serve, and the scope and size of their external research grants. In 1990 the Canadian Maclean’s magazine recognized the potential market for a Canadian version of the US News and World Report post-secondary rankings and created its own system for ranking Canadian institutions.

Maclean’s groups Canadian institutions into three major categories using a matrix that has since become a conventional means to simplify the complex post-secondary marketplace. These are: “Medical-Doctoral” (universities with a broad range of PhD programs and research, as well as medical schools); “Comprehensive” (universities with a wide range of programs at the graduate and undergraduate level, including professional degrees, and significant research activity); and “Primarily Undergraduate” (universities that are undergraduate-focused, and have relatively few graduate programs).

**Figure 2.1: SFU’s ranking among Canadian comprehensive universities (Maclean’s magazine), 1992-2010**

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<th>Second place</th>
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<td>1992</td>
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Source: Maclean’s magazine
Simon Fraser University is considered one of Canada’s twelve “Comprehensive” universities based on its combination of research intensity and its broad offering of undergraduate programs and has regularly ranked among the top four such universities in Canada. For the eighth time in 20 years, Maclean’s ranked SFU first among Comprehensive universities in 2010.¹

**British Columbia**

In British Columbia, the *University Act*² and the *Degree Authorization Act*³ ensure that provincially-chartered universities and approved degree programs have an approved, clearly articulated and published mission statement reflecting goals that are appropriate to an academic institution of high standard; and appropriate policies and processes concerning academic integrity and standards, including the admission and recruitment of students and the evaluation and awarding of academic credit.⁴ Relevant policies include quality assurance processes such as external review procedures for new and existing institutions and programs.

Programs are monitored by the province to the extent that the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED) approves new programs. In addition to quality assurance and governance, Ministry approvals for proposed new programs also consider the adequacy of a public institution’s resources to offer the program, anticipated student demand for the program, and the efficiency of program delivery across BC’s institutions.

**Post-secondary institutions in British Columbia**

British Columbia has 25 publicly funded post-secondary institutions, including 11 universities, 11 colleges and three institutes, with all receiving provincial funding through AVED.

The research-intensive universities, of which SFU is one, offer an array of undergraduate degree programs and a range of programs at the graduate level. The teaching-intensive universities offer a narrower range of undergraduate degree programs, as well as courses and programs in trades, vocational and career technical studies leading to certificates and diplomas, and developmental programs that prepare adult learners for post-secondary studies. A few offer largely graduate and applied programs.

Colleges offer developmental programs that prepare adult learners for post-secondary studies, as well as courses and programs in trades, vocational, career technical and academic studies leading to certificates, diplomas, associate degrees and applied degrees. Transfer credit for college level work is assessed for all BC post-secondary institutions through the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT).⁵

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² [www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96468_01](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96468_01)

³ [www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_02024_01](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_02024_01)

⁴ [www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/documents/exempt_status.pdf](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization/documents/exempt_status.pdf)

⁵ Transfer credit is discussed in the Student Resources section.
Institutes are organized according to career, vocational and technical specialties, covering a variety of occupations. They may offer credentials from certificates to degrees.  

A number of private colleges, primarily with offerings in English as an Additional Language education, operate within BC, and four private universities have been granted approval to award degrees by the province.

The *University Act* (RSBC 1996 c468)

In 1963 British Columbia’s *University Act* (the “Act”) created SFU and prescribed its governance system, which is “composed of a chancellor, a convocation, a board, a senate and faculties.” The Board of Governors (the “Board”) and the Senate are the principal governing bodies, with the Act defining the scope and limits of each one’s authority, membership and responsibilities. Amendments to the Act have not significantly altered either the structure or roles of these bodies.

The respective roles of the Board and Senate are well understood and extensively communicated within the University. All policies and procedures relating to their operations are published on the University website, and meetings are held regularly according to schedules published months in advance. Senate and Board agendas are published and circulated broadly, and meetings are open to the public except where law, regulation or policy requires that matters under consideration be addressed in camera.

Representation of the views of faculty, students and staff on SFU’s Board is provided for in the Act.

In 2011, SFU’s Board comprises 15 members: the chancellor; the president; two faculty members elected by the faculty members; eight persons appointed by BC’s Lieutenant Governor in Council (two of whom are to be appointed from among persons nominated by the alumni association); two students elected from students who are members of an undergraduate or a graduate student society; and one person elected by and from the employees of the University who are not faculty members.

The Act also provides for the appointment of a President by the Board, requires that the University collect student society fees and remit them to the appropriate society, and mandates the appointment of an internal auditor with responsibility to report annually to the Board. At SFU, the Internal Auditor works directly with the Board’s Audit Committee.

**Funding**

The province can exercise significant influence on the institutions it funds by increasing, freezing or decreasing their operating grants, by regulating tuition and ancillary fees, by directing funding to targeted enrolments, and by funding or not funding the capital expansion and maintenance of existing infrastructure. BC’s government has employed each of these strategies in recent years to encourage its post-secondary institutions to address government priorities.

For many years, the proportion of students who graduated from BC’s high schools and progressed to post-secondary institutions was low relative to most other provinces. Funded spaces were limited and,
consequently, entry to BC’s public universities from high school required an entering GPA averaging B+, with admission to some programs even higher.\(^9\)

Recognizing that changing global conditions increasingly demand a population with advanced education and skills, the province introduced an “access agenda” to increase the number of funded spaces in BC’s post-secondary institutions by 25,000 FTEs by 2010 (starting from the base year 2003/04). The resulting increase in capacity led to a temporary decrease in the average GPA required for admission to a BC university. In 2003/04, for every 100 persons between the ages 18 – 24 in BC who wanted to attend a BC university, there were approximately 17 funded full-time seats. This number grew to approximately 28 funded full-time seats in 2009/10.

Figure 2.2: Average admission GPA of BC 12 “direct admits”

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU

The financial benefit suggested by the growing number of funded FTEs has been offset by a decline in the “constant-dollar” provincial funding per student from approximately $9750 per FTE in 2003/04 to $9540 in 2009/10. Ten years earlier (in 1993/04), provincial funding per FTE averaged around $11,180 in 2002 constant dollars.

At the same time the province was funding enrolment increases but decreasing per student funding, it imposed limits on how much an institution can charge for tuition and ancillary fees. In 2005, the provincial government instituted an inflationary cap of 2% on tuition and ancillary fee increases that continues today.

Prior to 1995/96, BC’s average tuition fees for undergraduate programs were slightly higher than in Ontario. Starting in 1996/97, tuition fees in Ontario took an upward turn resulting in a dramatic divergence in tuition fees between Ontario and BC. This divergence is primarily traceable to different provincial responses to a dramatic cut in transfer payments by the federal government. Ontario chose to reduce provincial grants to post-secondary education, but to allow tuition fee increases to offset the shortfall. BC maintained the level of provincial grants, but froze tuition fees. The tuition freeze was abolished in 2002/03 and reinstated as a 2% cap in 2005/06. In the chart below, this appears as a second, smaller divergence from tuition fee levels in Ontario. Tuition fees for residents in Quebec, which remain the lowest in Canada, are included for contrast.

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\(^9\) In BC high schools, the equivalence of letter grades to percentage marks is: A (100% to 86%); B (85% to 73%); C+ (72% to 67%); C (66% to 60%).
Public sector bargaining

As SFU is a public sector employer, the province also prescribes compensation for SFU’s employees under its Public Sector Employers Act (“PSEA”). Through this mechanism, government establishes the bargaining mandate and funds the settlements across the board. Salary increments other than across the board settlements (i.e., progress through the ranks) are not funded and impose a significant inflationary cost on institutions.

Reporting requirements

As the principal stakeholder in its public post-secondary education system, the province mandates some reporting requirements. Under the University Act, a university “must provide the minister with reports and any other information that the minister considers necessary to carry out the minister’s responsibilities in relation to the university.”

10 www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/freeside/00_96384_01
11 www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/freeside/00_96468_01#section49
These reporting requirements take several forms. SFU submits an externally audited annual FTE enrolment report and quarterly financial reports to AVED to meet its obligations under the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*.12 Reports are used by the government in the preparation of government’s key financial reports such as the budget and fiscal plan, quarterly report and the public accounts.

Every publicly funded post-secondary institution also must submit to government an annual *Institutional Accountability Plan* (IAP) that reports on a broad range of issues of interest to the Ministry. Included in the IAP is an Accountability Framework composed of a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) with targets each institution must meet. Examples of KPIs include FTE enrolments, completion rates, and student satisfaction with the quality of teaching. IAPs for all BC universities are posted on the AVED website.13

Government retains final approval of all new degree programs. Post-secondary institutions prepare proposals for new degree programs, which are formally reviewed and commented on by other institutions with similar programs. Considered are such issues as the institution’s existing ability to support the program (e.g., current expertise in related fields); demand within the provincial system for such programs (e.g., marketability); and whether similar programs already exist within the system (e.g., competitiveness).

Proposals for new degree programs from established universities go directly to the minister for approval following a 30-day Notice of Intent period during which the proposal is posted on the Ministry’s website. The Degree Quality Assessment Board reviews a proposal from a private institution or established university only when the minister has concerns about it and refers it to the board. A brief moratorium on applications for new degree programs ended in March 2011.

**Governing Board**

The principal elements of SFU governance are vested in its Board of Governors, its Senate, and in its institutional policies. The *University Act* prescribes that SFU shall have a Senate and Board of Governors, defines their roles and responsibilities and establishes their makeup. The governance structures established in legislation are reinforced and refined in University policy and procedural documents at all levels of the University.

Major strategies and significant decisions taken by governing bodies and senior officers are informed by the views of faculty, students, staff and other members of the community through a variety of means. The major structures and processes through which governance takes place are addressed in greater length and detail below.

Students are represented on both the Board of Governors and the Senate, and on their several committees.

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12 www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_00023_01
13 www.aved.gov.bc.ca/framework/accountability_plans.htm
The Chancellor

The position of Chancellor is created by the Act, which specifies that there must be a chancellor for each university, who is appointed by the board upon nomination by the alumni association and after consultation with the Senate. The Chancellor is appointed for a three-year term and is eligible for re-appointment, but cannot hold the office for more than six consecutive years. The Chancellor is a member of the University’s Senate and Board of Governors and must not be an employee of the University. As the ceremonial head of the institution, the Chancellor’s official duties include the conferring of degrees at convocation. Although the Chancellor’s position is one of influence within each university, under the Act Chancellors do not serve as chief administrative officers for their institutions.

The Board of Governors

By statute the Board of Governors is the University’s primary governing body. The powers of the Board of Governors are “without limitation to its broad and overarching power to manage, administer and control property revenue, business and affairs of the university.” Further, the Act states that a university’s Board of Governors is authorized “to do and perform all other matters and things that may be necessary or advisable for carrying out and advancing . . . the purposes of the university.”

SFU’s Board of Governors is comprised of 15 members, the majority of whom must have no employment, contractual or financial relationship with the University. Governance structures, including lines of authority, roles and responsibilities for principal governing bodies and their members, are clearly defined, broadly communicated and well understood.

The Act also sets terms of office for Board members and provides for their reappointment, re-election and removal from office. It identifies who is not eligible to serve on the Board and establishes how vacancies will be filled. A minimum number of meetings to be held each year is identified (4), the threshold for quorum is set (51% of members) and the Chair is given equal voting rights with other members.

With the approval of the Senate, the Board establishes such procedures for the selection of candidates for the President, Deans, Registrar and other senior academic administrators as the Board may designate. The Board also formally appoints these officials, as it does professors and other members of the teaching staff. The Board has the power to fix salaries and define the duties and tenure of office for its appointees, but members of the teaching staff may not be appointed, promoted or removed except upon the recommendation of the President.

Conducting an annual evaluation of the President is one of the most important responsibilities of the Board, and provides a formal opportunity for the Board and President to have a constructive discussion regarding the performance of the institution and the President’s leadership.

The Board receives from the President and adopts, with or without modification, the University’s operating and capital budgets; fixes the fees to be paid by students; administers funds, grants, fees, endowments and other assets; and, with the approval of Senate, determines the number of students who may be enrolled.
The Board Chair is elected by and from among its members. Although there is no statutory requirement that precludes the President or Chancellor from serving as Chair of the Board, unbroken practice at SFU is for the Chair to be chosen from among the Order in Council members appointed by the province.

The Board has created eight standing committees to which it delegates some authority to act on its behalf. A list of the Board’s standing committees and their individual terms of reference and memberships is published on the University’s Policy Gazette as well as on the Board’s website.

Policies and rules for the conduct of the Board are reviewed regularly and revised as needed. All policies specific to the Board have been created or revised since 2004 to maintain their currency and relevance.

Board meetings are typically held bi-monthly, with the vast majority of its business carried out in open meetings; under policy a schedule of meetings for the coming year must be published before the end of the current year. To ensure transparency in the Board’s operations, few items are addressed in camera; clear guidelines are set and published to identify what those may be.

New Board members are presented with a comprehensive binder of information to help them understand their roles and responsibilities and meet individually with the University Secretary to review key information.

Since 2006 the Board’s Governance Committee has carried out a bi-annual survey of members to hear their views on how the Board and its sub-committees are conducting their responsibilities and how the University is supporting members in their work. The survey is developed and distributed by the Governance Committee to all Board members, with responses submitted to the Board Chair.

All University policies come to the Board for approval or for information. Policies affecting the academic governance of the University are approved by Senate and are reviewed by the Board’s Academic Operations Committee to fulfill the requirements of the Act and to ensure Senate is maintained as the body with primary responsibility for the University’s academic governance.

Compensation for the University’s most senior officers, including the President, Vice Presidents and Deans, is determined by the Board’s Employee Relations and Compensation Committee. Compensation levels are based on the University’s ability to pay, on an assessment of the value of the work done, and on the importance of maintaining salaries competitive with the market for similar positions. Performance of senior officers is reviewed annually.

All Board-related University policies can be found in the University’s Policy Gazette.

The Senate
Under Part 7, section 37 of the Act, “the academic governance of the university is vested in the Senate.” Senate is concerned with all matters that bear on teaching and research in the University,
including the development of new initiatives, the formation of priorities and the consideration and approval of policies.

Among the many statutory powers of the Senate are: the ability to identify and conduct its business; to elect a vice-chair; to establish committees and delegate authority to them; to set the criteria for admission to and graduation from the university; to award scholarships, bursaries and academic prizes; to recommend to the Board the approval or concluding of academic programs; to set the terms of affiliation with other post-secondary (or secondary) institutions; and to establish a standing committee of final appeal for students in areas of academic discipline.

The President is Chair of Senate and is empowered and expected to ensure the orderly advancement of the legitimate business of the Senate. Each year Senate elects a Vice Chair, who sits on the Committee on Agenda and Rules (SCAR). Vice Chairs can serve no more than two consecutive terms. An orientation is held annually to introduce new members to Senate. Under the Act, the Registrar is the ex officio Secretary to the Senate, a task that includes managing its day-to-day operations and its constituent committees, and ensuring that all Senate-related records are maintained appropriately.

Membership in the Senate is defined in Section 35 (2) of the Act. As of May 2011, SFU’s Senate had 69 members, including elected and appointed members chosen from among faculty, students, staff, professors emeriti, convocation founders, faculty founders and the community.

Senate usually meets on the first working Monday of each month in open and closed sessions. Matters for decision are normally brought to Senate through the Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules (SCAR), which also makes a first determination on whether an item will be considered in open or closed session. It remains, however, within the power of Senate to move an item from open to closed session or vice versa based on a majority vote. Notices of meeting, agendas and all available supporting papers are circulated to members at least seven days before the meeting. Agendas for both open and closed sessions are published in advance.

The first meeting of the SFU Senate was held November 29, 1965. In 1967, SFU’s Senate demonstrated the University’s early and profound commitment to shared governance and full transparency by voting to admit three student representatives, making SFU the first Canadian university with formal student representation on its academic governing body. In another precedent-setting decision, Senate admitted observers to its open sessions beginning in 1968.

**Student Government**

In addition to participating on Senate, the Board of Governors and numerous ad hoc and other committees, students elect the members of governing bodies for their own societies. Undergraduate students belong to the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS), and graduate students to the Graduate Student Society at Simon Fraser University (GSS).

Graduate students were represented by the SFSS until 2008, when they voted to separate and form their own society. As a result of that separation, the University amended a number of its policies to ensure undergraduate and graduate student representation is maintained on relevant governing bodies and sub-committees.
Both the GSS and the SFSS are funded by student fees approved by their members through referenda. SFU, acting as mandated by the Act, collects those fees at the time of registration and remits them to the appropriate society. Funding from fees pays to operate student space and society businesses, support student clubs, sponsor student-centred events and advocate on behalf of student interests. Student fees passed by referendum also pay for extended health and dental plans purchased through the societies, and cover the costs of a universal transit pass (U-Pass) for SFU students to use the Lower Mainland’s Translink system.

Additional information on the governance and activities of the two student associations is available on the GSS\(^{19}\) and SFSS\(^{20}\) websites.

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**Leadership and Management**

**The President**

Leadership at SFU begins with the President. Under the Act, the University must have a President who “will generally supervise the academic work of the university.” Presidents are chosen under the terms set out in policy.\(^{21}\) Searches are carried out by a hiring committee with broad representation from all levels of the University. Faculty, students and staff elected by their several constituencies must be among the committee members. The recommendation of the search committee is subject to approval by the Board.

The President is Chair of Senate and remains accountable to the Board. The Act grants the President the power to: recommend appointments, promotions and removal of members of the teaching and administrative staffs and the officers and employees of the University; summon meetings of a Faculty when the President considers it necessary or advisable to do so, and at his or her discretion to convene joint meetings of all or any of the Faculties; authorize lectures and instruction in any Faculty to be given by persons other than the appointed members of the teaching staff; and establish any committees she or he may consider necessary or advisable.

Timely leadership and comprehensive attention to institutional issues are achieved through weekly meetings of the President with the Vice and Associate Vice Presidents, and through monthly meetings with the Deans.

Annual performance reviews for the President and other senior executives are required under the University’s policy on Executive Compensation,\(^{22}\) which sets the terms and conditions for performance reviews and salary advancement. The Board’s Employee Relations and Compensation Committee is responsible for reviewing the President’s performance annually. The annual review of the President’s performance by the Board provides a formal opportunity for dialogue between the President and the Board around the President’s goals, objectives and competencies, as well as the University’s performance under the President’s leadership.

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19  [www.sfugradssociety.ca/News/News.html](http://www.sfugradssociety.ca/News/News.html)
20  [www.sfss.ca](http://www.sfss.ca)
21  [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-06.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-06.html)
22  [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-08.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-08.html)
The President is supported by a complement of senior academic and administrative executive officers chosen by search committees with broad representation from the University community and appointed by the Board of Governors as required by the Act and under processes set out in the University’s policies. Similar representation is guaranteed by University policies in the appointments of other senior administrative and academic positions.

The Vice Presidents

The number of senior administrative officers has increased over time to match the University’s growth and is considered appropriate for the size and complexity of the institution and is comparable to the administrative structure of other Canadian comprehensive universities. The makeup of the senior administration also reflects the University’s commitment to its core themes, each of which is represented at the Vice Presidential level.

Figure 2.5: Growth of senior administration by year, 1965 to 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>1965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, Academic</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, Finance and Administration</td>
<td>1968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Vice President, Academic</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, Advancement and Alumni Engagement</td>
<td>1981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, Research</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Vice President, Finance and Administration</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, External Relations</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Vice President, Students</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President, Legal Affairs</td>
<td>2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Vice President, Research</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vice Presidents are responsible for exercising leadership by formulating, in consultation with their communities, strategic goals appropriate to their areas, and with overseeing their implementation. In larger portfolios, the Vice Presidents are supported by Associate Vice Presidents.

Performance goals for Vice Presidents are set by the President and the Board in consultation with individual Vice Presidents. Executive compensation reflects a measurement of job worth based on a composite of the skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions required to perform the work. Other than general salary increases, adjustments to senior administrative compensation are based on clearly defined individual and organizational goals that are reviewed annually.

Academic Leadership

Academic leadership comes from the Vice President, Academic (VPA), assisted by the AVP, Academic, the Vice President, Research (VPR), and the eleven academic Deans (including the Deans of the eight Faculties, Graduate Studies, the Library and Lifelong Learning), and by the chairs and directors of the academic departments and schools.

23 GP29 (Search Committees for Vice Presidents and Associate Vice Presidents) and the A13 series of policies (for Deans, Chairs and directors of academic units). www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp29.html and www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic.html
The VPA’s primary objectives are to provide an outstanding education for SFU students and a productive research environment for faculty by: attracting and supporting the best students; recruiting and retaining as faculty outstanding teachers and researchers; supporting excellence and innovation in academic programs; promoting excellence in research, scholarship and teaching; and responding to community needs for education and research.

Faculty Deans chair their Faculties and report to the VPA. Powers and duties of the Faculty Deans are established by the University Act and include the authority:

- to make rules governing its proceedings, including the determining of the quorum necessary for the transaction of business;
- to provide for student representation in the meetings and proceedings of the Faculty;
- subject to this Act and to the approval of the Senate, to make rules for the government, direction and management of the Faculty and its affairs and business;
- to determine, subject to the approval of the Senate, the courses of instruction in the Faculty;
- subject to an order of the President to the contrary, to prohibit lecturing and teaching in the Faculty by persons other than appointed members of the teaching staff of the Faculty and persons authorized by the Faculty, and to prevent lecturing or teaching so prohibited;
- subject to the approval of the Senate, to appoint for the examinations in each Faculty examiners, who, subject to an appeal to the Senate, must conduct examinations and determine the results;
- to deal with and, subject to an appeal to the Senate, to decide on all applications and memorials by students and others in connection with their respective Faculties;
- generally, to deal with all matters assigned to it by the Board or the Senate.24

Consistent with the Act, SFU’s policy on the Responsibilities of Deans of Faculties clarifies how decanal roles and responsibilities will be carried out within the University.25

At SFU some Faculties are divided into smaller units, referred to as departments (led by a chair) or schools (led by a director). “School” is generally used to distinguish units that have a more professional focus. Departments and schools are considered to be equivalent for administrative purposes. Throughout this Report, references to departments and chairs should be understood also to apply to schools and directors. The Faculties of Education and Health Sciences and the Beedie School of Business employ non-departmental structures.

Chairs of departments are faculty members with the respect and confidence of the members of their departments and the administrative skill and the initiative to guide and manage their department. During their tenure in office, Chairs must make the interests of the department their paramount concern. Chairs are nominated by departmental selection committees and ratified by a majority vote of the faculty in their department.26 They are appointed for their dedication to teaching, research and service; for their intellectual, professional and administrative abilities; and for their leadership skills. Chairs are expected to ensure that the decision-making process includes full discussion with interested stakeholders.

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24 www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96468_01#part8
25 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a13-06.html
26 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a13-02.html
persons and that all reasonable attempts are made to reconcile differing viewpoints. Chairs and directors report to the Dean of their Faculty.

The success of the University’s academic mission can be achieved only with the assistance of its administrative and support staff, who conduct the day-to-day management and maintenance of the University’s physical campuses and electronic environments. Leadership is provided at all levels of the institution, with the structure of the SFU’s senior administrative and senior academic structures\(^\text{27}\) represented in organizational charts posted on the University’s website.

**Institutional Integrity**

SFU defines and preserves its institutional integrity using a number of institutional policy documents and processes. SFU’s overarching “Statement on Values and Commitments”\(^\text{28}\) was approved by the Senate and Board of Governors in spring 2000. It articulates the University’s commitment to abide by the highest standards in carrying out its mandates in teaching, research and community service, and expresses the University’s determination to contribute to the building of a robust and ethical society. These values and commitments profoundly inform SFU’s activities and shape its relationships with its stakeholders, including the general public and the members of its internal community. The Statement on Values and Commitments is now incorporated into SFU’s mission statement.

**Academic Freedom**

Simon Fraser University is a secular, publicly-assisted institution and imposes no particular social or religious philosophy on its constituents. The position of the University is that the practice of academic freedom is a fundamental pre-condition for the advancement of knowledge.

Although the principle of academic freedom is expressed and defined in many of the SFU’s key documents, it is most fully articulated in the University’s Framework Agreement with the Faculty Association\(^\text{29}\) and in the Faculty Code of Ethics.\(^\text{30}\)

**Under the Framework Agreement:**

Academic freedom is the freedom to examine, question, teach and learn, and it involves the right to investigate, speculate and comment without reference to prescribed doctrine, as well as the right to criticize the University, Faculty Association and society at large. Specifically, academic freedom ensures:

- \(a\) freedom in the conduct of teaching;
- \(b\) freedom in undertaking research and publishing or making public the results thereof;
- \(c\) freedom from institutional censorship.

Academic staff shall not be hindered or impeded in any way by the University or the Faculty Association from exercising their legal rights as citizens, nor shall they suffer any penalties.

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27 Organization charts for SFU’s senior administrative structure and senior academic administrative structure can be found at www.sfu.ca/press/administration.html
28 www.sfu.ca/pres/vandc.html
29 www.sfufa.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=category&sectionid=4&id=14&Itemid=27
30 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a30-01.html
because of the exercise of such rights. The parties agree that they will not infringe or abridge the academic freedom of any member of the academic community. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base research and teaching on an honest search for knowledge.

As part of their teaching activities, teachers are entitled to conduct frank discussion of potentially controversial matters which are related to their subjects. This freedom of expression shall be based on mutual respect for the opinions of other members of the academic community.

Librarians have a duty to promote and maintain intellectual freedom. They have a responsibility to protect academic freedom and are entitled to full protection of their own academic freedom. This includes the right to express their academic judgment in the development of the Library collection within the context of Article 1.3.2 and to make the collection accessible to all users in accordance with the University Library policies, even if the materials concerned are considered controversial.31

Many other University policies express the centrality of academic freedom to SFU’s institutional culture. Among them are: Renewal, Tenure and Promotion (A 11.05);32 International Activities (GP 23);33 Intellectual Property (R 30.03);34 and Integrity in Research and Misconduct in Research (R 60.01).35

The Faculty Code of Ethics speaks directly to the complex duties and responsibilities of academic staff as teachers, scholars, colleagues, and as members of both the SFU and the larger communities beyond. In accepting a University appointment, faculty members assume obligations to the University in addition to their primary duties as teachers and scholars. They have the responsibility to participate in the life of the University, in its governance and administration through membership on committees and organizations at Board, Senate, Faculty and department levels, provided that this participation is consistent with the discharge of their primary responsibilities and with their own abilities.36

These are a few of the policies that emphasize SFU’s commitment to both the freedom and the responsibility to pursue intellectual inquiry and the development of knowledge in all its activities.

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**University Policies**

SFU communicates many of its key institutional decisions in policy. Policies define how the institution’s business will be carried out. They state a decision, establish the context or provide a rationale for it, prescribe how it will be implemented, define roles and responsibilities, specify the scope of application, and otherwise provide basic guidance to community members on the policy’s relevance and application.

31 www.sfufa.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=category&sectionid=4&id=14&Itemid=27
32 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a11-05.html
33 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp23.html
34 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r30-03.html
35 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r60-01.html
36 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a30-01.html
Policies also elaborate or translate legislation and regulation established by external governing bodies into the university context. Examples of policies based on government regulation include Human Rights,37 Access to Information and Protection of Privacy38 and Radiological Safety.39

SFU has over 220 institutional policies that provide a robust framework that supports and guides institutional activities at all levels. All policies are posted on the University’s website, where they are grouped both by broad descriptor (e.g., research, information, Board, etc.) and by functional categories based on the University’s file classification plan (e.g., committees, administration, facilities, etc.). All policies may be viewed online or downloaded as pdf files.

When substantive changes to a policy are considered, members of the University community are offered an opportunity to comment on drafts prior to their approval. Announcements to faculty, staff and students outline the nature of proposed changes or the intention of the proposed policy, and invite comment on the draft, which is posted on the “Draft Policies” website.40 Comments are reviewed and drafts are amended as useful and appropriate. Final drafts are forwarded to Senate and the Board for information and/or approval.

Some policies are not subject to the same broad consultation processes. For instance, changes to policy imposed by changing regulations (e.g., the handling of hazardous materials or the sale of alcohol or tobacco) would be widely communicated for educational reasons, but not significantly affected by public comment.

Many policies articulate the formal results of negotiations between the University and an employee group; for these, the process of negotiation and approval by the employee group constitutes the equivalent of “consultation.” Among these are some of the A policies (Faculty Association), the AD9s (excluded staff) and the AD10s (non-excluded administrative and professional staff).

Policies governing employment and working conditions at SFU are discussed in the Human Resources section.

**Intellectual Property**

Among the primary fruits of academic freedom are the creation and dissemination of intellectual property. Until 2004, SFU addressed what is now known as “intellectual property” under separate policies on copyright41 and patents.42 These have since been superseded by a broader policy on intellectual property.43 Under its definition, intellectual property is defined as

the result of intellectual or artistic activity, created by a University Member in a scholarly, professional or student capacity, that can be owned by a person. Specifically, this includes inventions, publications (including scholarly publications), educational materials, computer

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37 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp18.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp18.html)
38 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/information/I10-04.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/information/I10-04.html)
39 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r20-04.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r20-04.html)
40 [www.sfu.ca/policies/draft.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/draft.html)
41 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r30-01.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r30-01.html)
42 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r30-02.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r30-02.html)
43 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r30-03.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r30-03.html)
software, works of art, industrial and artistic designs, as well as other intellectual property
rights (creations) that can be protected under legislation including, but not limited to patent,
copyright or trade-mark, integrated topography, industrial design laws, and/or through a
trade secret.

BC’s University Act gives the University the power to require, as a term of employment or assistance,
that a person assign to the Board of Governors “an interest in an invention or an interest in a patent,
copyright, trade mark, trade name or other proprietary right resulting from an invention made by
that person using the facilities, equipment or financial aid provided by the Board, or made by that
person while acting within the scope of the person’s duties or employment, or resulting from or in
connection with the person’s duties or employment as an officer or employee of the university.” 44

Canada’s Copyright Act 45 provides for the ownership of copyright to be vested in the employer
when works are created in the course of employment, except where agreement to the contrary
exists. However, the University’s commitment to the open exchange of ideas and the publication,
dissemination and communication of the results of scholarly activity is best served by allowing
University members who create intellectual property to own the products of their intellectual efforts
and to be free to publish those products without commercial intent, to pursue commercialization
with the assistance of the University, or to pursue commercialization of that property in their own
right.

Because of the University’s unique role in the creation and dissemination of knowledge, products of
intellectual endeavour should be used for the greatest possible public benefit. Intellectual property
produced solely in anticipation of profit is incompatible with university scholarly and research activity.

The University retains a royalty-free perpetual right to use for scholarly, academic and other non-
commercial purposes all intellectual property created through the use of University resources. Any
such property created through using University resources and then commercially exploited is subject
to the University exercising its right to share in the revenue earned.

**Academic Honesty**

All members of the University share responsibility for the maintenance of academic standards
and the reputation of the University. Academic honesty is a cornerstone of the development and
acquisition of knowledge and a condition of continued membership in the University community.
SFU prominently addresses its expectations for academic honesty in various policies as they relate to
different University constituencies.

The fundamental importance of carrying out the University’s business with honesty and integrity is
restated with specific application to different areas of institutional activity in policies on Integrity in
Research and Misconduct in Research, 46 Fair Use of Information and Communications Technology, 47

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44 www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96468_01#section27
45 laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C%2D42/
46 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/research/r60-01.html
47 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp24.html
the Code of Faculty Ethics, Conflicts of Interest, Internal Audit, Purchasing and Board Guidelines, and in the Code of Student Conduct.

Student Conduct
The University is committed to creating a scholarly community characterized by civility, diversity, free inquiry, mutual respect and individual safety. The Code of Student Conduct defines students’ basic responsibilities as members of SFU’s academic community, clarifies what constitutes inappropriate student behaviour, and sets out procedures and penalties that may be invoked in response to unacceptable behavior. The Code is not construed to unreasonably prohibit peaceful assemblies, demonstrations or free speech.

Appeal procedures exist for academic discipline, student misconduct, tuition refunds, withdrawal for extenuating circumstances, reconsideration of grades, admissions, the determination of transfer credit and administrative errors. These policies are all posted on the University Policies page in the University Calendar or on the Student Services home page. All appeals are heard before University tribunals, boards or committees composed of faculty, staff and/or students as appropriate, and all are governed by the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

Human Rights
The University is committed to providing a working and learning environment that allows for the full and free participation of all members of the University community. Discrimination undermines these objectives, violates the fundamental rights, personal dignity and integrity of individuals or groups, and may require remedial action by the University.

SFU has a director of human rights and equity who offers professional guidance and consultation to SFU employees and students on matters covered under human rights policy and law. As a provider of public education, SFU falls under the jurisdiction of provincial human rights legislation. The Human Rights office (HRO) responds to the University’s obligations under the Human Rights Code of British Columbia to prevent discrimination, to provide procedures to handle complaints, to resolve problems, to conduct investigations and to provide remedies when a violation of the policy occurs. SFU communicates its intentions to comply with these obligations in its own policy on Human Rights.

The HRO’s director is the senior University resource person on human rights and related issues; the director provides advice congruent with best legal practice, works with University managers to ensure
fair and equitable treatment of all members of the community, and maintains effective relationships with unions, employee and student groups. The HRO publishes an annual report.\textsuperscript{58}

Because the nature of the HRO is to respond to requests for service, its success is measured in part by quantifying the rates at which issues are reported to it and how it responds. The approximate population of SFU (students, faculty and staff) is almost 40,000. In 2010, the HRO dealt with 200 cases of discrimination and harassment; most of these were situations in which University members sought advice about human rights and related matters. By any standard, this speaks well of SFU’s success in maintaining an equitable, open environment in which human dignity is valued.

The director also administers University policies on Employment Equity\textsuperscript{59} and Disability Accommodation,\textsuperscript{60} and assesses and approves applications for disability accommodation submitted by employees actively involved in the workplace at the time of submission.

**Employment Equity**

The goal of employment equity at Simon Fraser University is to ensure no individual is denied access to employment opportunities for reasons unrelated to their ability or qualifications. The four designated groups under the Employment Equity program are women, visible minorities, persons with disabilities, and persons of Aboriginal ancestry. Consistent with this principle, the University advances the interests of underrepresented members of the workforce, ensures that equal opportunity is afforded to all who seek employment at the University, and treats all employees equitably. To this end, SFU works to identify and eliminate discriminatory barriers that interfere with employment opportunities in all jobs and at all levels. Both current and prospective employees receive equitable treatment in hiring, training and promotion.

Responsibilities under the Employment Equity Policy\textsuperscript{61} include maintaining an Employment Equity program and reporting to the federal government, when required, on the degree to which the four designated groups are represented in the University’s workforce. By regulation, membership in the designated groups must be self-declared, which leads to underreporting in most categories.

**Ombudsperson**

SFU’s first Ombuds office was established 40 years ago, making it one of the first ombuds offices at a Canadian university. In 2008, the University joined with the undergraduate and graduate student societies to fund the Ombuds office. Although the office is mandated to provide services primarily to students, other members of the University community may make use of it.

The Ombudsperson provides an independent, impartial and confidential resource for undergraduate and graduate students (current, former or prospective) seeking impartial and confidential advice to help them understand the University’s sometimes-complex processes. The office provides information and guidance on University regulations, policies and procedures, and on students’ rights and responsibilities in navigating them. The office may, where appropriate, recommend changes to

\textsuperscript{58} www.sfu.ca/humanrights.html  
\textsuperscript{59} www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp19.html  
\textsuperscript{60} www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp40.html  
\textsuperscript{61} www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp19.html
University policies and procedures and promote discussion on institution-wide concerns. When making recommendations, the role of the office is to advocate for fairness.

The Ombudsperson does not act as student advocate in the context of appeal hearings, but may help students in need to identify potential advocates. Most often, the Ombudsperson helps students become their own advocates by addressing issues constructively. All dealings with the office are deemed to be confidential, and may only be revealed on a “need to know” basis with the written consent of the complainant.

**Conflicts of Interest**

SFU encourages its faculty, staff and students to be broadly involved in professional interests and activities compatible with the University’s mission to advance knowledge. On occasion, the best interests of the University and the personal interests of its members may conflict, or may be perceived to conflict.

To maintain public and professional trust and confidence, the University must deal with real or perceived conflicts of interest in a fair, open, consistent and practical way. Rather than taking a rigid approach, the University prefers to assess potential conflicts of interest on an individual basis and, where appropriate, to manage conflict. To that end, SFU’s primary Conflict of Interest policy creates a mechanism that allows the University and its external constituencies to be confident decisions and actions are not being inappropriately influenced by private interests. At the heart of the policy is the duty of each member to assess their own activities and to report any real or potential conflicts of interest. A conflict will be allowed only when it can be managed in a way that protects and serves the interests, integrity and reputation of the University, as well as its legal and contractual obligations, and will stand the test of reasonable and independent scrutiny. Non-compliance with the policy and its procedures constitutes misconduct.

Other SFU policies and agreements address conflicts of interest within narrower spheres of activity. These include conflicts of interest for members of the Board of Governors, for managing requests for information, for managing investments and in research.

Assessing conflict requires the collection, use, disclosure and retention of personal information as defined in BC’s *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. In all such assessments, the University will be guided by this Act.

**Contracting of International Recruiting**

Approximately 35–40 students in for-credit programs, and more than 100 non-credit students each semester, come to SFU from nine international recruiting agencies retained by the University. The Agreement between SFU and each Agency establishes explicit and detailed criteria regarding the task to be performed and the manner in which it must be performed. Agents also provide market
intelligence about student recruiting in their identified territories. The foremost requirement of these agreements is that agencies must “uphold the high reputation of SFU and of the Canadian international education sector.” Marketing must be performed “with integrity and accuracy, recruiting students in an honest, ethical and responsible manner . . . in accordance with applicable legislation, and the policies, procedures and requirements of SFU.”

Agents are permitted to undertake only activities expressly authorized by SFU. Ongoing training and up-to-date information are provided by SFU to agency staff in relevant areas, and compliance is monitored through visits and regular meetings with agencies and by monitoring feedback from agency clients. Agreements are renewed on an annual basis subject to a review process.

**Fraser International College**

SFU has a contractual partnership with a for-profit company, Navitas Education Ltd., to operate a small private college, Fraser International College (FIC), for international students on SFU’s Burnaby campus. FIC is an independent business entity operating at arm’s length from SFU. FIC is co-branded with SFU for the purposes of student recruitment, charges the same international student tuition rate, and offers a selection of SFU-specific lower-division courses taught by qualified instructors hired by the College. It also offers English language support classes and other supplemental instruction.

Students at FIC who complete a minimum of 30 pre-approved, university-level credits (10 courses) at specified cumulative grade point (CGPA) levels are offered a guarantee of admission to SFU in one of the following programs: Arts and Social Sciences, Business, Computing Science or Engineering Science.

To provide SFU with assurance regarding the quality of teaching at FIC and confidence in the transferability of its courses toward SFU degrees, oversight of the curriculum and pedagogy is provided through the following mechanisms:

- **SFU faculty** provide academic oversight of FIC course offerings and advise on the qualifications appropriate for FIC instructors, many of whom also teach or study at SFU;
- **the SFU/FIC Academic Advisory Committee**, whose terms of reference include oversight of issues related to the partnership and mechanisms for resolution of outstanding and arising issues;
- **annual reports to SFU’s Senate monitor FIC’s academic operations and the academic achievement of students transferring from it to SFU**; and
- **SFU’s director of university curriculum and institutional liaison in the Vice President, Academic’s Office works closely with FIC’s director and principal to oversee and facilitate SFU’s interests and responsibilities.**

When Senate approved the contractual relationship with FIC in March 2006, it stipulated that the Vice President, Academic would report to Senate by June 2010, with a recommendation on whether the agreement should be renewed in March 2011.

In 2009 it was decided that an independent review of the SFU-FIC relationship would be more appropriate, and the terms of reference and process for the external review were submitted and
approved by Senate. A self-study document, a review team’s report, and the Vice President, Academic’s response to the recommendations of the external review were prepared and submitted to Senate in May 2010. Based on the results of that Review, Senate approved the continuation of the relationship between SFU and FIC.

Although FIC’s programs are structured to match SFU’s curriculum and facilitate the transfer of international students to SFU from FIC, FIC students are not required to transfer to SFU and may seek admission to any other post-secondary institution.

Communications

SFU acts on the principle that transparency and accountability are essential qualities for a public post-secondary institution. To that end, SFU publishes extensive information about itself. Much information remains available in print form, but SFU increasingly uses the Internet to make key information about itself and its operations widely available.

Transparency begins with governance, and SFU widely publishes all of its major planning documents. Plans include current and recent Three-Year Academic Plans, Strategic Research Plans, the President’s Agenda and University Budgets. Many of these documents, or those that contributed to them, are also available on various Faculty and departmental websites.

SFU also publishes meeting schedules, agendas, minutes and summaries for all open Board and Senate meetings. Documents are labelled intuitively and in ways intended to make them easy to identify and access. In maintaining transparency and communicating its activities, SFU’s use of the Internet is so extensive that it ranked 2nd among Canadian universities, 31st in North America, and 37th in the world in the 2011 Webometrics Ranking of World Universities.

For those seeking statistical information about SFU, the University’s office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) has a website that provides detailed statistics on activities ranging from student surveys to the University’s use of physical space. IRP participates in the College Board’s Common Data Set, with SFU’s submission posted for public review.

For SFU students, SFU’s most important document is its academic Calendar (usually referred to in the USA as a “catalogue”). The Calendar provides extensive detail for students on their relationship with the University, including admissions criteria, fee schedules, transfer credit, calculation of grade point averages and other basic elements of the contractual relationship between SFU and its students.

69  www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans/current_three_yearplans.html
70  www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/message.html
71  www.sfu.ca/pres/president/agenda1011.html
72  www.lidc.sfu.ca/finance/budget
73  www.sfu.ca/bog for the Board of Governors, www.sfu.ca/senate for Senate
74  www.webometrics.info/details.asp?univ=sfu.ca
75  www.sfu.ca/irp
76  www.sfu.ca/irp/cdataset.html
77  students.sfu.ca/calendar
The Calendar also includes listings of all approved degree programs; requirements for degree, diploma and certificate completion; an outline of financial aid available through University- and privately-funded scholarships, awards and bursaries; and a catalogue of all approved for-credit courses. Non-credit courses are offered by Continuing Studies in the Lifelong Learning unit78 and are not covered under the terms and conditions set out in the Calendar.

Students entering SFU are governed by the terms established in the Calendar under which they are admitted. For program requirements, students are governed by program requirements in effect at the time they are accepted into the program. Student Services also publishes an award-winning Viewbook79 for those considering whether to apply for admission to SFU, and maintains a website where prospective students can find additional information on all aspects of student life. Individual programs, departments and Faculties also offer a wealth of additional information in print and via their websites.

Public Affairs and Media Relations
Public Affairs and Media Relations (PAMR) brokers news and information about the University to media and the general public. As a major outreach activity, PAMR also maintains SFU’s “directory of experts,” a group of over 400 academic and administrative staff who provide expert opinion and commentary on subjects of public interest.80 PAMR also provides training to faculty and staff who have occasion to interact with media with workshops on how to do so.81

In print, PAMR publishes the bi-weekly Simon Fraser University News and the twice-annual alumni magazine aq. PAMR also manages SFU’s home page, websites for each SFU campus, and several other sites.

Accreditation Status and Reporting
Simon Fraser University is currently an Applicant for accreditation, with this Self Evaluation Report forming a part of its work toward achieving “Candidate” status. Because only one Canadian university (Alberta’s Athabasca University) is accredited in the USA, and one other is a Candidate (BC’s Capilano University), awareness of the accreditation process and its meaning remains limited within SFU and in the Canadian post-secondary community. The accreditation process now underway at SFU is consistently and clearly framed by the University within the context of its status as an Applicant, with Accreditation sought as the desired end-state.82

Functional responsibility to carry out the accreditation reporting process now resides within the portfolio of the Vice President, Academic (VPA), with oversight from a Steering Committee composed of the University’s President, Vice Presidents and Deans. Major changes involving academic areas of the University must be reviewed by the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP), chaired by the VPA. The current Accreditation Liaison Officer is the director, academic planning and budgeting, who participates in all major academic planning bodies.

78 www.sfu.ca/cstudies
79 students.sfu.ca/prospectiveundergrads.html
80 www.sfuexperts.ca/home.aspx
81 www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/accreditation.html
82 www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/accreditation.html
A written annual update of SFU’s progress regarding accreditation is made to the Board of Governors and forwarded to the University Senate for information. Regular progress reports are given to the Steering Committee and to chairs and directors of academic units.

The Vice President, Legal Affairs sits on the Steering Committee and monitors compliance with all accreditation reporting pertaining to collective bargaining and regulatory requirements.

Drafts of reports are reviewed by those responsible for the areas covered, by the responsible Vice President, and by the Steering Committee before being submitted to Senate and the Board. Links to the NWCCU Standards appear on SFU’s accreditation website,83 and periodic updates on progress are published to the community in Simon Fraser University News.
Chapter 2, Standard 2.B
Human Resources

SFU employs over 5000 continuing and temporary academic and non-academic staff who work at its three campuses and are represented by seven different employee groups. Over 2000 of these are academic staff whose tasks, depending on the nature of their appointments, may include teaching classes, leading or assisting with research, performing and creating art, advancing their disciplines and serving the University and its various communities.

Over 3000 non-academic staff provide support and services for SFU’s 54,000 credit and non-credit students and other members of the SFU community and its external constituencies. Academic staff are the heart of the University’s academic mission; administrative and support staff enable SFU to fulfill that mission by carrying out the complex and diverse activities that keep SFU’s physical campuses and its “cyber presence” working efficiently.

Academic and support staff are appointed on the basis of qualifications appropriate to and characteristic of each specific position, and through appointment processes established by University policy and the relevant collective agreements. Qualifications for academic positions are developed by departmental search committees with expertise in the field and are advertised as specified in policy. Advertisements for academic positions are vetted by Academic Relations before posting. Job descriptions for non-academic positions are created by their supervisors in consultation with experts in Human Resources, and are based on the skills, level of responsibility and experience deemed suitable for the position.

Positions to be filled are posted internally and advertised as widely as considered necessary to reach a suitably qualified pool of applicants; requirements to advertise for faculty appointments are established in policy. Position postings provide job title, a brief position description, qualifications, employee group, and deadline to apply; for non-academic positions, salary ranges are included in the posting. All non-teaching postings and the status of competitions are available on the Human Resources website. Faculty job openings are posted on websites for the Vice President, Academic and Academic Relations and are advertised nationally and internationally. Positions covered under the collective agreement with the TSSU are posted on the TSSU website.

Orientations are held for all new employees of SFU. New faculty are invited to an orientation organized annually by the Academic Relations office. Orientation introduces new faculty to SFU’s teaching and research programs, grants and resources; covers the terms of faculty employment at SFU; explains existing benefits and how to access them; provides an introduction to relevant policy requirements for contract renewal, tenure and promotion; and offers information on the University’s culture and other matters of interest.

All other new continuing employees, and temporary employees with appointments longer than three months, are invited to a comprehensive orientation session as soon as possible following their
appointments. New employee orientations are hosted by Human Resources and held monthly. Topics include an overview of salary and benefits, health and safety programs, emergency procedures, sustainability, and other key information on working conditions at SFU.

Policies and procedures directly related to the terms and conditions of employment with SFU are of two types: those that apply universally to all staff regardless of employee group, and those specific to an employee group and that result from a process of negotiation and collective bargaining. When serving as employees of the University, students have the same rights as employees who are not also students.

The fundamental principles of procedural fairness and natural justice underlie and inform institutional practices at all levels, and appeal processes exist and are clearly articulated wherever a decision may significantly impact the terms and conditions of employment of faculty, staff or students.

Although the University does not identify financial and institutional sustainability as a core theme for the purposes of this Self Evaluation, SFU recognizes these as enabling conditions for the successful achievement of its mission. To this end, SFU identifies recruiting and retaining the “best staff” as a core theme goal within the Academic Plan and the University Planning Framework. Being assessed by external parties as an excellent employer is an important indicator of the University's success in achieving this important goal. SFU’s selection as one of Canada’s Top 100 Employers in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 strongly demonstrates its positive qualities as an employer.89

Objectives related to SFU's Institutional Strength are discussed in greater detail in the Adaptation and Sustainability section of Chapter 5.

### Employee Groups

All Simon Fraser University employees belong to one of seven employee groups, five of which participate in collective bargaining. Bargaining groups include: the Faculty Association (SFUFA), the Teaching and Support Staff Union (TSSU), the Administrative and Professional Staff Association (APSA), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE Local 3338), and Polyparty, which collectively bargains on behalf of tradespeople belonging to several unions with small numbers at SFU.

A small group of “Excluded” staff do not bargain individually or as a group; their salaries tend to be based on settlements negotiated with APSA, and their terms of work are set out in the AD9 policies, which governed APSA members before being superseded by the AD10s.90 The senior administrative staff that includes the President, VPs, AVPs and Deans comprise the seventh group.

Continuing University employees who are not faculty members elect one staff representative to SFU’s Board of Governors. Their representative may be a member of APSA, CUPE, Polyparty or one of the Excluded staff. Non-faculty employees who are also students or alumni of the University are also eligible to be elected as a student or “convocation” member of the Senate.

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89 [www.eluta.ca/top-employer-sfu](http://www.eluta.ca/top-employer-sfu)
90 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative.html)
Faculty and other academic staff

SFU faculty are represented by SFUFA in negotiations on economic benefits and conditions of employment. Established in 1965 and formally incorporated in 1969, the Association is a registered non-profit society incorporated under the Society Act in British Columbia. While it acts as a bargaining unit for faculty members, it is not a certified trade union and is not governed by the Labour Relations Code of British Columbia. Academic staff represented by SFUFA include continuing and limited term faculty, librarians, laboratory instructors, sessional lecturers, visiting faculty, university research associates and retired faculty with post-retirement contracts.

Terms and conditions of employment for members of SFUFA are articulated in the Framework Agreement and the “academic” (“A”) policies. Because many involve contractual agreements, the A policies must be approved by SFU’s Board of Governors. In British Columbia, agreements with public sector employees involving remuneration also must be pre-approved by the Public Sector Employers’ Council (PSEC) in the Ministry of Public Safety and the Solicitor General.

Academic staff not represented by SFUFA belong to TSSU. Certified as a union in 1978, the TSSU represents teaching assistants (TAs), tutor markers (TMs), sessional instructors and language instructors at SFU. Since December 2004, it also represents staff of SFU’s English Language and Culture Program and its Interpretation and Translation Program. The Union functions as the sole bargaining agent for these employees during contract negotiations and represents any and all members in work-related issues. Approximately 1200 to 1600 TSSU members carry out academic work each semester, but are not counted among the continuing SFU workforce.

Simon Fraser employs more than 947 continuing faculty (CFL positions), 25 senior management and Deans, and a further 140 temporary faculty to achieve its educational objectives, provide oversight of its educational policies and ensure the quality and continuity of its academic programs. As of January 2011, the continuing complement of faculty was 315 professors, 293 Associate Professors, 206 Assistant Professors and 133 Instructors, Senior Lecturers, Lab Instructors and Lecturers. Among CFL faculty, on September 1, 2010, more than 91% had doctorates, with a further 7% holding a master’s as their highest degree.

Under University policy, the primary responsibilities of continuing tenure track and limited term research faculty include teaching, research and service to the community; the usual annual workload will include contributions in all three areas. Faculty are expected to maintain a program of research, scholarship or artistic creation, share in the instructional workload of their academic unit, contribute to University governance and their profession, and further University relations with the community. Research and teaching take precedence.

For continuing and limited term faculty, teaching and its associated duties are the primary obligation, although faculty are expected to stay current in their discipline. A normal annual teaching load for a full-time lecturer appointment is twice that of tenure track faculty. Workload provisions are consistent with those at other research universities across Canada.

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91 www.bclaws.ca/EPILibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96433_01
92 www.sfua.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=category&sectionid=4&id=14&Itemid=27
93 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a30-03.html
SFU offers a number of opportunities and services for faculty members to assist them to effectively fulfill their roles and responsibilities. New tenure track faculty are eligible for President’s Research Start-up Grants and other grants to kick-start their research. Tenured faculty have study leave opportunities to increase their facility as scholars and teachers. Study leaves provide an extended period to focus on scholarly activity uninterrupted by teaching or service duties. Teaching faculty also have study leave opportunities in order to complete a project or a course of study to enhance their teaching.

Eligibility criteria for study leave and study leave options (including provisions for salary and length of study leave) are clearly set out in University policy94 and require recipients to have satisfactory salary reviews and study leave proposals. Opportunities and support for professional growth and development in teaching are also available through the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC). TLC’s general and discipline-specific approaches are designed to: foster a positive community and culture around teaching and learning through cross-functional collaboration; support the creation and implementation of effective teaching and learning practices; encourage and support scholarly approaches to teaching; and provide creative services that enhance teaching and learning experiences. Professional development is further encouraged by the generous annual Professional Development Reimbursement faculty receive, and through tuition waivers available for University courses and programs.

University and departmental criteria for contract renewal, tenure, promotion and salary review are communicated to new faculty when appointed. Faculty are evaluated when they are up for contract renewal, tenure and/or promotion, and biennially for salary review, when they can receive career progress and merit salary increases. The general criteria by which faculty are evaluated are specified in University policy95 and must include teaching effectiveness, scholarly activity and service to the University. In addition to the University’s criteria, each academic unit has its own departmental criteria, standards and methods of assessment ratified by the department, approved by its Dean and vetted by the Vice President, Academic. Departmental criteria are to be renewed and/or revised every three years.

Evaluations are conducted by a department’s Tenure and Promotion Committee (TPC). The composition of TPCs is regulated by University policy,96 with each composed of faculty members across the ranks and members elected by the department/school or program to which the faculty member belongs. A Faculty Review Committee drawn from tenured faculty across the University reviews any negative contract renewal, promotion and tenure decision reached at the TPC or decanal level, or both.

Appeal processes are clearly communicated and widely available on websites for the Vice President, Legal Affairs, Academic Relations and through SFUFA.97 Faculty can further inform themselves by reviewing the information on these processes posted on the Academic Relations website and by attending annual workshops presented jointly by Academic Relations and SFUFA.

94  www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a31-02.html
95  www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a11-05.html
96  www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a11-04.html
97  www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a11-06.html
Concerns about a member’s contributions in research and teaching can be further addressed after two career progress cycles in which their performance has been considered insufficient. Faculty who, in the judgment of their TPC, have not sufficiently contributed as scholars or researchers over two consecutive cycles of career-progress assessments must undertake a program of remedial action. Such programs are developed in consultation among the Dean, Chair and member.

**Administrative and Professional Staff (APSA)**

APSA represents almost 800 administrative and professional staff at SFU. It was incorporated under BC’s *Society Act* in 1980 to provide representation for SFU employees whose employment was not covered by another collective agreement. A Basic Agreement for Collective Bargaining and Consultation was achieved between SFU and APSA in 1983.

Most of the terms and conditions of employment for APSA members are defined in the Basic Agreement and the University’s AD10 policies. Among other things, the Basic Agreement, signed in 1991, establishes APSA’s right to represent administrative and professional staff and defines processes by which disputes and grievances may be addressed. The AD10s are the result of ongoing negotiation and consultation between APSA and the University.

A basic feature of salary administration is the salary scale. The salary scale provides the framework within which equitable salary decisions can be made and has been developed based on competitive market rates. APSA salaries are mapped along a salary “grid” of 17 grades, with each grade having eight steps.

Each salary grade consists of a spread of dollar values in successive steps from a minimum to a maximum expressed as a salary range. The salary minimum is the salary normally paid on appointment to new employees holding the minimum qualifications required to perform the responsibilities of the position (unless provided otherwise by policy). The salary grade maximum is the salary attainable by fully qualified, competent employees. Starting at step one and given satisfactory performance in the position, an employee’s salary will normally rise over seven years from their salary grade minimum to their salary grade maximum. This process is referred to as “progression through the ranks” or “step progression” and recognizes the benefits to the employer brought about by the employee’s increased experience and growth in the position. Employees whose performance does not fully meet expectations may be denied an annual step increase.

Staff who reach step 8 of their grade receive only those adjustments to the salary scale negotiated through collective bargaining and funded by the government. These general adjustments apply to the entire salary scale and to all employees and are not contingent on performance or service in a position. Guidelines and procedures regarding general and/or step progression salary adjustments are normally issued from Human Resources to supervisors following the conclusion of negotiations between APSA and the University.

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98 [www.sfu.ca/human-resources/hr_services/employee_relations/collective_agreements/APSABasicAgreement.html](http://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/hr_services/employee_relations/collective_agreements/APSABasicAgreement.html)

99 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative/10-01.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative/10-01.html)

100 [www.sfu.ca/human-resources/employees/salary/apsa](http://www.sfu.ca/human-resources/employees/salary/apsa)

101 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative/10-6.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative/10-6.html)
University policy calls for APSA members to receive annual performance reviews to enable them to receive regular feedback on job performance, to assist them to become more effective in their positions, and to inform supervisors of each employee’s career aspirations. The principal objectives of performance evaluation are to evaluate and improve performance; to facilitate mutual feedback and communication between the employee and the supervisor; to develop or modify objectives and the means to implement them; to plan professional development and training; to ensure job descriptions are accurate; and to provide a basis for salary recommendations. Excluded staff are covered under a similar policy.

Members of the senior executive consistently undergo performance evaluations on an annual basis as set out in policy. Among APSA and Excluded staff, performance evaluations occur consistently in some units and sporadically in others. Steps are taken intermittently to implement regular and universal performance appraisals, but these often falter under the pressure of other demands and what may be a collegial disinclination formally to assess the work of colleagues.

The University has no ongoing merit-based salary component for administrative and professional staff, and the impact of poor performance on salary is most likely to manifest in the denial of a scheduled step increase. Negotiated salary structures and step increases are posted on the Human Resources website.

APSA works through numerous committees to advance the interests of its members, including a number of joint committees with the University. APSA committees include University Affairs, Salary and Benefits, Advocacy, Pension Advisory and others. APSA members also are represented on a number of other University governance and advisory committees.

**Excluded Staff**

A limited number of administrative and professional staff are identified by the University to be “excluded” from membership in any collective bargaining group. Based on BC’s *Labour Relations Code*, staff are typically excluded for one of two reasons: their duties call for them to possess confidential information involving labour relations or personnel that could place them in a conflict of interest; and the University requires a core group of staff able to maintain its operations in the event of a labour dispute.

Under Article 3 of the University’s agreement with APSA, exclusions are limited to a maximum of 10% of those who would otherwise belong to it. The current number of Excluded employees represents approximately 5% of APSA’s membership.

Terms and conditions of employment for Excluded staff are covered under the University’s AD9 policies. As Excluded staff do not participate in collective bargaining with the University, their
salaries and benefits are predicated on those achieved in negotiations with APSA for non-excluded administrative and professional staff.

**Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 3338**

CUPE Local 3338 represents over 1200 workers at SFU, as well as staff employed in other bargaining units associated with SFU but for whom the University is not the employer (e.g., the Simon Fraser Student Society). Unit 1 includes workers holding clerical, support, library and technical positions at SFU.

CUPE members work under the terms of a collective agreement that establishes and maintains mutually satisfactory working conditions, wages and benefits for CUPE staff, maintains collective bargaining relations between the University and the Union, and provides a mechanism for the prompt and equitable disposition of disputes.

CUPE salaries are mapped along a grid with 12 grades and six steps. As with APSA and Excluded staff, salaries are subject to two types of increase: general, across-the-board increases that apply to all positions, and incremental increases that apply to those at or below the penultimate (for CUPE, the 30-month) step for their grade. Staff in grades 3 through 12 are typically hired at the formal “starting” salary for their position and advance to step six over a period of 36 months. Grades 0 to 2 are used for basic temporary and/or part-time positions and are subject only to across-the-board increases. No formal requirement exists for CUPE staff to participate in regular performance evaluations.

CUPE shares in the governance of the University through formal representation on numerous joint and advisory committees. CUPE members are also eligible to run for office as staff representatives on the Board of Governors and, if qualified, as student or “convocation” members of the Senate.

**Polyparty**

Polyparty bargains collectively on behalf of over 100 tradespeople belonging to eight unions with small memberships at SFU. It represents the staff who maintain SFU’s buildings and grounds, carry out maintenance and repairs and otherwise do work needed to keep facilities at the Burnaby Mountain campus running efficiently and effectively. All Polyparty members report within Facilities Services, the Faculty of Science, or Athletics and Recreation: there are no Polyparty positions at either the Vancouver or the Surrey campus.

Polyparty wages are specific to job classification (e.g., plumber, electrician, painter) and change only as negotiated. Callout and overtime provisions are keyed to regular work hours and apply equally to all Polyparty members (i.e., they are not specific to job classification).

Polyparty members are eligible to run for office as staff representatives on the Board of Governors and, if qualified, as student or “convocation” members of the Senate.

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109 www.sfu.ca/human-resources/employees/salary/cupe_local_3338
110 www.3338.cupe.ca/site/contact-the-union/committees-of-cupe-3338
111 www.bclaws.ca/EP/Libraries/bclaws_new/document/freeside/00_96468_01#section1
112 www.sfu.ca/human-resources/employees
Faculty Pensions

New faculty are immediately vested in the Academic Pension Plan and eligible for University contributions from the first day of employment provided they are appointed for a term of more than one year on a full- or part-time basis as a professor, associate professor, assistant professor, instructor, lecturer, limited term faculty member, professional librarian or laboratory instructor.

The faculty Plan is of the “defined contribution” type; members are not required to contribute to it. The University contributes ten percent of a member’s basic salary, less a Canada Pension Plan offset of $419.40 per year. The University’s contribution is allocated to a Money Purchase Account, where funds are invested under the direction of professional money managers and the profit (or loss) incurred by the Plan is allocated to the account.

Faculty may voluntarily contribute to their Plan, in which case their funds are credited to an individual Voluntary Contribution Account. These funds are invested together with the University’s contributions and any accrued profit (or loss) is allocated monthly to individual accounts.

Although they are eligible for health-related benefits (e.g., health and extended health insurance, dental plan, etc.), TSSU members are not enrolled in an SFU-administered pension plan as a benefit of employment. TSSU members may be eligible for membership in the Canadian Pension Plan as per Government of Canada regulations.

Pension Plan for Administrative and Union Staff

Full-time continuing employees who are members of APSA, CUPE or Polyparty, as well as Excluded staff, participate in the same “defined benefit” pension plan unless they are hired at age 65 or later. Part-time continuing employees who are members of these groups become vested in the same plan after two years of continuous service if their appointment is at least half-time.

Security of Personal Records

The security of individual human resources records is carefully protected consistent with the requirements of British Columbia’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act\(^ {113} \) and University policy.\(^ {114} \)

Individual paper records are held in locked fireproof filing cabinets in Academic Relations (for faculty) and in Human Resources (for other staff). Electronic records are securely held in SFU’s PeopleSoft Resource Information System. All employees with access to online employee records sign a confidentiality agreement. The level of information they may access is strictly controlled by internal security settings linked to personal passwords.

Those seeking access to information held in an employee file (i.e., APSA, Excluded, CUPE and Polyparty members) are required to sign a waiver requesting access, with the file viewable only within the Human Resources Office. More sensitive information, such as medical and disciplinary records, is held only as “paper” records. Access to personal information online is tracked via audit trails, as are instances when any kind of information is added to a record of employment.

\(^ {113} \) www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/96165_00
\(^ {114} \) www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/information/I10-04.html
SFU employees can access their personal information (e.g., salary, paycheques, vacation balances, tax statements, benefits enrolments, addresses, and emergency contacts) by logging onto my.sfu.ca using their SFU personal password.
Chapter 2, Standard 2.C

Education Resources

Simon Fraser University offers face-to-face undergraduate and graduate programs to students at its three campuses, as well as a broad range of courses and programs available through online, off-campus and distance formats. Courses and programs span a wide variety of topics and disciplines, from traditional academic and professional fields to contemporary and interdisciplinary subjects, and allow students to choose among an extensive selection of scholarly activities and experiences.

SFU offers academic programs in eight Faculties. The founding Faculties in 1965 were Arts (now Arts and Social Sciences), Education and Science. Faculties that developed since 1965 are: Business (1981); Applied Sciences (1985); Health Sciences (2004); and the new Faculties of Communication, Art and Technology, and of Environment (both in 2009).

The nature and scope of the programs offered by SFU are consistent with its goal to provide programs across a wide spectrum of academic disciplines, its commitment to interdisciplinary education, and its responsibility to respond to emerging areas of academic inquiry and demand. Options to combine programs (joint majors, majors and minors, extended minors and double majors) are extensive and suggest the extent of SFU’s commitment to interdisciplinary education.

Interdisciplinary education has been an important aspect of the University’s programming from its earliest years. The belief in teaching, learning and research that bring together a number of disciplinary perspectives to focus on a topic or issue was built into SFU through its architecture, which was designed to co-mingle disciplines by placing them in close physical proximity rather than cloistering them in separate structures.

SFU also embraced the value of cross-disciplinary influences through the mandates of some original departments, and in the early creation (1972) of a Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies (FIDS) as an “incubator” unit whose primary purpose was to encourage the development of multi- and interdisciplinary programs. Programs begun in FIDS include Fine and Performing Arts, Kinesiology, Communication Studies, African/Middle Eastern Studies, Computing Science, Latin American Studies, Criminology, Women’s Studies, Natural Resource Management, Management and Systems Science and Gerontology. While FIDS was dissolved in 1985, virtually all programs begun in that Faculty continue in some form at SFU, with many now among SFU’s “signature” programs.

A number of other interdisciplinary programs have since been added to SFU’s curriculum. These include programs such as Cognitive Science, Geographic Information Science, Management and Technology, Mechatronic Systems Engineering, and International Studies. The creation of the Faculty of Health Sciences with a mission to integrate social and natural science research relating to global and public health is a vivid example of the University’s support for interdisciplinary studies.

At the undergraduate level, SFU offers honours, majors, extended minors, minors, post-baccalaureate and certificate programs. Undergraduate courses carry a course number between 100 and 499, with graduate courses having a designation of 500 or higher. Graduate programs offered by SFU lead to doctoral and master’s degrees, with graduate diplomas and certificates also offered. In all, SFU offers over 317 baccalaureate, 18 diploma and 37 certificate programs at the undergraduate level, and 36
doctoral, 77 master’s and 10 graduate diploma or certificate programs at the graduate level.\textsuperscript{115} SFU enrolls more than 35,000 students a year in for-credit programs\textsuperscript{116} and awarded over 4200 bachelor’s degrees, 900 master’s degrees and 130 doctoral degrees in 2009/10.\textsuperscript{117}

SFU also offers undergraduate certificates and post-baccalaureate diplomas. Certificate programs consist mainly of lower-division (i.e., 100- and 200-level) courses and are generally equivalent to between one-half and one year of full-time study (18 to 30 credit hours). Certificate students must meet SFU’s admission requirements and, in most cases, must apply to the appropriate academic department for program approval.

**Figure 2.6: Credentials offered by year**

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<td>20</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>41</td>
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<tr>
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<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Diploma</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU

Post-baccalaureate programs consist of upper-division courses (with perhaps some graduate courses) and are the equivalent of one year or more of university study. A first university degree or the equivalent is normally a prerequisite for admission to a post-baccalaureate program, although they are considered undergraduate programs.

SFU operates on a “trimester” system, admitting and enrolling students and offering classes three times yearly. This provides great flexibility for students who need to accommodate work schedules and other demands that might otherwise affect their ability to enrol at university and take classes. Each semester includes 13 teaching weeks and a two-week examination period.

More than 1100 courses are offered during each fall and spring semester, and about 700 each summer, totaling approximately 2900 undergraduate and graduate credit courses annually. One measure of the trimester system’s success is that FTE enrolments for the summer semester are approximately half of those for the conventional fall/spring semesters.

The number and character of new courses and programs illustrates the University’s efforts to respond to new demands and emerging topics. Each year Senate approves from 70 to over 130 new courses and an average of approximately eight new programs. A prescribed and effective system for removing courses from the course inventory allows the curriculum to evolve without becoming diluted or exceeding the available resources.

\textsuperscript{115} students.sfu.ca/calendar
\textsuperscript{116} See IRP “Fingertips Statistics”: www.sfu.ca/irp
\textsuperscript{117} www.sfu.ca/irp/students.html#outcomes
The University has a robust system of academic quality assurance for its programs and courses. All programs offered by SFU are subject to Senate review of their content, coherence and rigour, with consideration given to the appropriate breadth, depth and sequencing of courses. Program and course changes, and the introduction of new courses, which mainly originate from faculty members or faculty committees, are also subject to review and oversight at the academic unit, where approval is required prior to review by a Faculty committee.

New graduate programs typically originate in departments or schools and are subject to extensive review before approval. Under British Columbia’s University Act, universities determine the appropriate level of credential to be offered in a discipline. However, BC’s Degree Authorization Act also allows new graduate programs to be considered by the Ministry of Advanced Education based on resource requirements and demand within BC. Proposed programs are offered for review and comment by other post-secondary institutions through BC’s Degree Quality Assessment Board.

Faculty who propose courses or programs, and those responsible to approve or deny them, are appropriately credentialed in their disciplines, giving further assurance that they meet a high standard of academic quality. As noted, more than 91% of SFU’s tenured or tenure-track faculty have doctoral degrees and are hired through a selection process that is both national (and often international) in scope and carried out by academic peers qualified to assess their competence and expertise.

Academic units review their curriculum on a regular basis. Reviews are designed to keep programs contemporary in their academic content and to ensure faculty resources and program offerings are adequately synchronized. All academic units are regularly reviewed (normally every seven years) through a process of external reviews. External reviews are carried out by committees composed of senior members in the discipline or subject area, with many from international institutions, and with all external to the University. One member appointed from SFU provides the committee with contextual advice about SFU. Committees examine programs to ensure both content and teaching meet disciplinary standards and to consider whether the unit’s academic environment contributes to its teaching and research objectives.

Figure 2.7: Credentials conferred by year

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<tr>
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<td>3389</td>
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<td>259</td>
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<td>104</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s</td>
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<td>543</td>
<td>594</td>
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<td>589</td>
<td>768</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate diplomas</td>
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<td>523</td>
<td>537</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>558</td>
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</table>

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU

118 For details: www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/facstaff/newprograms
119 www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/avpa/external_reviews.html
120 See www.sfu.ca/Senate/SenateComms/SCUP/SCUP-ExReview.html for Senate Guidelines on External Reviews of Academic Units.
Program and degree requirements are based on credit counts, a minimum GPA and course requirements that must be met for a student to graduate. These include the completion of general education and course-level requirements (i.e., distribution of lower- and upper-division courses), and specific subject-area requirements. Whether a course is classified lower- or upper-division is determined by the content, the effort, and the degree of disciplinary knowledge and skill a student must demonstrate to succeed in it. On rare occasions, an exception to a course requirement for graduation may be granted to a student based on a rigorous process that involves review by the Faculty Dean and the Registrar, followed by the approval of Senate.

Assessment in courses and programs reflects the norms in academic culture, which allocate primary authority for assessing what has been learned in a course to individual teaching faculty. Methods of measuring student achievement vary by discipline, program content and level, but reflect the standards applied in each discipline and of higher education in Canada. The phenomenon of grade inflation that has concerned a number of post-secondary institutions has been less of a problem at SFU; a recent report listed SFU among the “sweet sixteen” Canadian and US colleges and universities (among 210 assessed) where earning an “A” remains significantly more difficult than the norm.121

All credit courses at SFU must publish a course outline prior to registration. By policy, course outlines must describe course requirements and specify how course grades will be calculated.122 The allocation of relative grade weights among such activities as final and other exams, papers and projects, tutorial participation, laboratory work and other requirements are noted. Outlines are typically published online and are available through the Registrar’s and Student Services’ websites and/or the websites of the department(s) offering the course.

On occasion the University eliminates an academic program. The process governing the elimination of a program was approved by Senate and requires approvals by the appropriate Senate bodies, among which may be: the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS) or Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) and the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP).123 Winding up a program requires approval by more than one of the above committees plus the Senate and the Board of Governors. The consultation process requires that students be consulted and plans described to ensure affected students have the opportunity to complete the program in a timely way.124 Two programs were concluded by Senate in 2010.

Learning Outcomes

The practice of developing explicit and expected student learning outcomes for degrees, programs and courses is relatively new in the Canadian context and is not widely practiced in its universities. However, the Council of Ministers of Education in Canada has produced a framework that outlines what each degree level at post-secondary institutions in Canada “is intended to achieve in general learning outcomes”.125 Some course instructors and some SFU programs with external accreditation

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121 www.gradeinflation.com/sweet162010.html
122 www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/teaching/t20-01.html
123 www.aved.gov.bc.ca/degree-authorization
have developed learning outcome protocols. The implementation of SFU’s new online curriculum management software (CurricUNET) will encourage widespread adoption of expected learning outcomes for courses, especially as the development of individual course learning outcomes is an explicit goal of the current Academic Plan.126

**Teaching and Instructional Methods**

Faculty at SFU use a range of instructional methods and forms of course delivery to provide high-quality teaching across the institution to suit the needs of the wide variety of students enrolled in its programs, and to provide high-quality teaching across the institution. A recent Task Force on Teaching and Learning127 found that SFU instructors employ different pedagogies based on their beliefs about what creates effective teaching and learning, and that support for innovative initiatives by departments, schools and Faculties depends on their perceived effect on the quality of teaching and learning.

The tutorial is a key instructional format used at SFU, especially for first- and second-year courses. Tutorials augment lectures and provide a more intimate learning environment formed around smaller groups; they are typically taught by graduate students based on the philosophy that there is no better way to learn your discipline than to teach it. In academic 2009/10 over 490 first- and second-year lecture sections had tutorials, for a total of 2,876 tutorials. Undergraduate surveys indicate SFU students consider tutorials to provide an effective learning environment and to be generally preferable to large lectures. Eighty-two percent of students who completed SFU’s 2009 undergraduate survey said instruction in the tutorial environment was very or somewhat effective, while 66% rated large lectures to be similarly effective.

Experiential education is another important aspect of diverse pedagogy long supported at SFU. Many academic courses include experiential elements, and co-operative education (discussed below) has been an institutional feature for decades. SFU was the first Western Canadian post-secondary institution to offer an accredited co-op education program and the first Canadian post-secondary institution to launch a comprehensive field school program. Other highly regarded, experience-based programs such as the Semester in Dialogue have been developed, and a new project designed to explore, document and promote credit-bearing experiential education was launched in 2010.128

In the context of their courses, teaching faculty require the use of Library and other information sources in their assignments and other course-related activities and requirements. Students are expected to assess and use information they acquire to develop their subject-area concepts, analyze the issues they encounter and understand the topics they address. New information technologies are widely employed in courses and students learn how to access information and to assess the reliability of sources.

Providing high-quality teaching and instruction is central to the mandate of SFU, so the monitoring of teaching is an important activity. The most widely practiced means of teaching evaluation is the

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126 www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/vpacademic/files/vp_academic_docs/pdfs/VPA3yr_AcadPlan2010.pdf
127 www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/committees_taskforces/Ad_Hoc_Committees/tftl.html
use of course evaluation forms by students. The extent to which student evaluations are used by academic units in the tenure, promotion and appointment processes suggests they are considered a useful instrument in helping to determine teaching effectiveness. A 2010 report to the University Senate on the teaching evaluation system at SFU found that all of the relevant units responding to their survey evaluated “all courses each semester.” 129 It also recommended the development of a modified evaluation form more sensitive to unit-specific issues, with a best-practices guide prepared to help conduct the evaluations and interpret the information they provide.

To assist instructors in maximizing student learning and creating an intellectually engaging environment for student learning, SFU has developed the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC). The TLC is staffed by educational professionals who assist programs and faculty to develop, design and implement programs, courses, content and social learning environments; they also provide professional development opportunities for teaching staff.

**Undergraduate Programs**

**General Education**

Although SFU students have always had both opportunity and encouragement to take courses that can cultivate their general communication and thinking skills and broaden their horizons beyond their disciplines, too often they did not. To address the concerns this situation raised, and to offer students a relevant, effective and coherent education, the Vice President, Academic appointed an ad hoc Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) to review the matter.

In 2002 Senate approved in principle the UCC’s recommendations designed to enhance the quality of undergraduate education at SFU. Included in the recommendations were new requirements to ensure that students entering SFU would be adequately prepared to begin university-level coursework. Where remediation was necessary, applicants would obtain it before entering SFU or early in their programs. Based on the work of a subsequent task force, Senate approved the adoption of new general education requirements beginning in 2006.

Students who enter a baccalaureate program at SFU must now fulfill University–wide writing, quantitative and breadth (WQB) requirements. These include the completion of six credits in courses that foster writing abilities (“W” courses), including one each at the lower- and the upper-division level, preferably within their discipline. All students must also complete two courses that foster quantitative abilities (“Q” courses), and at least 18 credits in breadth courses, including at least two designated breadth courses in each of the Sciences (“B-Sci”), Social Sciences (“B-Soc”) and Humanities (“B-Hum”). 130 To complete an undergraduate degree, all SFU students must complete their WQB courses with a grade of C– or better.

WQB courses meet specific criteria. 131 Until 2007, courses for which a W, Q or B designation was sought were reviewed by their department and Faculty and evaluated by Certification Committees to

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130 For full details of the Breadth requirements: www.sfu.ca/ugcr/for_students/wqb_requirements.html

131 For criteria and definitions: www.sfu.ca/ugcr/for_faculty/wqb_criteria_and_definitions.html
confirm they met the required criteria: Senate approval for a course to carry a W, Q or B designation is needed. Now courses are assessed by the University Curriculum office and the department notified. If approved to carry a W, Q or B designation, the department takes the course with proof of its certification through the normal curriculum approval process. As of fall 2010, SFU classified 152 courses as W courses, 315 courses as Q courses and 233 courses as B courses.132

Some students arrive at university not quite ready to undertake a W or Q course. For them, SFU provides two “foundations” courses: Foundations of Academic Literacy (FAL) and Foundations of Analytical and Quantitative Reasoning (FAN). Students are advised at the time of admission whether they must enrol in one or both of these courses. Others who wish to take FAL or FAN courses may do so when capacity permits.

Foundations courses earn “additive” credits: that is, they do not count toward the completion of degree requirements. Students enrolled in certificate and post-baccalaureate programs are not required to complete the WQB requirements. The Student Learning Commons133 provides additional assistance on academic writing, learning and study strategies, and offers one-to-one consultations, workshops, peer-facilitated group discussions and extensive online resources for academic success.

**Graduate Programs**

Graduate studies at SFU are an integral component of the institution’s academic life and cultural environment. More than 5600 students in all eight Faculties participate in graduate programs and engage in the research, creative work and advanced critical thinking characteristic of graduate education.134

Graduate headcount enrolment increased by 30% in the six academic years 2004/05 to 2009/10, with the last three years of growth funded by the province as part of its plan to create new graduate spaces. Home to a variety of world-class research facilities, innovative programs and world-renowned scholars, SFU attracts graduate students from over 60 countries.

Studies at the graduate level demand that students engage in deeper analysis, demonstrate greater understanding of more complex materials, and a more extensive knowledge of the literature of a subject than is expected of undergraduates. To meet these demands, SFU requires applicants for graduate admission to have an undergraduate degree with a strong record of academic achievement. Additional requirements may be set by individual graduate program committees.

Admission to SFU’s graduate programs is typically very competitive and entry requirements are often considerably higher than stated University and program minimums. Programs restrict admission to students whose interests are compatible with faculty expertise and who can be supported within available resources.

132 For a listing of these courses: www.sfu.ca/ugcr/for_faculty/certified_wqb_courses.html
133 learningcommons.sfu.ca
134 www.sfu.ca/irp/students.html
Graduate program committees assess applicants’ academic records and the quality of the programs and institutions from which they will arrive, and review their recommendations to determine the applicants’ overall compatibility with their program demands. Committees are assisted in this by information on GPA conversions and admissions guides for international students compiled by the Dean of Graduate Studies office.

SFU’s doctoral programs engage students in ongoing research independently or in collaboration with larger research groups. To earn a doctorate students must complete a thesis based on substantial original research of a high caliber and pass an oral examination conducted by a committee that includes a qualified examiner from outside SFU. Some programs require that candidates also pass comprehensive exams.

Master’s programs introduce students to the research process or prepare them with the critical and analytical skills required for their intended professions. Master’s students must successfully complete prescribed coursework and a thesis or research project, or pass final examinations in their subject area.

Graduate diploma programs provide specialized combinations of courses for students who wish to upgrade their knowledge and skills to an advanced level. Diploma students must successfully complete 22 units or more of graduate course work, depending upon the diploma. University course, thesis and grade requirements for graduate degrees are listed in the Calendar, as are all requirements for individual programs. Program requirements are also available on departmental websites.

“Special Arrangements” doctoral students (that is, students whose areas of study lie outside of or “across” existing graduate programs) are admitted and administered though the Dean of Graduate Studies office. Students admitted to Special Arrangements programs must be exceptionally able, and propose a well-developed plan of studies characterized by internal coherence and academic merit. To accommodate them, the University must also have faculty with the appropriate expertise and interest who are willing to supervise the proposed work. Special Arrangements made for an individual student must be reviewed and approved by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC).

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135 students.sfu.ca/calendar
While most graduate students take all their graduate courses at SFU, up to one half of the University minimum course work or departmental degree requirements for a graduate program may be completed elsewhere. Graduate transfer credit is assessed by graduate program committees and students need prior approval from their program committee before taking a course at another institution.

Internships and clinical practices may be part of a graduate program. All such graduate learning experiences, when assigned course or program credit, are reviewed and monitored by the program involved. SFU does not grant graduate credit for prior experiential learning.

Oversight of graduate studies at SFU is the responsibility of the SGSC. The Committee is responsible to Senate for admissions (a function delegated to the Dean), maintaining academic standards, monitoring changes to existing programs, evaluating new programs and administering graduate general regulations. The Committee may act as an appeal body for student progress reviews.

**Lifelong Learning and Continuing Studies Non-Credit Programs**

Continuing education at SFU has been provided by the department of Continuing Studies since 1971. In 2011, Continuing Studies was subsumed into the new Lifelong Learning unit. The new name reflects the changing nature of university education and the increasing demand for access to education throughout one’s lifetime. It also reflects changes at SFU over the past few years, with the most obvious of these changes being the reorganization of the Learning and Instructional Development Centre into the Teaching and Learning Centre, which now reports to the Dean of Lifelong Learning.

As a rubric, “Lifelong Learning” also captures the Dean’s responsibility for a number of other initiatives, including online and distance education programs; credit programs for mature learners; and education and outreach programs for the general public. Lifelong Learning’s mission as articulated in its 2010-2013 academic plan is to

> provide opportunities for adult learners and groups to achieve their intellectual, professional, aspirational and cultural goals through the development and delivery of lifelong learning programs and activities that link and build upon the strengths and academic capital of SFU and the resources of the various communities it serves.

Lifelong Learning’s programming is central to SFU’s mission to provide high-quality learning experiences. Through its deep involvement in the Burnaby, Vancouver and Surrey communities, Lifelong Learning also plays an essential role in achieving SFU’s community and citizenship core theme objectives. As a significant presence on all SFU campuses, Lifelong Learning offers courses and programs face-to-face, online and through blended formats, making its credit and non-credit certificate and diploma programs widely available to people locally and across BC.

136 [www.sfu.ca/senate/senate-committees/sgsc.html](http://www.sfu.ca/senate/senate-committees/sgsc.html)
137 [www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans/current_three_yearplans.html](http://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans/current_three_yearplans.html)
With advice from the Committee on Continuing Studies (SCCS), SFU’s Senate formally oversees the development of all of the University’s continuing education credit and non-credit offerings.\(^{138}\) The SCCS reviews existing and proposed non-credit programs and assesses their suitability for SFU. The University maintains a record of approved continuing education certificates and diplomas in several sites: the minutes of meetings of both the SCCS and the University Senate, the bi-yearly continuing education catalogues, and a central web page that provides links to all program areas and offerings.\(^{139}\)

Lifelong Learning is organized into 22 distinct program areas. Working closely with faculty and external partners from the public and private sectors, each program develops its own courses and other educational activities to provide university-level programming able to meet community needs.

Lifelong Learning carries out its activities through an extensive range of programs and methods. For example, since 1975 the Centre for Online and Distance Education (CODE)\(^ {140}\) has been helping students meet their academic goals by providing undergraduate credit courses through distance and online arrangements where circumstances prevent them from attending on-campus courses. The English Language and Culture Program (ELC)\(^ {141}\) offers English language courses to non-English speakers. ELC’s approach assumes that student learning is deeper and more meaningful when emphasis is shared between new language skills and understanding the cultural context within which the language is used. With unusual aptness to Lifelong Learning’s mandate, SFU’s longstanding and highly successful Seniors’ Program offers academically-oriented courses, forums and outreach to people 55 and older.\(^ {142}\)

Individual non-credit programs offered through Lifelong Learning’s Continuing Studies unit receive academic and community oversight by Program Advisory Committees (PACs). PACs draw representatives from the relevant Faculties and departments, and from among students, instructors, and community and client groups.

For example, Community Education Programs work with local communities to support positive social change by creating access to education and other resources for socially excluded individuals and communities. The Community Education Advisory Committee includes members from a neighbourhood housing society, a treatment facility and an Aboriginal organization in addition to SFU faculty members who are “tasked with visioning a more comprehensive critical path for Community Education Programs at SFU and in the community.”\(^ {143}\)

As another example, Management and Professional Programs provide foundational and advanced continuing education in business and management. Its steering committee is composed of SFU faculty members from business and management-related areas,\(^ {144}\) and “helps to guide [its] programming priorities.”

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\(^{138}\) [www.sfu.ca/senate/senate-committees/sccs.html](http://www.sfu.ca/senate/senate-committees/sccs.html)


\(^{140}\) [code.sfu.ca](http://code.sfu.ca)

\(^{141}\) [www.sfu.ca/cstudies/lang/elc](http://www.sfu.ca/cstudies/lang/elc)

\(^{142}\) [www.sfu.ca/seniors](http://www.sfu.ca/seniors)

\(^{143}\) [www.sfu.ca/community/about_committee.htm](http://www.sfu.ca/community/about_committee.htm)

\(^{144}\) [www.sfu.ca/cstudies/mpprog/about.php](http://www.sfu.ca/cstudies/mpprog/about.php)
With annual enrolments of over 19,000, non-credit offerings are important staples of Continuing Studies programming. They include courses offered over months, lecture series, conferences, moderated discussions, hands-on projects and even customized training. Most non-credit programs are variously sponsored by SFU’s academic Faculties, departments, schools or advisory committees, usually in partnership with community organizations, and are provided on a cost-recovery basis. Non-credit courses cannot be applied toward an SFU degree. However, some courses and programs are accredited by professional groups, qualify as professional development and continuing education credits, or can lead to professional designations.  

Credit courses offered by Lifelong Learning are organized through either CODE or the Centre for Integrated and Credit Studies (CICS and SFU Now). Courses offered by CODE are delivered via online or distance format, while CICS offers in-class courses at the Vancouver campus. SFU Now (“Nights Or Weekends”) provides evening and Saturday courses for students at the Vancouver and Surrey campuses. All courses offered for credit through Lifelong Learning are part of the University’s regular curriculum. Academic credit is established by the appropriate department or program, courses meet equivalent academic standards, and are approved by Senate. Instructors for these programs are hired by the Faculties.  

CODE has established procedures for students to access online or distance course materials and submit assignments to course instructors using unique online IDs and passwords. Examinations must be written under supervision that enables students’ identities to be verified.

**Figure 2.9: Continuing Studies non-credit enrolment and public events**

Student records for Continuing Studies non-credit courses are maintained by Continuing Studies and are severed from SFU’s records of its for-credit offerings even when the same student partakes of both.

Although not a part of the Lifelong Learning unit, SFU’s Centre for Dialogue offers credit courses and convenes dialogue conferences and events around topics of community, national and international interest, and provides consultation services on dialogue-based issues. Its steering committee includes students, staff, faculty and community members and is charged with promoting “the study and

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145 For a list of the organizations and associations that offer continuing education credits to their members for Continuing Studies courses: [www.sfu.ca/cstudies/nccredits.htm](http://www.sfu.ca/cstudies/nccredits.htm)

146 [www.sfu.ca/dialogue/study+practice/programs+courses.html](http://www.sfu.ca/dialogue/study+practice/programs+courses.html)
practice of dialogue . . . with special reference to learning, research, public events and training in connection with the Morris J Wosk Centre for Dialogue.”

147  www.sfu.ca/dialogue/study+practice/people.html
Chapter 2, Standard 2.D
Student Support Resources

Becoming a Student

Simon Fraser University makes every effort, consistent with best practices for post-secondary education, to admit a diverse group of students who are well qualified to succeed at university. Admissions standards are rigorous and equitable and attempt to ensure that those admitted are prepared for the challenges they will face in their new educational environment. Admissions criteria are clearly stated and easily available,148 and applicants are able to contact an admissions advisor directly via email to “Ask SFU.”149

Inevitably the over 7000 new students now admitted annually to SFU arrive variously skilled and unevenly prepared to meet one or another demand that comes with the transition to university-level work and culture. To meet their needs SFU offers numerous programs and services that provide new students with ample opportunity to flourish and prosper in their new environment.

Student Services is SFU’s primary provider of direct services and support programs for students, with a core mandate to provide logistical support for the processes that recruit and admit aspiring applicants to SFU, to maintain records for students in credit courses, and to facilitate student learning and success for those attending SFU. Where students receive services provided by other areas, as in the Learning Commons operated by the Library, Student Services is an active partner in facilitating awareness of, and access to, the service.

Student Services at SFU is led by the Associate Vice President, Students (AVPS), who oversees a large and comprehensive portfolio of administrative units tasked with providing support to current and former students, and to aspiring applicants.

Undergraduate Admissions

Information on the Admission and Readmission processes, including detailed information on admission requirements for all of SFU’s for-credit programs, are clearly articulated in the Calendar,150 in the University’s recruiting materials (print and electronic “Viewbooks” for domestic and international applicants), and on the Admissions website.151 The process for appealing admission decisions is communicated directly to unsuccessful applicants by the Undergraduate Admissions office and is published on the University website and in the Calendar.

Admission to SFU is competitive. The generally high quality of Canadian universities means that Canadian students typically attend their local universities, especially for undergraduate education. Of the 48 Canadian universities ranked by Maclean’s magazine in 2010, most receive fewer than 10% of their first-year undergraduate students from outside the province. Of those with more than 10%
extra-provincial students, most are small universities in the Maritimes. Exceptions are McGill in Quebec, Queen’s in Ontario and the University of Victoria in BC.

There are no regulatory barriers to students attending any institution in Canada. Universities and colleges generally co-operate to make programs accessible to qualified students. The BC Council on Admissions and Transfers (BCCAT) is a provincially funded entity made up of public and private post-secondary institutions across BC and the Yukon and is responsible for facilitating admissions, articulation and transfer agreements among them. Specifically, the Council encourages member institutions to develop policies that facilitate transferability of credit courses so credit can be applied toward baccalaureate degrees in all degree-granting institutions.\(^{152}\) The BCCAT website offers an interesting outline of the history of transfer credit management in BC starting in 1958.\(^{153}\)

Applications for admission may be submitted directly to SFU. A separate entity, BC’s Post-Secondary Application Service (PASBC) provides a single application process for all BC public post-secondary institutions for those who wish to apply to multiple institutions, and manages the articulation or approval of courses for credit transfer among institutions.\(^{154}\)

The quality of its students, like that of its faculty, determines the quality of a post-secondary institution. SFU manages its admissions processes to achieve a successful balance between admitting those already well equipped for success and those who can succeed and prosper with some assistance. At the same time SFU must meet, but not greatly exceed, its allocation of government-funded seats because tuition alone does not fully cover the cost of educating a student. In times of economic instability, when more people turn to advanced education to improve their employability, competition for admission can spike and hitting enrolment targets precisely becomes more challenging. The unanticipated growth of demand in recent years has also resulted in SFU being significantly overenrolled for international students in academic 2010/11.\(^{155}\)

Undergraduate admissions targets at SFU are set by the Senate Committee on Enrolment Management and Planning (SCEMP)\(^{156}\) and reflect institutional priorities (e.g., increasing the number of international students) and government mandates. SFU and government share a priority to improve access for Aboriginal peoples.

SCEMP sets broad admissions targets for SFU and each Faculty, with targets also set by Basis of Admission (e.g., BC12, college transfer, international).\(^{157}\) Targets are implemented through the efforts of the Admissions and Recruitment units of the Registrar’s office. Successfully meeting targets typically involves complex calculations based on extrapolations from previous acceptance rates for offers at each grade point, on early self-reported information from applicants about expected graduation GPAs, on numbers of possible applicants overall, and on the Basis of Admission.

Domestic undergraduate students admitted to SFU come primarily from two groups: those admitted directly upon graduation from BC grade 12 (“direct admits”), and those who transfer from other
post-secondary institutions. Despite demographic changes that have resulted in year-to-year decreases in the number of students graduating from BC high schools, from 2005/06 to 2009/10 the ratio of direct admits to SFU from high school grew from 47.3% to 50.6%, while admissions of college and university transfer students declined from 39.9% to 33.7%. Students entering SFU directly from high school graduation outside BC represent less than 5% of incoming students, and only one in ten of all high school entrants. The remaining entrants are “mature,” “other” or second degree students.158

Admissions GPAs have fluctuated over the past decade. Recognizing the importance of addressing unmet demand for higher education, the province introduced an “access agenda” in 2004/05 to increase the number of funded seats at BC institutions by 25,000 by 2010.159 Funding for new seats has since slowed dramatically, but demand varies based on demographic changes, on competition among BC institutions for fewer graduating high school students, and on sudden surges in applications as people seek improved employability through higher education.

The trend at SFU and in BC has been to offer admission as early as possible to provide applicants with greater predictability and comfort about their futures.

Transfer Credit
With over 30% of SFU’s admissions coming through institutional transfers,160 the management of transfer credit is a key element of the admissions processes managed by SFU. SFU was the first BC institution to recognize the importance of establishing the provincial process to articulate transfer credits now grounded in well-established province-wide articulation committees that meet, discipline-by-discipline, to address transfer credit issues.161

The work of the articulation committees is administered by the British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer (BCCAT), which operates under a provincial mandate to facilitate articulation and transfer arrangements among BC’s post-secondary institutions. SFU also subscribes to the 1994 Pan-Canadian Protocol on the Transferability of University Credit,162 which promises SFU will consider for credit all coursework satisfactorily completed by students transferring to SFU from degree programs at other Canadian universities.

The Undergraduate Admissions office also maintains an internal database that holds transfer credit rules from post-secondary institutions worldwide so courses taken at colleges, technical institutes and other universities will be appropriately recognized for transfer credit. SFU initiates and maintains dual-partnership agreements and dual-degree programs for which the transfer of credits and applicability of coursework are clearly articulated. SFU International163 also maintains a database of course-specific transfer for students interested in completing coursework at international institutions with which SFU has exchange or other partnership agreements. SFU has over 290 such partnerships

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158 “Mature” entrants are 23 years old or older and not eligible for admission under another category. “Other” entrants include students from technical programs, non-BC transfer students, visiting students, special entries, ABE provincial diploma and concurrent studies students.
159 www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2004/highlights/bgt2004_highlights.htm#highereduc
160 www.sfu.ca/irp/enrollments/EnrollmentDashboard.html
162 www.bctransferguide.ca/resources/links
163 students.sfu.ca/international
in over 64 countries, and offers exchange programs, field schools, work abroad and other study abroad options in over 50 countries.

**International Students**

International students bring valuable diversity of experience and perspectives to a university. International applicants to SFU must meet the same admissions requirements as other applicants; in other respects their access to SFU is limited only by their ability to obtain student visas. Generally these are not a problem, although Canadian universities consistently lobby the federal government to process applications more expeditiously.

International students in Canada are permitted to obtain work permits to work off campus, including in co-op positions (since 2006), and can continue to work in Canada for three years after graduating. These legislative changes, as well as increased restrictions in the United States since 9/11, have made Canadian schools more attractive to international students. Still, three quarters of Canadian universities have fewer than 10% international undergraduate students. In fall 2010, international students made up 14.4% of SFU’s undergraduate students and 22.2% of its graduate students, making it a leader among Canadian institutions. Students with citizenship other than Canadian, but who hold Permanent Resident status in Canada, are considered to be domestic rather than international.

**Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLA)**

Only one program at SFU has granted credit to incoming undergraduate students for prior experiential learning: the Integrated Studies Program (ISP). ISP was a part-time cohort-based degree completion program for mid-career adults, first launched as a pilot program in 1995. Admission to ISP was determined by an Academic Steering Committee (ASC) that assessed applicants based on an intensive application process and on recommendations by their employers.

ISP applicants were measured by weighting their amount or level of work experience (30%), their amount or level of post-secondary education/professional experience (30%), a diagnostic test of writing and grammatical abilities (20%), and an interview (20%) with the Academic and Program Directors. Applicants approved for admission by the ASC were admitted to SFU through a flexible admissions process that grants up to 60 “non-transcripted” (i.e., undifferentiated or non-specific) credits towards a Bachelor of General Studies degree. The credits needed to complete the degree were earned by completing the approximately 18 courses that comprised the Integrated Studies Program. Close supervision of the program by its Academic Director and the ASC maintained clear academic standards within the IS Program.

In November 2010, Senate suspended admissions to the ISP program in response to a motion from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS). FASS’ request noted the NWCCU’s limit on PLA credits among its reasons for terminating the program. The small cohort admitted in fall 2010 will be allowed to complete the program, but no further students will be admitted to it.

Credit is not granted at the graduate level for prior experiential learning.

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164 [www.sfu.ca/irp/students.html#international](http://www.sfu.ca/irp/students.html#international)
Orientation

Each semester Student Services offers orientation programs for incoming undergraduate students to introduce them to SFU programs and services and to prepare them for the demands of university life. Group-specific orientations include programs for undergraduate students, mature and transfer students, international students, residence students, graduate students, and students at the Surrey campus. Departments contributing to orientation programs include Student Development, Residence and Housing, and SFU International. Orientation is not mandatory, but approximately 46% of incoming undergraduates participated in fall 2009. Attendance at the orientation specific to SFU’s Surrey campus approached 55%. A mini-orientation is also available for those unable to attend the full event.

General orientation sessions group students with others admitted to the same Faculty and a trained student leader. Students participate in campus tours, workshops on the basics of SFU life (academic policies and procedures, requirements, programs, etc.), student panels (academic success, getting involved, challenges and tips), “icebreakers,” an introduction to the Simon Fraser Student Society, meetings with representatives from their Faculty and official welcomes. The momentum created during Orientation is sustained by SFU’s “Orientation Leaders,” who continue to contact and meet with their student groups throughout the first semester to help with their ongoing transition to life at SFU.

A separate orientation for incoming graduate students is organized jointly by Student Development and the Dean of Graduate Studies office and held each fall. Individual departments also hold extensive program-specific orientations; 2009 participation by graduate students in the University-wide orientation was more limited at just under 13%.

SFU International also offers International, Exchange and Study Abroad orientations for all newly admitted students in each of these groups. Orientations cover Immigration Basics (study permits, visas, working in Canada, etc.); Understanding Canadian Health Insurance; Academic Culture: Your guide to academic success at SFU; Surviving in Vancouver and Canada; and Getting Involved in Campus and Community Life. Sessions are intended to provide students with essential information for a smooth and successful transition to graduate life at SFU and in Canada while also creating an opportunity to make friends.

Residence and Housing runs three orientations annually in conjunction with University orientations. These reach approximately 750 students, who receive vital information about how to live successfully in Residence.

New student orientations are followed by the larger “Week of Welcome” (WoW) events during the first week of classes at Vancouver and Burnaby campuses. WoW is intended to promote awareness of campus services, resources and activities for students and to foster a sense of community on campus.
Chapter 2 • Section IV • Student Support Resources

**Being a Student**

**Academic Advising**

SFU practices a shared model of academic advising, with responsibility for undergraduates distributed among the Academic Advising and Student Success units of Student Services and individual academic departments. Student Services advises newly admitted and “exploratory” students in their first and second years (i.e., students who have not yet declared a major) and students in academic difficulty. Academic departments advise students already accepted into their programs (i.e., “declared” students) and undecided students with 70 or more credits accrued.

Within this shared model academic advice is provided by professional, student and faculty advisors. Student Services offers advising at all three campuses through a mix of individual sessions (drop-ins, appointments and instant messaging) and group workshops. Departmental advising is typically available at each department’s home office.

Academic advising at SFU is informed by two philosophies: developmental and intrusive. Advisors assist students with clarifying their life and career goals and developing educational plans to realize them. This approach requires an understanding that academic advising is a responsibility shared by the student and the advisor. At times, particularly with “at-risk” students, a more proactive, “intrusive” approach is taken that involves initiating contact with a student who otherwise may not seek help before difficulties arise.

As of spring 2010, a Degree Progress Report has been built into the Student Information Management System (SIMS) to allow students or their advisors to audit degree progress. Exceptions for degree requirements are approved by the department, submitted to the Registrar’s office and recorded on the individual student record.165

It is normal practice at SFU that “declaring” in a program determines a student’s graduation requirements, which are those published in the *Calendar* for the program at the time the declaration is made. Program declaration occurs either at the time of admission, if the student is admitted directly into a program, or not later than 60 credits for students not admitted directly to a program or a major.

**Fees**

Simon Fraser University assesses undergraduate tuition fees primarily based on the number of credits in which the student enrolls (for undergraduates and some graduates). There is a flat fee for research graduate students. An “international premium” is assessed to tuition for international undergraduate students; the premium is calculated at a rate of $10,000 based on registration in 30 credits. Various special fees may be assessed by the University in certain circumstances or for specific purposes.

All fees are subject to change, sometimes to provincial controls, and to approval by SFU’s Board of Governors. All fees are published in the *Calendar* and on the Fees website.166 A government mandated cap of 2% on annual tuition increases has been in place in BC since 2005/06.

165 [students.sfu.ca/degreeprogress.html](students.sfu.ca/degreeprogress.html)
166 [students.sfu.ca/fees.html](students.sfu.ca/fees.html)
International students in graduate programs pay the same fees as domestic students unless otherwise noted. Fees per credit for non-degree, exchange and qualifying students are set at the applicable undergraduate rate. Fees such as the Universal Transit Pass fee and the Student Extended Health Care fee are approved through student referenda and collected by the University on behalf of one or both of the student societies.

**Scholarships, Awards, Bursaries and Emergency Loans**

The Financial Aid and Awards office administers SFU’s undergraduate student scholarships and awards (i.e., merit-based financial aid) as well as undergraduate and graduate bursaries, emergency loans, work-study and externally administered government-sponsored student loans (i.e., needs-based aid).\(^{167}\)

Merit-based institutional graduate scholarships, awards, and fellowships are administered through the Dean of Graduate Studies office.\(^{168}\) Athletic awards are administered by the Financial Aid and Awards office in conjunction with the SFU Athletics department, while Entrance Scholarships are currently administered in conjunction with the University Recruitment office.

The allocation of University funds to student financial aid is based on the recommendations of the Senate Policy Committee on Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries (SPCSAB),\(^{169}\) which sets terms of reference for all University administered award programs and their adjudication; develops budget requests; integrates award programs with recruiting goals; and reports annually on its activities to Senate. SPCSAB also establishes University policies relative to student funding from non-University sources.

Based on University priorities, funding may be assigned to designated groups: for example, to students going on international co-ops, field schools or exchanges. Aboriginal students have been targeted as a priority by both the University and the provincial government, and are provided designated funding through entrance scholarships, awards and bursaries. Accountability for institutional financial aid and awards funding is reviewed through audits by external, third-party accounting offices.

As Canadian government student loan funding is administered externally, institutional accountability is verified through individual program reporting requirements, policies and procedures.\(^{170}\) US citizens (and eligible non-citizens) attending SFU may apply for funding through the Direct Lend Program, with administrative support provided by SFU’s Financial Aid and Awards office. Direct Lend Program funding is audited annually by an external, third party accounting office.\(^{171}\)

Financial Aid and Awards regularly monitors its student loan programs and default rates. It complies with all requirements, policies and procedures for both Canadian and US government student loan funding opportunities. SFU’s default rate for British Columbia Students Loans for 2009 was 4.9%. The average default rate for public institutions in 2009 was 8.4%. For Canada Student Loans, it is

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\(^{167}\) students.sfu.ca/financialaid.html

\(^{168}\) www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies

\(^{169}\) www.sfu.ca/senate/senate-committees/spcsab.html


\(^{171}\) SFU’s Federal School Code is 008444: www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/nonfed/Fgn092402.pdf (this is a document of 80+ pages)
viewed as a repayment rate. The repayment rate of SFU students for 2008 was 91.2%. For the US FY 2008, the current draft cohort default rate is 0%.

Information on all forms of student financial assistance is published in a variety of media, including the Financial Aid and Awards website,172 in the relevant section of the Calendar,173 through advising services (in-person, telephone or email), brochures, workshops and/or information sessions. Websites and brochures provided by the Ministry of Advanced Education and the Government of Canada174 also provide relevant financial aid information.

**Security of student records**

Student records are administered under the care of the Registrar. An extensive records policy guides decisions around staff access, retention and third party requests for access. Primary student records are maintained and stored on the Student Information Management part of SFU’s PeopleSoft system. IT staff, like all other staff with access to the system, sign a confidentiality agreement. All records are stored and backed up on University servers on site.

Records are of two distinct types: administrative records and student records. Access to administrative records is limited to the Registrar’s staff in Student Services, with the exception of the Senate records, which are also available to members of Senate. Access to the student records system is necessarily more wide-ranging, as authorized users in departments and Faculties must access student records to administer their programs.

Student records contain personal, educational and financial information. Paper documents accumulated during a student’s admission or ongoing enrolment are stored in locked “day files” kept for four semesters. By law and consistent with University practice elsewhere, financial records are kept for seven years. Staff practice within the Registrar’s office is guided by numerous documents, with guidelines revised and updated on a regular basis as appropriate.

Because some units involved with student records take credit card information in payment for services provided, the Registrar’s office follows the University’s best practices around the collection and disposal of credit card information (i.e., Payment Card Industry, or “PCI” Compliance).

**Co-curricular activities**

Student speakers at SFU’s convocation ceremonies often reflect that they learned more at University outside of classes than in. Recognizing the important truth of this, SFU invests significant resources to support co-curricular activities and programs that enhance the development of students’ academic, life and social skills, personal health and wellness, and community outreach.

Some activities are closely related to the academic work undertaken by students, as are co-operative education programs. Others, like athletics and various leadership programs, touch on academics less directly. All are undertaken to increase students’ awareness of their world by introducing them to experiences from which they can benefit and that might otherwise remain beyond the boundaries of their academic lives.

172 students.sfu.ca/financialaid.html
173 students.sfu.ca/calendar
174 www.canlearn.ca
Co-curricular activities take many forms, with most at SFU organized and delivered by Student Services. Some programs have intentional learning outcomes and are structured to promote student leadership and development. Others provide opportunities for involvement, contribute to the student experience and build community on campus. Among SFU’s co-curricular activities are a variety of programs that encourage leadership, promote intercollegiate and recreational athletics, provide peer education and mentoring, and offer social advocacy and support. Many clubs and other programs also enrich students’ lives and help prepare them for a healthy, active and participatory future.

Student clubs (with the exception of recreation clubs) operate under the governance and sponsorship of the Simon Fraser Student Society, not Simon Fraser University.

**Work-Integrated Learning—Co-operative Education**

Co-operative Education (co-op) forms a part of the larger Work-Integrated Learning unit within Student Services. Participating in co-op enhances student academic, personal and professional development by alternating periods of academic study with periods of work in fields related to a student’s academic discipline.

Co-op placements allow students to develop skills, acquire new knowledge, explore academic and career options, and network with potential employers while completing their degrees. Students also accrue the direct economic benefit of paid work to offset the cost of study. In turn, employers benefit from access to an enthusiastic and educated temporary workforce who may bring new ideas and energy from the academy to their workplace. Finally, the University gains students who return to their studies bringing new experience, perspective and information from the world beyond the “classroom.”

Co-op work terms are related to the student’s field of study and area of career interest. While co-op coursework carries “additive” and not academic credit (i.e., they are not included in the calculation of a student’s GPA and do not count toward the completion of graduation requirements), completed work terms count towards a “co-op” certificate or degree designation. Work terms are recorded on a student’s transcript as Pass, Fail or Withdrawal. Successful completion of a co-op work term is awarded three additive University credits.

At SFU, a co-op work term generally consists of full-time, paid work experience, typically 35-40 hours weekly for 13-16 weeks. Because of SFU’s trimester system, academic programs are rarely structured around the characteristic progression of a sequenced cohort. As a result, work terms may more easily be extended over two consecutive semesters, providing students up to eight months of continuous employment and a deeper connection with their workplace and the learning environment it offers.

In most programs the completion of three co-op work terms during an academic program qualifies for a co-op certificate. The successful completion of four work terms represents one year of professional, related work experience prior to graduation and earns a co-op designation on the candidate’s degree. Employer evaluations remain part of a student’s confidential records in the Co-operative Education program and are retained for a minimum of one year following graduation.
Frequent communication between the co-op program and the student reinforces learning outcomes and strengthens the partnership between the University, the program and the employer.

SFU also offers an International Co-op option. Students have the opportunity to expand their career horizons while gaining international and intercultural work experience, improving foreign language skills, and experiencing invaluable personal growth and competitive advantage in a global economy. In the past 12 years, SFU students have worked in over 950 international placements.

SFU’s co-operative education programs are accredited with the Canadian Association for Co-operative Education (CAFCE).175

Work-Integrated Learning—Career Services
Career Services is, with Co-operative Education and Volunteer Services, a part of SFU’s comprehensive Work Integrated Learning unit. In the past year, close to 2500 students took advantage of one-to-one appointments with both professional Career Advisors and volunteer Career Peer Educators. For 2010/11, the number of Career Peer Educators trained has increased by almost 50%, dramatically improving the service available to students.

As research has confirmed a connection between early career education and increased student persistence, Career Services also partners with the Faculties and departments to develop targeted programming to reach students earlier in their university careers. Career Services programming is based on contemporary career development theory, most notably Happenstance Theory and The Chaos Theory of Careers.

SFU’s “Symplicity” job posting system presented over 600 unique (non-co-op) job postings in 2010, and over 100 employers, graduate schools and professional schools attended the annual Career Days event to meet with thousands of potential student employees. Career Services also hosts numerous employer and school information events throughout the year.

Student employment by SFU
Being employed and able to earn an income allows many students to attend university, and the opportunity to try out options for a future career is a driving concern for most. SFU also offers students early opportunities to explore the working world and earn income through participating in its temporary labour pool. In the years 2007–2010, the proportion of temporary job placements at SFU filled by students through Personnel Action Requisitions (PARS) rose from 40% to almost 50%.

Although many positions require basic skills and knowledge, others engage students’ higher-level skills and interests as they assist faculty and administrators, often by carrying out research that otherwise would be difficult to undertake. For example, students collect data on operational practices working under the broad supervision of SFU’s Sustainability Advisory Committee.

Figure 2.10: Student temporary employment by Personnel Action Requisitions (PARs) processed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total PARs related to student jobs</th>
<th>Total PARs processed</th>
<th>Percentage of PARs related to student jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007*</td>
<td>566</td>
<td>1336</td>
<td>42.40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SFU Human Resources

175 www.cafce.ca/program_directory/151
Work Study

Work Study is another major opportunity for placements that provide experience and income to SFU students. The Work Study program is intended to supplement funding for Simon Fraser students with demonstrated financial need and is not restricted to BC residents, or to those receiving funding from StudentAid BC.

Of the $475,280 in salary (includes benefits) paid to SFU undergraduate students in 2008/09, $73,351 was awarded to international undergraduate students in fee schedule A (entered SFU in fall 2003 or later) whose work study funding was paid by the international bursary fund budget. These international undergraduate students are included in the chart below.

As awareness of the program has grown, the number of graduate students applying and accepting work-study placements has increased. Graduate students tend to use other sources of funding to support their education, such as fellowships and TAships which are not available to undergraduates. The current hourly wage is $10.25 (plus approximately 12% in lieu of benefits and vacation—adding up to approximately $11.50 per hour).

Until August 2002 the Work Study program was part of the BC Student Assistance Program, limiting the program to those BC residents who were receiving maximum government student assistance. In fall 2003 the government program was discontinued and Simon Fraser University has since funded the Work Study program.176

Figure 2.11: Growth in SFU-funded work study for undergraduate students177

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of awards</th>
<th>Total $ awarded</th>
<th>Total $ disbursed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09/10</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>641,700</td>
<td>475,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08/09</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>519,455</td>
<td>412,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/08</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>589,200</td>
<td>447,087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/07</td>
<td>525</td>
<td>714,000</td>
<td>526,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/06</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>687,800</td>
<td>536,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/05</td>
<td>541</td>
<td>734,400</td>
<td>607,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03/04</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>760,200</td>
<td>633,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02/03</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>510,800</td>
<td>431,640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/02</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>417,900</td>
<td>329,208</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2.11a: Growth in SFU-funded work study for graduate students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of awards</th>
<th>Total $ awarded</th>
<th>Total $ disbursed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

176 Report to the Senate Policy Committee on Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries 2008/09: www.sfu.ca/Senate/SenateComms/SPCSAB

177 A Work-Study student is assigned either 90 or 140 hours per semester; all must be at least 60% research-based. Students can be found doing research in faculty labs, preparing research reports for various departments at SFU, working for student radio CJSF on a communications-related issue, etc. Numbers include expenditures for the Students Aiding Students program until August 2005.
Residence Life

Most students arrive at SFU at a time of other major and related life transitions, from living at home to living independently, from study in a secondary school atmosphere with commensurate expectations to work at the university level. Each of these transitions calls on new and greater levels of personal responsibility. To help students successfully meet these challenges, Residence Life offers programs and services that support their emotional, physical and social development by establishing communities of students grounded in a common sense of responsibility, purpose, integrity, respect and openness.

Athletics and Recreation

The Athletics and Recreation department provides opportunities for students, alumni and the community at large to enrich their intellectual pursuits by participating in social and physical activities that challenge them to get active, be active and stay active.

The department adheres to SFU’s values and commitments and encourages intellectual and academic freedom; celebrates discovery, diversity, and dialogue; and strives to produce good citizens for a global community. Believing that resourcefulness is a result of balance, learning and service, varsity athletes are encouraged to contribute through mandated community service.

Simon Fraser University is, first and foremost, an academic institution and strongly encourages its athletes to balance their participation in competitive sports with sustained academic performance. An Academics First office provides student athletes with access to tutors, academic counseling and workshops. As a result, half of SFU’s “Clan” teams have team GPAs above 3.0.

SFU’s athletes demonstrate conclusively that academic and athletic performance are profoundly compatible, with varsity teams earning 72 national championships in 11 sports, most won in US leagues in which SFU was the only Canadian competitor. Between 1996 and 2004, SFU was awarded six Sears cups178 for the best all-around athletic program. In 2004, many SFU teams moved to the Canadian Interuniversity Sports league seeking suitable competition after many of their NAIA competitors moved to the NCAA’s Division II. Clan athletes and former athletes have won 10 Olympic medals.179 In 2010, SFU teams had over 350 varsity athletes in nine men’s and ten women’s teams.

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178 en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NACDA_Directors%27_Cup
179 athletics.sfu.ca/stats-history.html
SFU students who do not participate in intercollegiate athletics have many other recreational opportunities to live an active, healthy lifestyle while at SFU. SFU’s Gym and Fitness Centre is open daily and provides access to a full range of recreational facilities and programs that promote and enhance lifelong healthy living. These include:

- exercise machines, free and fixed weights and fitness classes;
- swimming and diving pools and aquatics programs;
- recreational and competitive intramural leagues (e.g., badminton, ultimate Frisbee);
- instructional programs and lessons (e.g., yoga, martial arts, kayaking, dance);
- recreational and competitive sports clubs (e.g., lacrosse, hockey, rowing); as well as
- recreational activities at the Surrey and Vancouver campuses.

Athletics and Recreation now hosts 16 club teams, 24 intramural teams and 45 recreational programs, with over 13,000 SFU students, staff, alumni and members of the UniverCity residential community holding active memberships. SFU’s Fitness Centre hosted 132,000 individual visits in 2010. Athletics and Recreation also hosts over 5200 summer camp participants annually, an activity that supports families, establishes healthy habits for growing children, and employs a number of SFU students throughout the summer months.

**Health, Safety and Security**

**Health and Counselling Services**

Health and Counselling Services takes a holistic and innovative approach to health care that incorporates mind-body wellness and encompasses emotional, physical, psychological, social and environmental aspects of life. A broad range of health-related services are provided, including access to physicians and nurses, referrals to external health providers, medical labs, and other health-related resources. Travel clinics are available for students planning travel outside Canada for field schools, international exchanges, research semesters or personal growth. Short-term access to psychiatric and psychological support and testing on a clinical basis also is available.

**Campus Security**

Campus Security is responsible for the safety of persons and property on SFU’s three campuses, a task it performs by practicing proactive strategies to reduce risk, preparing incident response strategies and conducting post-incident investigations. In addition to its patrol activities, Security initiatives include the Safe Walk program, campus speed watch and access control operations (mechanical and electronic). Security also participates in campus events and works collaboratively with other campus departments and off-campus agencies. In fall 2010, Security operations that previously operated semi-independently at each SFU campus were integrated into a single administrative body.

Campus Security operations are continuously supervised by experienced security professionals employed by the University. Supervisors oversee certified contract security officers who conduct
campus patrols and other routine duties. Security staff are required to participate in ongoing training to ensure all members are knowledgeable, current and professional and that their training exceeds the minimum levels required by law. Under BC’s Security Services Act\textsuperscript{180} every officer engaged in a security role must take basic security training and be licensed by the government as a Security Worker. In addition to the Security Services Act, Campus Security operates under the authority of the University Act and various SFU policies and procedures.

The Criminal Code of Canada limits the powers of arrest for citizens and defines who qualifies as a “peace officer.” Except for a few institutions where campus security officers are sworn as Special Constables under their province’s Police Act, campus security officers operate analogously to corporate security and have the powers of citizen’s arrest. They cannot carry batons, pepper spray or other “weapons,” and their powers of arrest are limited to instances when they directly observe the committing of a crime. Under BC’s Trespass Act,\textsuperscript{181} Security staff acting as agents of the University can issue notices of trespass and evict persons who are conducting unauthorized and unwanted activities on SFU property.

There is no Canadian equivalent to the US Clery Act, and campus security operations carry no federal or provincial requirement to report publicly on-campus crime statistics. Nonetheless, SFU’s Campus Security collects, analyzes and issues regular reports for the Burnaby campus that, although self-defined, cover essentially the same kinds of incidents reported under the Clery Act.\textsuperscript{182}

Every incident reported to and acted upon by Security on the Burnaby campus is documented in a Security Incident Report. Reporting for the Surrey and Vancouver campuses was brought into conformity with Burnaby practice when Security operations at those campuses were integrated with those at the Burnaby campus in November 2010. Crime statistics are discussed with members of the community through student orientation sessions, Residence safety sessions, Residence and student staff training sessions and new employee orientations.

Campus Security staff also are the initial responders to campus emergencies and are responsible for the initial assessment of all incidents. Campus Security has incident-specific safe operating procedures, is responsible for setting up the initial incident command, making decisions on the need for additional internal and external resources, and co-ordinating the request of resources. If the Campus Security Incident Commander determines that the incident is beyond Campus Security’s ability to manage, the Incident Commander has the authority to activate SFU’s Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and begin the EOC staff call-out.

Campus Security has a role in carrying out the following SFU policies:

- \textit{AD 1-3 Traffic and Parking Regulations}
- \textit{AD 1-4 Control of Keys and Access Cards}
- \textit{AD 1-12 Selling, Serving and Advertising Liquor}
- \textit{GP 4 Unscheduled Cancellations of Classes}
- \textit{GP 16 Non-Smoking Policy}
- \textit{GP 22 Fire Safety}

\textsuperscript{180} www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_07030_01
\textsuperscript{181} www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96462_01
\textsuperscript{182} www.sfu.ca/security/patrol_operations/incident_statistics_2008.html
Environmental Health and Safety

SFU fosters a safe working, research and study environment by instilling a comprehensive safety culture shaped by a coherent body of safety-related policies and programs that support a participatory approach to identifying, reporting and addressing safety hazards. The Environmental Health and Safety department (EHS) provides programs and services in support of safe work practices and regulatory compliance.

Compliance works best when the reasons behind safety-related rules, regulations and programs are well understood. To that end EHS makes a point of being accessible and responsive to departments, providing regulatory updates, guiding compliance, facilitating the meeting of regulatory reporting requirements, providing general safety training and co-ordinating collaborative EHS initiatives. EHS also reviews regulatory proposals and requirements, manages relationships with regulatory agencies, and oversees compliance at SFU.

The EHS Management System is composed of policies and programs that build legislative and regulatory compliance, minimize loss, train employees, co-ordinate contractor activities, and monitor and review the effectiveness of programs. Responsibility is assigned to line managers to comply with University and legislative requirements, and emphasizes the need to create an environment conducive to collaboration in addressing environmental health and safety issues. EHS prepares an annual report that documents safety-related activities.

To assist departments with practicing the Safety Management System, EHS has developed a Departmental Safety Program Outline that can be customized to the needs of individual departments and safety committees.

Hazardous materials management

Hazardous waste disposal is regulated federally through Environment Canada, provincially through the Ministry of the Environment, and locally through the Greater Vancouver Regional District’s Sewer-Use Bylaw. It is SFU’s policy to comply with all legislation to protect the environment.

By regulation, hazardous materials cannot be disposed of down the drain, must be properly labeled and packaged in suitable containers, and those who handle, use or dispose of them must know how to do so properly. Federal regulations outline general policies and procedures for safe disposal of hazardous or toxic materials, and EHS has developed internal policies to ensure that chemicals, biohazardous, radioactive and other toxic materials are safely managed.

EHS’ Hazardous Materials Management Program sets four objectives directed at ensuring that:

- all University faculty, staff and students working with hazardous materials do so safely and that their health is protected;

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183 www.sfu.ca/ehs.html
184 www.ehs.sfu.ca/safety/safety_programs/departmental.html
• applicable legislation is complied with;
• the University’s requirements for procuring, handling, storing, transporting and disposing of hazardous materials are successfully communicated; and
• faculty, staff and students who must handle hazardous materials on campus receive proper training for doing so.185

EHS has a role in carrying out the following policies:

• GP 13 Ergonomics
• GP 17 University Occupational Health and Safety
• GP 21 Disposal of Broken Glass and Sharps
• GP 22 Fire Procedures
• GP 25 Response to Violence and Threatening Behaviour
• GP 31 Emergency Management
• GP 39 Working Alone or in Isolation
• R 20.02 Bio-Safety
• R 20.04 Radiological Safety
• R 20.05 Non-Ionizing Radiation Safety

185 Refer to www.sfu.ca/ehs.html for examples of procedures, reports and training manuals relating to the management of hazardous materials.
Chapter 2, Standard 2.E
Library and Information Resources

SFU’s Library provides access to Library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth and breadth to support members of the SFU community in their academic activities, wherever offered and however delivered. Performance in these areas is reported annually in the Library’s Annual Reports. Identified indicators align with the University’s mission and core themes and underscore the Library’s role in SFU’s academic culture.

The SFU Library is guided by its commitment to equal access. While this commitment has been in place for decades, the opening of libraries at the Vancouver (Belzberg Library) and Surrey (Fraser Valley Real Estate Board Academic Library) campuses, and the increasing number of distance education students, have resulted in the Library adopting specific policies and practices to carry it out.

Maintaining this commitment has required ongoing consultation and planning, particularly with regard to the resource needs of students and faculty using distance education programs and those at the Vancouver and Surrey campuses. Library representatives meet each semester with distance education co-ordinators to review resources and materials and discuss access issues. Staff who work at the Vancouver and Surrey campuses are fully integrated with the Library’s administrative and planning structure and sit, for example, on internal Library committees such as the Library Council and the Library Planning Committee.

Figure 2.12: Library subscriptions

2006-2010, 1% change in print subscriptions, 34% change in digital subscriptions
Source: SFU Library

More importantly, the Library’s commitment to equal access has significantly affected how Library resources are acquired and access is provided. The SFU Library guides its allocations of resources and capacity based on student (and, increasingly, faculty and staff) preference for electronic over print resources. Most current undergraduate students were born in the computer age, educated in the Internet age, and are most comfortable seeking and finding material electronically, a preference mirrored in changes to how Library collections are used. In the past ten years, SFU’s Library has invested more of its collections budget in electronic resources that can be made available to students and faculty with Internet access anytime and from anywhere. For example, over the period 2006–2010, the number of print subscriptions grew by only 1%, while the number of electronic subscriptions increased by 34%.

186 www.lib.sfu.ca/about/reports
To meet the increasing need of students for access to technology, each of the three libraries has laptops to lend. The Bennett Library at Burnaby also lends LCD projectors. Surrey campus’s Fraser Library offers an array of equipment that includes: LCD projectors; external hard drives; video and photography equipment; tripods and lighting equipment; digital audio recording devices; GPS; interactivity devices; tablets; USB sensors and microcontrollers; and gaming consoles. Equipment is added as demand requires.

Figure 2.13: Library loaned equipment, individual use

To stay ahead of the curve in the rapidly changing information environment, the Library actively pursues avenues for staff development. Professional development sessions are regularly held in-house, and Library staff are supported to attend professional development conferences, workshops and courses. Library staff are also active publishers and presenters. In 2010, 22 staff published articles or presented at conferences.

Library Planning

The Library’s core planning document is its Strategic Plan. The Library Strategic Plan is developed in the context of the University’s vision and is strongly aligned with the University’s core themes: teaching and learning, research, student success and experience, and community and citizenship.

Library Strategic Plans are developed in consultation with and through the Senate Library Committee, Liaison Librarians, department Library representatives and Faculty representatives on Library committees. Planning includes selected members of the University administration and Library staff and is carried out through a series of meetings and workshops. Student input and opinions are gathered using an online survey.

Quantitative data also are considered, including indicators of collection, service and program use. Data track online and in-person use and are collected for all three libraries. Finally, the Library Strategic Plan considers current and emerging trends affecting academic libraries as, for example, trends in scholarly communications and open source software. When complete, the Library Strategic Plan is shared broadly with the University community through presentations and via the Library website.

187 www.lib.sfu.ca/about/reports
The most recent Library Plan covers the period 2007-2010. Upon his arrival in September 2010, the new Dean of Library Services initiated a strategic planning process beginning with an environmental scan. The environmental scan included: 1) a Library staff survey; 2) preparation of Library Division head reports outlining current issues and future needs; 3) two Library Planning Committee retreats; 4) stakeholder consultations with faculty, Deans and graduate students.

In May 2011, the Library Council met in a professionally facilitated retreat that resulted in a five-year vision statement, including six high-impact strategic planning directions and nineteen goals. This document was shared with Library at an all-staff meeting in June and distributed for SFU community comment in July; when community input is complete, the resulting document will be published as the Library Strategic Plan 2011-2016.

While the Strategic Plan forms its core planning document, the Library carries out continuous and ad hoc planning. Ad hoc planning initiatives generally are time-limited, involve faculty, students and Library staff, and consider quantitative indicators in the planning and decision-making process. Recent ad hoc initiatives include planning an expansion of programs and services offered through the Student Learning Commons while managing a contraction in the Library’s collection budget.

Ongoing planning initiatives include those that ensure day-to-day operations meet current needs. For instance, the Library Planning Committee meets twice monthly to discuss budget priorities, contact with external organizations, priorities for services and projects requiring significant budget or personnel resources, and co-ordinating cross-divisional or inter-campus Library initiatives.

In keeping with best practice, SFU conducts an External Review of the Library every six years. The review is performed by an External Review Committee, normally composed of three librarians from universities of similar size and one SFU faculty member. The Library submits extensive documentation to the Committee, including a Self-Study that outlines current issues and future challenges. An External Review Committee conducted a site visit and delivered a report to the Vice President, Research (VPR) in spring 2011. The overall tenor of the report was positive. Both the Report and the Library’s response to the eleven recommendations were reviewed by the VPR and forwarded to Senate in summer 2011.

Using the SFU Library

The SFU Library provides instruction and support to a wide range of individuals and groups to inform them how to use the Library and its resources effectively and efficiently. While the primary focus is on use by students and faculty, the Library also supports administrators, staff and other community members.
SFU undergraduate and graduate students can access instruction and support programs and services online or in-person through the Library and the Student Learning Commons. In-person sessions are available at all three campuses, while online tutorials are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the Library’s website.\(^\text{188}\) The number of students benefitting from classes and workshops offered by the Library grew by 34% from 2006–2010.

The Student Learning Commons (SLC) was established in 2005 and today operates on all three campuses.\(^\text{189}\) Its mandate is to support SFU students in their academic pursuits, with emphases on writing and learning support. Over the past few years, the SLC has been asked to participate in a number of University partnerships and integrated programs, including the Academic Enhancement Program (AEP) with Computing Science and the large-scale Back on Track (BOT) program with Student Services. The latter has had notable success in improving the academic performance and retention of students who would otherwise be required to withdraw. (See the Student Experience and Success section of Chapter 4 for a brief discussion.)

A list of other in-person and online programs and services can be found on the Library’s website. In many cases, students can register online for these. Some of the most popular past workshops have included On Your Way to an A, Top Ten Things to Know About University Writing, Creating an Effective Study Schedule, and Exam Strategies. Workshops specific to graduate students have included Publish, Don’t Perish and the Grad Salon, a writing and discussion series.

SFU librarians are increasingly asked by faculty to provide in-class presentations on Library resources and services. For these, librarians customize the presentation and material so students get information directly relevant to their course. Information and help sheets for both graduate and undergraduate students cover a range of topics and are available online and in print.

SFU faculty can access instruction and support from the Library in several ways. Liaison Librarians are the primary point of contact for faculty and will assist them to access Library information, programs and services for themselves or their classes. Through the Library website, faculty can access information regarding the collection, teaching support and other faculty-related services.
The Library also is actively involved in discussions and new initiatives in scholarly communication and academic publishing. In February 2010 the Library created an Open Access Fund to subsidize author charges for faculty who choose to publish articles in open access journals produced by publishers such as BMC, PLoS and Hindawi.

The Library has been a leader in the Public Knowledge Project, bringing together faculty, librarians and graduate students to explore whether and how new technologies can be used to improve the professional and public value of scholarly research. The Library has been a leading “node” in the Synergies project, a not-for-profit platform for the publication and dissemination of research results in the social sciences and humanities. Finally, the Library manages a Scholarly Digitization Fund of $50,000/year that annually supports 8 to 12 faculty-led projects to digitize collections of research materials housed in the Library or elsewhere.

Although there are no programs and services specifically for administrators and staff, as members of the SFU community they are welcome to access the programs and services designed for students.

Over the past decade, SFU has been involved in the development of the UniverCity residential community adjacent to the campus. Residents of UniverCity are eligible to use the Burnaby Public Library; however, the nearest branch is about eight kilometers away and off the Mountain. As a result, the SFU Library partners with the Burnaby Public Library to make a small collection of public library materials available through SFU’s Bennett Library.

Security of Library Resources

The Library early recognized the need to authenticate online user identities in order to manage access to its resources, and was an early adopter of security protocols for this purpose. In the late 1990s, the Library was one of the first libraries to adopt EZproxy and, in 2004/05, developed security support for the provincial entity BC Campus. The security of electronic resources, particularly the identification of users, is of the utmost importance to the Library and is critical to maintaining relationships with vendors.

Today the Library is partnering with SFU’s IT Services on a national trial of Shibboleth, a standards-based open source software package. Shibboleth permits a single web sign-on and allows sites to make informed authorization decisions controlling individual access to protected online resources in a way that preserves privacy across or within organizational boundaries. Shibboleth will allow users to move seamlessly among federated library resources.

In the broadest context, SFU Library’s policies support the University’s mission and core themes, particularly teaching and learning, research, and student success and experience. At a high level, the intended outcomes of SFU Library policies are to provide equitable access to the Library’s resources, to maintain a respectful Library environment, and to protect the Library’s resources and assets.
In 2011 the SFU Library is as much a virtual Library as a physical one. The policies that govern the virtual Library ensure that the Library’s resources are secure while remaining easily accessible to those authorized to use them. Importantly, the policies also ensure that the agreements with vendors, particularly with regard to user access, are respected. The Library’s policies in this regard are also in keeping with SFU’s policies governing information and communications technology.

The security of the Library’s electronic resources is governed by a set of complementary policies: a University-wide policy on Fair Use of Information and Communications Technology\(^{190}\) and Library policies, including the Public Computer Policy,\(^ {191}\) and Guidelines on the Use of Library Computer Equipment and Software by Library Staff.\(^ {192}\)

The security of the print and special collections is also of ongoing concern to the Library. SFU has had for many years an alarm system to prevent people from leaving the Library with materials that have not been checked out. The Library’s Special Collections and Rare Books are subject to special provisions governing the use of its materials and its space: The Special Collections and Rare Books Security Policy.\(^ {193}\)

The policies that govern the physical Library ensure the highest and best use of both the space and the collection. They recognize that, for many on campus, the Library is their “academic home,” and strive to create a welcoming environment that is nonetheless focused on learning and research.
Chapter 2, Standard 2.F
Financial Resources

Simon Fraser University manages its financial resources using sound principles based on government legislation, University policy and professional best practices. Financial reporting and capital planning are integrated within the portfolio of the Vice President, Finance and Administration, and all University budgets and capital plans are subject to approval by the Board of Governors.

Budgeting

Public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia now receive roughly half of their total revenue from the provincial government in the form of grants from the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED). The rest is generated from tuition and student fees, ancillary services, federal grants, donations, endowments, investments and research grants. A copy of the Annual Budget for 2011/12 is appended to this Report.

The amount of the annual operating grant from the province is determined primarily by what it received the previous year, referred to as “the base.” Government decides whether and by how much it will increase funding to institutions to help offset such inflationary pressures as salary increases and utility costs. BC institutions have long sought a funding formula that takes account of the impact of inflation as measured by the US Higher Education Price Index\(^\text{194}\) and the cost of salary increases caused by “progress through the ranks.”

In addition to the base, the province may increase the University’s funding by allocating to it additional “program FTEs.”\(^\text{195}\) Funding rates for undergraduates differ from those for graduate students. In fiscal 2008/09 the province funded undergraduate FTEs at approximately $7200 (general growth rate) and graduate FTEs at $20,000. In 2009/10 the University was funded for an additional 532 undergraduates and 109 graduate students; however, provincial growth funding for undergraduates ceased in 2010/11.

Information on total government operating grants is contained in an annual Budget Letter from the Ministry of Advanced Education. The Letter notes any increase to the grant for new program FTEs that the government intends to fund and provides operating grant projections for three years, which is intended to permit long-term planning.\(^\text{196}\)

\(^{194}\) en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Higher_Education_Price_Index

\(^{195}\) An undergraduate program FTE is equivalent to a normal annual full-time load. Except for Engineering students, at SFU this is 30 credits. Graduate student program FTEs are calculated as [(the # of Full time students + the # of part-time students) ÷ 3].

\(^{196}\) 2010/11 Budget letter: www.aved.gov.bc.ca/budget/10_11/SFU.pdf
Planning for tuition revenues at SFU begins with the institution’s Strategic Enrolment Management Plan, managed by the office of the Vice President, Academic. Revenues are projected based on expected enrolments and increases to fees. The current rate of tuition fee increases is capped by the province at 2% for 2011/12. Proposed fee increases form a part of the annual operating budget and must be approved by the Board of Governors.

![Figure 2.16 Tuition and provincial funding as percentages of total revenues, 2004-2010](source: SFU Financial Services)

Under legislation BC’s publicly funded post-secondary institutions are required to provide a balanced operating budget. Budgets are not similarly mandated for non-operating donations, external grants or other non-tuition revenue sources; however, SFU has a host of other internal controls and processes in place to ensure sound fiscal management over these activities. Annual targets for fundraising and research revenues are incorporated into the budget model to allow the allocation of expense budgets to support these activities.

### Day-to-Day Operations

In managing its capital assets (i.e., the totality of its financial and physical resources), SFU’s object is to safeguard its ability to fulfill its institutional mission. To that purpose it internally restricts a portion of its net financial assets to fund such future commitments as long-term lease obligations and self-insurance liabilities. The University also holds funds for the ongoing development of ancillary businesses and for specific activities funded from various external sources (e.g., multi-year research grants).

The University supports its programs and services with cash flow generated through two principal revenue sources: its provincial operating grant provided in monthly installments in accordance with an annual schedule set by government; and student tuition and ancillary fees collected prior to the start of each semester.

Cash flows are managed by SFU’s Treasury department, which monitors daily cash receipts and disbursements and performs monthly forecasts. A line of credit with SFU’s bank provides operating

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197 Refer to Chapter 3 for development process of the Strategic Enrolment Management Plan.

198 Typical internal controls include accounting practices that monitor spending and ensure revenues and expenses are appropriately matched (especially for restricted funds), policies controlling how endowment funds are managed and setting spending limits, clarity around proper signing authority.
funds to bridge short-term cash flow requirements, and the University has access to an emergency line of credit through the province. Excess operating funds are invested consistent with guidelines established in the University’s Investment Policy.\textsuperscript{199} SFU maintains a debt rating of Aa1 with a stable outlook as of August 2010.

Between fiscal 2005 and 2009, the operating net assets of the University declined to a deficit of $19.5 million.\textsuperscript{200} This deficit stemmed from impacts on the market value of operating investments during the worldwide decline of financial markets in 2009, and from several years in which operating budgets were supplemented by drawing down excess reserves. The University has since made a concerted effort to return its operating net assets to surplus, leading to a restored surplus of $13.1 million at the end of fiscal 2009/2010. The University has also changed its budgeting processes to mitigate the risk of future impacts to reserves. The new budget model is discussed in Chapter 3.

The University budget is developed annually using a process established in policy\textsuperscript{201} and managed by the Budget office. Budgets are developed in and informed by extensive consultation throughout the University community.\textsuperscript{202} That process begins each summer with forecasting and modeling based on planning assumptions for enrolment, government grants and known inflation for costs.

The Budget Guiding Principles developed in 2009\textsuperscript{203} are used to inform allocations. They ensure the budget model preserves funding for specific strategic and operational areas; areas with non-discretionary costs (e.g., contractual agreements, utilities, and expenses related to specific grants); and areas of strategic importance to the University.

A draft budget is prepared and reviewed by the Vice Presidents and presented for information and comment to stakeholder groups in open forums that include students, faculty and staff. Feedback is incorporated into the budget model. A final draft of the operating budget is reviewed by the Vice Presidents and forwarded in March to a Board of Governors Budget Workshop prior to its review by the whole Board.

Spending is monitored throughout the year, with significant budget variances reported to the Board through its Finance and Administration Committee.

Financial Reporting

SFU rigorously monitors its finances using monthly reporting and variance analysis through data provided from SFU’s Enterprise Resource Planning system (PeopleSoft). The same integrated system is used to manage staff and faculty positions and SFU’s student records. The system is configured to provide the appropriate level of internal control while facilitating accurate and timely financial reporting.

\textsuperscript{199} www.sfu.ca/content/sfu/policies/gazette/board/B10-09.html
\textsuperscript{202} Community Budget Presentation 2010/11 schedule: www.sfu.ca/uploads/page/05/2010-11_Consultations_v11A_Public.pdf
\textsuperscript{203} Budget guidelines can be found at www.sfu.ca/finance/budget/budget_guidelines/.
A web-based financial reporting tool distributed to Faculties and departments allows decentralized access to financial information and enables academic and administrative units to track and monitor costs in their departments and projects. The tool is flexible and easy to use and provides real-time reporting and “drill down” access to supporting information (e.g., vendor invoices, journal entries and payroll information). Training sessions are offered on an ongoing basis and accounting month-end is closed five working days after each calendar month-end.

As part of BC’s Government Reporting Entity (GRE), SFU is required to issue quarterly financial reports and forecasts to the Ministry of Advanced Education to be consolidated with government financial reports. Audited annual financial statements are required by government in late May, approximately two months following the March 31st fiscal year-end.

Finance also prepares and releases to senior managers a Monthly Financial Review that highlights key fiscal data and transactions over the past month. Monthly reports are distributed to SFU’s Vice Presidents, Deans and other senior and financial administrators to ensure they have access to a current and comprehensive overview of the University’s financial status.

**Capital Finances**

Budgets for capital projects are established at the time the project is approved. Funding comes from various sources, including provincial or federal governments and private donations. The University also incurs debt to fund portions of some capital projects. Debt issuance is carefully controlled and requires provincial approval.

In June 2003, SFU issued a 40-year bond to generate funds for key capital projects for which other funding could not be acquired. Projects included the construction of new student residences and academic buildings. The bond was issued for a total of $150 million at an interest rate of 5.613%. Interest is paid to bondholders semi-annually. The bonds are neither obligations of, nor guaranteed by, the provincial government. Financing is provided through annual charges to SFU’s Ancillary and Operating Funds and includes interest payments and a provision for sinking funds. The bond is scheduled to be retired in 2043.

Capital projects funded in whole or in part by the bond include:

- $ 6.4M, Refinanced existing residence debenture debt at a lower rate;
- $ 0.8M, Refinanced existing parking lot debenture debt at a lower rate;
- $ 2.5M, Fully financed energy efficiency projects;
- $39.9M, Fully financed the construction of three new residence towers and a residence dining hall;
- $ 5.6M, Fully financed an upgrade of Hamilton Hall Residence building;
- $11.6M, Financed approximately 73% of a gym expansion and new fitness centre;
- $11.9M, Financed approximately 60% of the new Segal Graduate School for Business building;
- $26.4M, Financed 75% of the new Saywell Hall building;
All capital projects funded in whole or in part by the bond issue are located on the Burnaby campus except for the Segal Graduate School of Business that forms part of SFU’s Vancouver campus.

Ancillary Services

The University’s policy on budget objectives requires that ancillary operations must be operated to cover their own direct and indirect operating costs. The University manages the budgeting and financial reporting of its ancillaries through separate funds. Revenues are generated to cover operating expenses and debt service payments and to provide the reinvestment necessary to ensure long-term financial viability of those operations.

SFU’s ancillary services units provide goods and services to the University community and support the University’s mission and core themes. They include:

- **SFU Bookstores** are located at each of SFU’s three campuses in Burnaby, Vancouver and Surrey. The Bookstore includes a Tech Shop that sells personal computers and supplies to the SFU community.
- **Residence and Housing** accommodates over 1,800 students, with an additional 14 hotel rooms available for casual use. Several Residence buildings generate summer revenue by providing accommodation that supports meeting and conference business, summer camps and other events or activities.
- **Parking Services** operates all Burnaby campus parking lots and repays debt on the Parkade. Parking at the Surrey and Vancouver campuses is managed by external parking vendors.
- **Food Services** are provided through a contractor at seven locations on the Burnaby campus.
- **Document Solutions** provides both digital and traditional printing services.
- **Meeting, Event and Conference Services (MECS)** manages casual and external room bookings at SFU’s Vancouver and, to a lesser degree, Burnaby campuses.

In exceptional circumstances, ancillary operations can be supported by the operating fund. Residence and Housing is the only ancillary now receiving operating funds, which are applied to offset some of its deferred maintenance costs.

Audits

BC’s Auditor General issues a Financial Statement Audit Coverage Plan that outlines which GREs will be audited. SFU’s auditor of record is currently the Auditor General; however, government has contracted out its audits to a third-party auditing firm, BDO Dunwoody. The University received a clean audit opinion for 2009/10.

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204 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-05.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/board/B10-05.html)
SFU’s external financial audit takes place within the two months following its fiscal year-end. Results are submitted to the Audit Committee of the Board of Governors and, thereafter, to the full Board at its May meeting. The Management Letter accompanies the audit opinion and identifies minor deficiencies in management procedures or controls. It is reviewed at each meeting to satisfy the Committee that management is making progress on addressing items noted in the Letter.

Fundraising

Fundraising for SFU is carried out under the leadership of the Vice President, Advancement and Alumni Engagement (VPAAE), who receives all Canadian and many international donations. SFU has been a registered charity in Canada since 1967. The SFU Foundation also receives gifts to the University, although the Foundation Board now serves largely as a volunteer advisory group to the University.

SFU is a member of the Canadian Council for the Advancement of Education (CCAE), the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), a US-based organization of institutions focusing on post-secondary fundraising, and of IMAGINE Canada, a similar, Canadian organization. Individual staff members have CFRE (Certified Fundraising Executive) accreditation from the US-based CFRE International; from the Association of Professional Researchers for Advancement (APRA); from the US-based Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP); and from the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP).

VPAAE staff are well acquainted with Canada Revenue Agency and US Internal Revenue Service regulations, and ensure that all donations and tax-receipts adhere to both laws and recommendations. External audits to ensure compliance with Canadian GAAP and US OMB Circular A-133 are performed annually. Staff members are familiar with, and adhere to, the Association of Fundraising Professional’s Donor’s Bill of Rights and Ethical Fundraising guide for non-profit boards and fundraisers.

Friends of SFU, a Washington 501(C) 3 organization established in 1974, receives donations from US organizations and individuals who wish to receive a US tax receipt for their gifts. The stated purpose of Friends of SFU is to support “academic activities and scientific research at Simon Fraser University.” Both SFU and Friends of SFU are listed as organizations eligible to receive charitable donations in IRS Publication 78.

Advancement complies with systems and requirements set by Finance for departmental budgeting and in the proper designation of gifts and the correct application of Canada Revenue Agency rules and guidelines for gift receipting. Advancement liaises regularly with Finance regarding bank reconciliations, new account setups and correct procedures for account management and oversight. It reports annually to Finance on tax-receipted donations, gifts in kind, and gifts to SFU’s US foundation. As they form a part of the University’s comprehensive financial records, the financial records of the VPAAE’s office are subject to annual audits by the province.
The following Board-approved policies govern the management of financial resources; all are available on the University’s Policy Gazette:

- **AD 3.01** Petty Cash
- **AD 3.02** Travel and Business Expenses
- **AD 3.03** Direct Acquisition of Goods and Services
- **AD 3.05** Credit and Collection
- **AD 3.11** Employee/Independent Contractor Policy
- **AD 3.12** Supplementary Course Fees
- **AD 3.14** Indemnity Approval Policy
- **GP 20** Endowment Management Policy
- **B 10.05** Budget Policy Objectives
- **B 10.09** Investment Governance Policy
- **B 10.11** Signing Authorizations Policy
- **AD 11.01** Purchasing Policy
- **AD 11.10** Reporting and Disposal of Surplus Equipment and Material
- **AD 11.13** Purchase or Lease of Land
- **AD 11.21** Ethical Procurement

[206](http://www.sfu.ca/policies.html)
Chapter 2, Standard 2.G
Physical and Technological Infrastructure

Physical Infrastructure

Physical facilities at SFU are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure the healthy learning and working environments that support SFU’s mission, programs and services.

SFU has three campuses, one in each of BC’s three largest municipalities, all located within the Greater Vancouver Regional District. Together, the Burnaby, Vancouver and Surrey campuses contain approximately 24,000sm (258,333sf) of classroom space, 15,000sm (161,459sf) of teaching laboratories, and 33,000sm (355,209sf) of research laboratories.

SFU’s original campus in Burnaby combines striking architecture with a panoramic view of BC’s Lower Mainland. In 2007, the Burnaby campus was awarded the Prix du XXe siècle by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada for architectural excellence.

The Burnaby campus opened in 1965 with over 405 hectares (1,000 acres) of land donated by the City of Burnaby. In 1996, over 320 hectares was returned by SFU to Burnaby in exchange for saleable property elsewhere and for development rights within the remaining campus. The University, acting through the SFU Community Trust, has since used a portion of its remaining lands to create UniverCity, a residential neighbourhood and an award-winning model of sustainable urban development.

SFU’s downtown Vancouver campus offered its first courses in rented office space in 1980 and has since grown to become the “academic heart of Vancouver.” Success led in 1989 to the expansion of its initial “storefront” operations into leased space at the Harbour Centre building. SFU’s Vancouver campus has since grown to four buildings located within blocks of each other, plus a leased visual arts studio facility nearby. Three of SFU’s four downtown buildings carry “heritage” status.

Space at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue (2000), the Segal School of Graduate Studies building (2007) and the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts (2010) is owned by SFU. The Harbour Centre facility is leased until 2017, at which time it will need renewal or a suitable alternate space identified. Since 1989, SFU has committed approximately $150 million to developing and improving the Vancouver campus.

The Vancouver campus now serves over 70,000 people annually, and the recent move of the School for the Contemporary Arts from Burnaby to Vancouver’s Goldcorp Centre for the Arts downtown is expected to significantly increase SFU’s already considerable outreach and impact in Vancouver.

The Surrey campus was established in 2002 and now has 30,613sm (329,516sf) of space located in one of Canada’s biggest and fastest growing cities. The building, designed by acclaimed architect Bing Thom, has won numerous national and international awards. SFU owns the interior space that comprises the Surrey campus. The balance of the building complex is owned by a third party and

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managed by a professional management company. SFU leases additional space at Surrey to house its Mechatronic Systems Laboratory and the Surrey City Library classrooms.

**Campus Planning and Facilities Management**

Planning the development of the University’s physical growth and maintaining and renewing its various lands and buildings are the responsibility of the departments of Facilities Development and Facilities Operations, both of which report to SFU’s Chief Facilities Officer and University Architect, who reports to the Vice President, Finance and Administration.

Day-to-day management of campus operations and maintenance is the task of Facilities Operations. Facilities’ mission is:

> to effectively and efficiently provide stewardship of buildings and lands to support the faculty, staff, and students in pursuit of excellence in their individual and institutional, academic teaching, research, and community objectives.

Given the different operating requirements of SFU’s three campuses, Facilities’ responsibilities vary from campus to campus, with activity preponderantly focused at Burnaby.

Facilities is charged with campus planning, managing real estate and property, developing new buildings, maintaining, operating and renovating buildings and utility systems, overseeing the landscaping of grounds, keeping an inventory of space and operational systems, and supporting sustainability initiatives.

Staffed by over 150 University employees, with assistance from approximately 140 external contract employees, Facilities provides general maintenance and operational services on a fee or cost recovery basis to student residences, food services and other auxiliary units. In all, Facilities services more than 432,000sm of built space and 156 hectares of land. Staff employed or supervised by Facilities include skilled technicians and tradespeople, custodians, groundskeepers, mechanics, electricians, carpenters, operating engineers, maintenance professionals, clerical assistants, engineers, architects, technologists, managers, administrators and others.

The Vancouver and Surrey campuses each have managers who supervise building maintenance on-site and oversee the external contractors who perform some maintenance duties. Each also has a small Facilities office that works directly with the campus’s Executive Director; to maintain operational continuity the Vancouver and Surrey managers report to the Chief Facilities Officer at Burnaby campus on Facilities-related matters.

**Maintenance**

Annual funding for operational maintenance comes from a combination of base operating budget and revenues recovered for services provided to clients. Funding in 2010/11 amounted to approximately $22.2 million, or approximately 6.1% of the SFU’s operating budget. This represented the lowest percentage reported among the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO). Approximately $6.3 million was for utilities, with another $3.2 million for custodial maintenance. SFU’s average cost of maintenance is $65/sm.
At Burnaby, maintenance and operational services for some entities are provided on a fee or cost recovery basis. These include revenue-producing ancillaries such as the student residences, food services and bookstore. The two student societies and several businesses sub-leasing space from the Simon Fraser Student Society also pay a fee for maintenance services.

The province also provides targeted funding as an Annual Capital Allowance (ACA) for cyclical maintenance, renovations and upgrades to buildings (e.g., replacement roofing, piping and equipment). ACA funding was originally assessed at $6.6 million to SFU in 2008/09, but was reduced to $4.5 million midway through fiscal 2009/10. It was drastically reduced to $501,031 in fiscal 2010/11. Of this amount, $200,000 has been allocated to environmental requirements, and $301,031 has been allocated to the central heating plant rehabilitation. As a result of these steep reductions, some required maintenance and upkeep are being deferred, with SFU self-funding some essential maintenance from its operating funds.

An ongoing challenge in funding and constructing new buildings is the absence of provincial funding for key student and public space. The BC Universities Space Manual\textsuperscript{209} used to establish standards for how space is configured in new projects recognizes “common use and student activity space” as a category. In practice, however, government only partially funds many buildings and typically restricts funding to space used for direct instructional or research purposes. As a result, universities must find creative ways to provide public space within the space allotted for “circulation.” This circumstance accounts for why so much student study and leisure space at SFU is located within its major corridors and atria. Other common areas and student activity spaces used for purposes such as student government and clubs, lounges and recreation are funded by students through fees levied to a capital fund. SFU presently has approximately 9290sm (100,000sf) of “student activity” space making up 3% of the total net area of the campus.

Canadian post-secondary institutions carry substantial inventories of deferred maintenance, and funding to support the renovation or replacement of public buildings constructed during the boom of the 60s and 70s is urgently needed. The industry “rule of thumb” for annual maintenance requirements is 2% of the current replacement value of the building. This is the amount that should be budgeted for building maintenance. For SFU, this would require a maintenance budget of $40 million annually, approximately twice the size of SFU’s current maintenance budget.

Deferred maintenance is a significant issue for the Burnaby Mountain campus. With the original structures and utility systems now approaching 50 years in operation, the total amount of deferred maintenance is approximately $717 million, with a replacement value of $1.957 billion. A commonly used method for measuring deferred maintenance is the Facility Condition Index (FCI). This measure indicates the deferred maintenance and capital renewal requirements compared to the current replacement value. SFU’s most recent data show 11 buildings with an FCI above 50%:

- Shrum Science Building P
- Shrum Science Building B
- Academic Quadrangle
- Strand Hall
- Facilities Services

\textsuperscript{209} www.aved.gov.bc.ca/cppm/space.htm. Space here is defined as “internal” space and does not include open air spaces such as SFU’s Convocation Mall.
SFU is currently working with VFA Canada Corporation to implement software that will strategically manage capital assets and identify critical maintenance needs across what has become a large institution with various and complex operating requirements. SFU will be one of the first universities in BC to complete this assessment.

Capital Planning

A Five-Year Capital Plan covering 2012/3—2016/7 was approved by the Board of Governors. In prioritizing the goals and objectives, the Plan directly supports the President’s Agenda, the Academic Plan and the Strategic Research Plan. Relationships among the Capital Plan and other major University plans are documented and clarified in the University Planning Framework.

Twenty-one projects with an estimated cumulative value of $787,750,000 are proposed for the period covered under the Plan. Among the proposed projects, first priority goes to expansion of the Surrey campus to accommodate the expected demographic growth of university-aged students in the South Fraser Valley and Surrey areas in the coming decade. These projects are intended to expand program offerings in science, health, business and graduate studies and to provide needed student services for the campus.

At the Vancouver campus the upcoming expiry of the Harbour Centre lease in 2017 requires the acquisition of a new location if an agreement to stay in the current location is not achieved.

The priorities at the Burnaby campus are primarily about renewing aging buildings and campus infrastructure. A top priority is development of a new Data Centre. The project involves converting a former hydro transmission building into a modern centre to replace the existing data centre, which is too small and lacks sufficient power and cooling-capacity to meet future needs. SFU has also begun the first phase of a program to upgrade and modernize all classrooms and lecture theatres at Burnaby. Plans are underway to replace the aging central heating plant with a new biomass-fuelled heating plant to serve the Burnaby campus as well as the UniverCity residential community. It will be financed and built by a third-party, who will operate it as a publicly regulated utility.

Other Burnaby campus priorities include rehabilitating campus roads, renewing the Library, upgrading water and sewer services and developing new student residences and athletics facilities.

Provincial regulations require all publicly funded new construction and major renovations to be executed to LEED Gold standard or its equivalent and to comply with the province’s Wood First policy.

In the last 10 years SFU has carried out $500 million in major capital projects at an average rate of approximately $50 million/year. Of this total, one-third has been self-funded. Property acquisition
and leasing is an ongoing activity as opportunities arise. Approximately $55 million in acquisition costs have been incurred in the last 10 years, and 100 current leases are now managed through Facilities Services.

**Active and Recent Capital Projects**

**Upgrades to SFU’s Chemistry facilities**

As part of their economic stimulus programs, the federal and provincial governments invested $49.4 million under the Knowledge Infrastructure Program to renovate the chemistry building at SFU’s Burnaby campus. Existing labs were restored to address deferred maintenance problems and to bring the facility up to current disciplinary and environmental standards. The renewal project was completed in spring 2011 and will further SFU’s contribution to research and development in key areas of health and life sciences, environmental science, and information and communication technologies.

**Surrey Podium 2**

Podium 2 was acquired with $10 million in funding from the Knowledge Infrastructure Program (Ministry of Advanced Education [$5.3M] and the federal government [$4.7M]) to provide additional space for wet labs, classrooms, offices and support activities at the Surrey campus.

**Discovery 1 Renovations**

SFU has assumed ownership of two buildings at the recent expiry of the lease with Discovery Parks. The Discovery 1 building needs upgrading to permit assembly uses and to meet the code requirements of an academic building. The initial plan is to house a private party - Fraser International College (FIC). FIC offers upgrading programs for international students. The balance of space in the building will be retained for future SFU uses or other tenants. The initial project will cost $10M.

**Data Centre**

This $5M project is a bridging phase of a larger capital project (described above) to renew and repurpose an existing campus building and associated site servicing to provide a replacement location for the existing SFU Burnaby computing facility. This building already provides space for research projects, including the WestGrid collaboration, and eventually will become the campus’ main data centre for research and administrative IT systems. The initial phase of work includes expansion of the electrical supply and cooling systems, improved fire and security systems, expansion of computing machine space and upgrades to the building envelope.

**Overview of Equipment at SFU**

Equipment at SFU includes computing, research and instructional equipment and is deemed to be sufficient in quantity and quality to allow the University to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve its intended outcomes.
Facilities is responsible for supplying the initial furnishings in new buildings, which are provided from capital funds. All other equipment, including the subsequent replacement of equipment, is purchased by individual departments and Faculties and funded internally. This decentralized system allows each department and Faculty to monitor its requirements and purchase accordingly.

University policy provides for the disposition of equipment that has been replaced. Equipment purchased using grants obtained by individual faculty members who later leave SFU is addressed in the A policies.

In fiscal 2010, the net book value of equipment and furnishings was $72,678,000, with the net book value of computing equipment totaling $15,171,000. All equipment and furnishings are depreciated over eight years using a straight-line amortization method; all computing equipment is depreciated over three years using the straight-line method.

**Technological Infrastructure**

The technological infrastructure at SFU is well-developed, functional, up-to-date, stable and adequate to support the functions, programs and services delivered by the University. Information Technology (IT) changes over the last decade have been massive, pervasive and successful, and SFU’s IT environment continues to evolve in response to the intense demands and needs of the SFU community and within the context of a complex funding landscape.

**IT Service Delivery**

SFU has a Chief Information Officer (CIO) for Information Technology, who serves as SFU’s senior IT executive. The IT Services organization (ITS) is organized as a single, multi-functional department. The department is composed of about 130 full-time professional positions and 20 part-time student employees and is organized into five functional divisions, each with its own director.

Network Services is responsible for the campus network on all campuses, for University telephone services, and for the operation of the data centre.

IT Infrastructure (ITI) supplies and operates all central servers and data stores and provides both system administration and system database support for these systems.

The Institutional, Collaborative, and Academic Technologies (ICAT) group is responsible for core institutional systems such as email, authentication, and learning management systems (e.g., Blackboard’s WebCT).

The Enterprise Systems/Project Management office (ESPM) maintains the Oracle PeopleSoft suite and non-ERP applications and provides IT-related project-management services. The Client and Research Services (CaRS) group provides desktop support, research support and computer lab support.

In addition, all Faculties and some departments employ staff who provide additional IT support. Decentralized IT support typically takes the form of: administrative and technical training and

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211 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative/ad11-10.html](www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/administrative/ad11-10.html)

212 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a30-08.html](www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/academic/a30-08.html)
support; specialized support for research, or for instructional technologies other than WebCT (e.g., Elluminate); and web management.

**Instruction and Support for Technology Use**

ITS provides some project-based training, but ongoing training for specific systems is a functional responsibility of the various departments. All Faculties and some departments or schools require the use of more specific technologies than those it is efficient to support at the University-wide level. These typically are supported by their own IT staff.

For example, the Faculty of Education’s ENGRAM/ME program works to alleviate mathematics anxiety and improve conceptual understandings of mathematics and its applications, especially in mathematical problem-solving contexts using computer enhanced learning environments. ENGRAMMETRON facilities enable simultaneous observation and acquisition of audio data from talking-aloud reflective protocols; video data of facial and bodily expression; and real-time screen capture. Education provides specialized IT support for this and other programs.

Similar IT support is provided “locally” (i.e., by the Faculty, department or school) where the specialized nature of instructional or research support is more effectively or efficiently served at that level. Distributed IT staff offer training in different learning management systems, support teaching staff in their use of learning technologies, provide expertise in exploring and innovating using advanced and ever-changing technologies, and manage IT equipment.

ITS also creates and maintains several web sites containing tutorial material for major systems.

**Campus Networks**

Each of SFU’s three campuses operates a converged campus network, with the Burnaby campus network being the largest and most complex. The three campuses are interconnected by high-speed links (10 Gb/s) creating the unified SFU network. In turn, SFU’s network connects to the province-wide BCNET, and from there into CANARIE (Canada’s research and education network) and the commodity Internet.

Managed by BCNET and CANARIE, this upgraded Optical Regional Advanced Network provides universities, hospitals and researchers in BC with access to 10 Gb/s bandwidth over more than 72 optical wavelengths. This new high-speed link provides the telecommunications backbone for many research and educational initiatives.213

The Burnaby campus maintains a 10Gb/s backbone and makes available 100 Mb/s and 1Gb/s port connectivity for users. The Surrey and Vancouver campuses have limited 1Gb/s availability, but universal 100Mb/s availability. The Burnaby campus network currently services over 20,000 ports, Surrey 3000 and Vancouver another 2000.

Telephone communication systems for Burnaby and Vancouver campuses are currently serviced by traditional PBX technology, with plans to migrate to Voice-over IP (VoIP) by 2015. The Surrey campus migrated from a traditional PBX technology to VoIP unified communications in 2008.

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213 canarie.ca/en/about/aboutus
Campus Wireless

Wireless mobility is an important aspect of the IT environment at SFU. The University operates an SFUNet WiFi service at all campuses. Two SFU wireless services are available (SFUNet and SFUNet-Secure) as well as Eduroam. SFUNet is the standard SFU wireless network on campus, supporting 802.11a/b/g with no encryption, with a web portal for authentication using a unique SFU ID and password.

There are currently no on-campus traffic restrictions for SFUNet, which supports all wireless devices. SFUNet-SECURE is the secure wireless network on campus, supporting 802.11a/b/g protocols as well as full WPA2/AES encryption. It requires an 802.1x EAP/TTLS client for authentication rather than a web portal. AEL 700 access points on all three campuses have recently been upgraded to 802.11a/b/g/n.

Eduroam is an international initiative that allows students, staff and faculty access to wireless services at co-operating universities without the need to obtain a guest account. This means a user visiting from another institution can log-in using the same credentials they would at home. Support for Eduroam is currently available from member institutions in Canada, Asia, Europe and the United States. An important aspect of SFU campus wireless, which is especially critical for students, staff and faculty who move from campus to campus, is the consistency of the networks and their availability regardless of campus location.

Data Centres

SFU’s primary data centre (BDC) is located on the Burnaby campus, with a secondary data centre on the Surrey campus. The Vancouver campus co-locates any required server and storage technology with communications equipment. The BDC operates as an ASHRAE Class 1 compliant facility with full emergency power and HVAC. All network and data centre equipment is monitored and managed using advanced monitoring and surveillance tools.

Computing Infrastructure

SFU server technology uses blade technology, adopting virtualization to improve efficiency and resilience in the data centre. SUN technology is used for efficiency and VMware ESX technology for resilience. SFU data are protected with a robust backup and off-site storage rotation, and major systems can be restored rapidly should a catastrophic loss occur. Valuable experience was gained in 2010 when the laying of new power lines to the Burnaby campus required a controlled shutdown and reboot of all IT systems.

Formal disaster recovery planning has just begun and progress is being made in providing hot redundancy for core services in the Surrey campus data centre.

Computer Labs

SFU has computer labs at all three campuses. The Burnaby campus has seven open (i.e., “assignment”) labs available for general use to anyone with a valid SFU computing ID. These are managed by IT Services and feature standardized equipment with three-year lifecycle equipment replacement, and standardized availability and operation. The Surrey campus has two drop-in labs
and seven instructional computer labs available for drop-in use when they are not scheduled for instructional use. The Vancouver campus has three labs available for general use.

More specialized computing labs are operated by Faculties, schools and departments as needed to serve their unique constituencies. These allow the flexibility needed to provide “block booking” to conduct classes in a computer lab environment, and often provide access to specialized software programs of great utility for a limited audience.

**Identity Management**

IT Services runs an Identity Management System (Amaint) that automatically provides computing IDs to each of SFU’s 57,000 faculty, staff and students at the time they are hired or admitted. The Oracle/PeopleSoft student information and human resource/payroll systems are linked to Amaint automatically to determine the validity and status of all employee and student computing IDs. Once these data sources indicate a student or employee has graduated or left, Amaint automatically expires the SFU computing ID after an appropriate grace period.

**Single Sign-on**

LDAP and Active Directory-based shared authentication services are populated automatically with SFU computing IDs and integrated with the open-source Central Authentication Service (CAS) to provide a ubiquitous single-sign-on infrastructure. All major technologies and services use single sign-on, including the Oracle/PeopleSoft-based financial and student information systems, Blackboard learning management system, Zimbra-based email and calendaring system, Library systems, campus labs, wireless access, numerous collaboration systems and departmental business systems.

**Email Service**

IT Services runs a web-based email system based on Zimbra for all SFU faculty, staff and students and for functional business purposes. The system contains 55,000 mailboxes, 20,000 email distribution lists, uses single sign-on, and is automatically provided to all faculty, staff and students while their SFU computing IDs are active.

**Learning Management System**

Since 2000, IT Services has operated a learning management system to support all courses offered at all campuses. Using enrolment data from the student information system, the Blackboard-based system WebCT populates course shells automatically with enrolled students upon instructor request via a web-based request form. The number of unique students using WebCT has quadrupled since 2002.

**Administrative Applications**

SFU’s PeopleSoft administrative applications (student information, finance, and HR/payroll) are managed for the University by the ESPM division of ITS. All technology infrastructure associated with these applications is located on the Burnaby campus. The SFU/ITS call centre, with the assistance of the Registrar’s office and Student Services, supports SFU users of these applications.
Planning Input
LAN administrators in Faculties and administrative departments meet regularly with ITS staff to exchange planning information. Project teams consult widely with affected constituencies as part of implementation and upgrade projects. Departmental LAN administrators meet roughly monthly with ITS staff to discuss infrastructure issues of shared interest. Smaller working groups or project teams are created as necessary, either to develop or to execute plans. For larger application-based projects, functional and technical staff from relevant units are on the project team or consulted as necessary. Most major infrastructure upgrades are related to underlying application implementations or upgrades.

Technology Updates
Development, implementation and review of technology updates and replacement have mainly been the responsibility of ITS. As part of the annual budgeting process, the CIO requests increases to recurring funding and funding for one-time projects. Internal planning to update and replace technology becomes visible in this way at the University-wide level. In summer 2010 the CIO implemented a new framework for IT governance that will enable more intentional and transparent technology planning.
Downtown campus

“Thanks to a remarkable group of public-spirited and education-minded individuals, corporations and organizations, we were able to create a downtown university campus for Vancouver without a dime of public money being used for capital costs.”

Jack Blaney, then-vice-president for Simon Fraser University at Harbour Centre

In the 1980s Vancouver was the only North American city of its size without a permanent university presence downtown. Following the success of its early “store-front” educational centres, SFU opened its downtown campus on May 5, 1989 in the rebuilt and revitalized 1920s Spencer Building. With the completion in 2010 of a new teaching and performance facility in a heritage building for its School for the Contemporary Arts, and with two other previously restored heritage buildings—the Segal Graduate School of Business and the Wosk Centre for Dialogue—Simon Fraser University has committed $150 million to the establishment and improvement of its downtown campus.

Serving the community

Offering both undergraduate and graduate courses, as well as non-credit courses for the general public, the Vancouver campus serves more than 70,000 people each year, and hosts major urban events organized by international groups.

Professional graduate degrees are available in business, gerontology, international studies, liberal studies, public policy, publishing and urban studies. A unique program in liberal and business studies offers the opportunity for undergraduate degree completion to those already in the work force. Other programs designed for those who want to study in mid-career are SFU NOW and an Executive MBA, both offered on weekends and in the evenings.
Meeting urban needs

The mandate to serve the needs of the City of Vancouver and its citizens has made the Vancouver campus a hub of intellectual and cultural activity, with a goal of assessing the need for advanced recurring, mid-career, and lifelong education and responding to the rapidly changing professional education needs of Vancouver’s urban population.

Making university study available after business hours and on weekends allows students access to the expertise of career professionals and insight into the workings of a major city and its public policy-making.

With gathering places like the Wosk Centre, the David See-Chai Lam Centre for International Communication, the Belzberg Library and art galleries in the Harbour Centre and Woodward’s buildings, as well as the wildly popular Philosophers’ Cafés moderated by faculty, and many public events throughout the year, the Vancouver campus is as busy and as vibrant as the downtown core it serves.

Vancouver campus growth, 2007-2011

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*Gross Assignable Square Metres
Chapter 3

Institutional Planning

The institution engages in ongoing participatory planning that provides direction for the institution and leads to fulfillment of its mission, accomplishment of its core theme objectives, and achievement of the identified goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. The resulting plans reflect the interdependent nature of its operations, functions, and resources in achieving intended results. The institution demonstrates that its planning and implementation processes are sufficiently flexible to address unexpected circumstances with the potential to impact the institution’s capacity to accomplish its core theme objectives and fulfill its mission. It demonstrates that its plans are implemented and influence practice, resource allocation, and application of institutional capacity.
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Chapter 3, Standard 3A
Institutional Planning

Simon Fraser University engages in ongoing, purposeful, systematic, integrated and comprehensive planning intended to achieve its core theme objectives and lead to the fulfillment of its mission. Major institutional plans are developed, refined and updated on a regular basis, with ancillary or contributory plans produced and renewed at various intervals as appropriate.

Involvement in the development of major plans is broad and tailored to gather useful and practical input while also communicating the institution’s larger goals and values to the University’s diverse communities. Preparations for planning are announced at meetings and via a host of media, among which are email lists, websites and internal newsletters. Early and penultimate drafts typically are posted on websites for comment, and comments received are considered in producing subsequent drafts. Approved plans include detailed information about the process by which they were produced, and final versions of all major plans are published on the appropriate University websites.

Plans identify goals and, where useful, indicators to monitor institutional progress toward achieving them. Plans are amended when changing circumstances or growing experience suggest the implementation would be improved by adjusting a plan’s original goals, strategies or indicators. Overall, planning and assessments at Simon Fraser University are appropriate in scope and sufficient in detail to allow the University to conduct its operations and fulfill its mission successfully. Ultimately, plans identify institutional priorities and guide the allocation of the University’s resources and capacities, whether the resources are human, financial or physical.

SFU’s ongoing, primary planning documents include the:

- Three-Year Academic Plan (the current Plan covers 2010-2013);
- Five-Year Strategic Research Plan (the current Plan covers 2010-2015);
- Institutional Accountability Plan and Report (the current Plan covers 2011/12 to 2013/14; and
- Annual Budget.

Each of these Plans is embedded within SFU’s new University Planning Framework.

The University Planning Framework (President/Vice Presidents)

In 2009, responding to a request from the Board of Governors, SFU’s senior administrators began the development of a new document that would bring greater clarity and cohesiveness to the University’s planning processes by providing a single integrated overview of major University plans. The new University Planning Framework (UPF) became the means by which goals, strategies and indicators drawn from the growing number of planning documents could be concisely brought together and the alignments among them easily reviewed. Where ambiguities and misalignments are discovered, steps can be taken to recast goals and strategies in ways that make their interrelationships more clear.

In November 2009, a first draft of the UPF was presented to the Board; its intended purpose, it was noted, “is to provide a structure for guiding management decisions, strategically allocating resources,
and communicating the University’s priorities.” Using the UPF, major plans would be continually aligned to promote key goals and priorities and, ultimately, to inform the budget process.

In its short life, the UPF already has proven very useful as a means to test and to illustrate the alignment among SFU’s major planning processes and documents, to elevate University-wide goals and themes, and to define the high-level strategies required to achieve the University’s core themes and strategic goals. It does not replace existing plans, but is intended to provide a benchmark against which to measure progress, a vehicle to manage the overall planning process, a foundation for resourcing and an aid for decision-making.

Goals, strategies and indicators from the UPF were used by the Core Theme Teams as the basis for carrying out their first comprehensive assessment of SFU’s progress in achieving its core theme goals and fulfilling its mission. As a corollary, feedback from the Core Theme Teams has been instrumental in revising some of those goals and the indicators used to measure their progress.

The UPF represents all of the existing major and ancillary plans, and has placeholders for ancillary plans under development. At its heart are the University’s values and commitments, radiating outward through institutional priorities to the Academic and Strategic Research Plans, on to ancillary plans, with all circumscribed by SFU’s financial and governance models.

Figure 3.1: Planning Wheel at May 18, 2011

Source: University Planning Framework Committee
A number of other major University plans exist and undergo planning, implementation and renewal processes similar to the ones discussed here. Those included in the University Planning Framework are the:

- Strategic Enrolment Plan;
- Ten-Year Capital Plan (2007/08 to 2016/17);
- Student Services Plan;
- Library Strategic Plan;
- Faculty Renewal Plan;
- First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan;
- Enterprise Risk Management Plan;
- Advancement Strategic Plan; and
- Ancillaries Plan.

These and other plans reflect and contribute to the goals, strategies and indicators of the major plans and develop in greater detail and specificity how larger goals will be achieved in practice. For the Academic Plan, this role is fulfilled by the plans of individual Faculties, which are themselves informed by departmental plans and by the Strategic Enrolment Plan. Administrative and operational strategic plans also cover such diverse business as fundraising, ancillaries and University facilities.

The following sections show in more detail how SFU’s major planning documents are developed, and how they are used to allocate resources to achieve the goals and support the strategies they establish.

**The Strategic Vision and Goals 2011 (President)**

In the last decade a fourth planning document, the President’s Agenda, was added by the President in consultation with the Board of Governors. The President’s Agenda set out high-level priorities for the University, described its desired future and indicated how that future could be achieved. In that sense, the President’s Agenda served for ten years as both an institutional “vision” and a strategic planning document that articulated high-level goals to be reflected in and implemented through other plans.

President Andrew Petter was inaugurated in September 2010 and, in February 2011, launched an extensive community visioning process with two desired outcomes:

- to develop a Strategic Vision statement that would articulate the University’s strengths and set its direction; and
- to establish a set of Strategic Goals that would express what the University wants and expects to accomplish over the next five years in support of its vision.

Input to the development of the Vision and Strategic Goals was both broad and deep, and community participation was solicited through numerous meetings and through the local, provincial and national media as well as through multiple channels on SFU’s campuses.

The process, called “enVision > SFU,” was designed to build upon the University’s core commitments to being student centred, research driven, and community engaged. SFU’s strengths in undergraduate education, advanced research, graduate studies, and community betterment reflect the University’s deep commitment to a comprehensive model of university education. In fostering an environment of
positive and productive interplay amongst these strengths, it is expected that intellectual engagement and academic inquiry will be energized by motivated undergraduate students who, in turn, will benefit from their exposure to accomplished scholars, talented graduate student mentors, and advanced research practices.

enVision > SFU was also intended to foster a culture of collaboration and inclusion, align priorities, develop widely supported criteria for success, encourage initiative and celebrate achievement. Key outcomes are expected to identify a common ground and discover synergies to help SFU concentrate its efforts where it can be most successful. The enVision > SFU process resulted in a discussion paper in summer 2011, with approval and adoption of the new strategic vision expected in fall 2011.

**Figure 3.2: Planning from vision/mission to performance-based budget**

Also illustrated is how the Ministry of Advanced Education influences the planning process through levels of grant funding and funded student enrolment.

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Source: SFU Academic Planning

**The Three-Year Academic Plan: 2010-2013 (Vice President, Academic)**

The University’s first and foremost tasks are to educate students, to provide continuing opportunities across its communities to pursue learning over a lifetime, and to contribute new knowledge for the common good. The Academic Plan, together with the Strategic Research Plan, guides the academic development and activities at the heart of SFU’s mission.
The Academic Plan offers the President and Vice Presidents a basis on which to allocate resources and assess performance, and provides a broad, clear-yet-flexible structure within which academic and operational supports can be positioned to achieve the University’s goals. Indeed, the allocation of most of SFU’s human, financial and physical resources is based on objectives set out in the Academic Plan. Although SFU’s work toward achieving its core theme goals is woven through all of its major planning documents, these objectives are most fully expressed and delineated in the Academic Plan.

The centrality of the Academic Plan to the University’s success in achieving its core themes and fulfilling its mission requires that its development be both highly transparent and consultative, and that communications during planning and implementation be widespread and full. Broad consultation ensures that the strengths offered and challenges faced by individual units are taken into account during the planning process. It also helps everyone to understand the role their Faculty, department, school or administrative unit must play in carrying out SFU’s mission and how they can contribute personally to achieving the Vice President, Academic’s strategic goals.

The Academic Planning Process

SFU’s academic planning horizon is three years, with planning timelines, participants and contents formally set in the Senate Guidelines for Academic Plans.1 Guidelines call for each academic unit to prepare a three-year academic plan of its own, with departments and schools feeding plans to their Faculty, where they are integrated into a Faculty Plan and, from there, to the University’s Academic Plan. Only Faculty Plans are submitted to the Vice President, Academic.

Academic planning at SFU begins with identifying key strategic themes and developing guidelines to direct the next three-year planning cycle. As the most recent cycle coincided with the appointment of a new Vice President, Academic, an external consultant was retained to begin the process by leading discussions with 16 focus groups on various questions pertaining to SFU’s academic future. Findings were used to assist in the development of the Plan and an Academic Vision of what SFU should be in 2013.2 As a prelude to the planning exercise, an annual assessment of the University’s success in meeting the goals set out in the preceding Plan was carried out by the Vice President, Academic and Deans using data provided by the office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP).

Planning continued through a sequence of “retreats” lead by the Vice President, Academic working with the Deans. Consensus developed around institutional goals and strategies, leading to first drafts of the Planning Guidelines and Academic Plan, both prepared by the Vice President, Academic. Distribution of the draft Vision and Plan was used to initiate the planning process within academic departments and Faculties.

Faculty and departmental plans take account of the Academic Vision and respond to goals and objectives identified in the larger Plan, but do so with a more granular view commensurate with their direct involvement in delivering programs and services. The processes of Faculty and department planning are often merged with and overlap one another.

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1 www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/vpacademic/files/vp_academic_docs/pdfs/SENATE_GUIDELINES_Acad_plans_Rev_3.pdf
2 The Academic Vision appears on page 4 of the current Academic Plan at www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans/current_three_yearplans.html
Other inputs to the academic planning process include a review of the post-secondary environment in Canada, the provincial goals communicated by the Ministry, the results of the external reviews of academic departments, the Strategic Enrolment Plan, financial prospects and the President’s Agenda. All Faculty plans, as well as the plans for the Dean of Graduate Studies, the Dean of Lifelong Learning and the Associate Vice President, Student Services are posted on the Vice President, Academic’s website.3

Academic plans at all levels are expected to assess achievements against previous plans and state objectives for the current plan. Programs, research activity, student recruitment and retention, support issues and the adequacy of resources are addressed. An outline of communications on the planning process within the unit is included to ensure all members have been informed of the objectives and content of the plan. This process is replicated at each level of planning. To provide consistency, a template is provided for units to use in planning. The final Academic Plan is presented to the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP), Senate and the Board of Governors for information.

The current Academic Plan identifies five themes at the heart of SFU’s academic mission and activities. Themes for 2010 – 2013 are:

- High-quality student experience;
- Teaching and learning in a research university;
- Research intensity;
- The University’s role in the community; and
- Financial sustainability and institutional strength.

Four of these mirror the University’s identified core themes. The fifth, financial sustainability and institutional strength, speaks to the need to manage the University’s resources in a way that enables SFU to continue to achieve its mission as expressed through its core themes. The academic planning process is timed to produce information useful in carrying out the annual budgeting process. A complete account of the steps leading to the current Academic Plan is included in the Plan.4

The Use of Metrics as Indicators in Academic Plans

Annual assessments of progress toward Plan objectives are carried out by the Faculties and forwarded to the Vice President, Academic, who updates the University’s Academic Plan and submits it to SCUP for review. Annual assessments are discussed at Deans’ Council5 and SCUP. These processes are intended to ensure the Plan remains relevant and focused on current demands; where necessary, the goals and objectives may be amended to better reflect the changing environment.

SFU employs a number of operational indicators and key performance measures to assess and manage its activities. Data are collected, analyzed and published by IRP, which provides the results of these indicators, as well as a wealth of other institutional data, on its website.6

3 [www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans/current_three_yearplans.html](http://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans/current_three_yearplans.html)
4 [www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans/current_three_yearplans.html](http://www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/academic_planning/academic_plans/current_three_yearplans.html). This site also includes copies of all of the individual Faculty plans contributing to the Plan.
5 The Deans’ Council includes the Deans of the eight academic Faculties, Graduate Studies, Lifelong Learning and the Library.
6 [www.sfu.ca/irp.html](http://www.sfu.ca/irp.html)
Until a few years ago, SFU’s assessment processes were primarily qualitative. Considerable work has been done over the past year by the accreditation Core Theme Teams to refine indicators and, through a suitable balance of quantitative and qualitative measures, make them provide a clearer index of meaningful activity. This work continues and will expand throughout the accreditation process and in future planning documents. More quantitative metrics for each goal have been introduced in the last two planning cycles, and the search continues for indicators that will help to capture the full picture of institutional performance.

In recent years, data from student surveys have also been considered in drafting the Academic Plan. Although some survey methodologies are controversial and, because responding students are “self-selected,” biased samples are common, the available data do suggest broad student satisfaction with the quality of classroom teaching at SFU. For instance, in the 2010 CUSC survey, 86% of SFU’s first-year students who responded expressed satisfaction with the quality of teaching received at SFU. In 2009, 93% of graduating students who responded were satisfied with the teaching they received at SFU.

The same surveys have consistently indicated a level of student dissatisfaction with a few elements of the experience at SFU. For example, student access to courses required to complete degree programs has been a persistent and well-recognized challenge, and action continues to improve timely access to core courses.

**The Five-Year Strategic Research Plan: 2010–2015 (Vice President, Research)**

Research intensity is a core theme at SFU and drives much of its scholarly activity. Knowledge generation and knowledge transfer through research are fundamental to SFU’s mission, and the advancement of excellence in research is one of the University’s defining characteristics and core theme objectives. Research is a major instructional activity involving close work with both graduate and undergraduate students in a wide variety of research settings. Because students benefit significantly from direct exposure to, and participation in, research activity, SFU has made it an explicit goal to engage more undergraduate students in its research activities.

At SFU, research matters. As a core theme, research strengthens the success of SFU’s efforts around its other themes. Multidisciplinary research collaborations are facilitated through research centres and institutes, and include many projects carried out jointly with business and industry, community organizations and agencies in all levels of government.

SFU’s Strategic Research Plan (SRP) guides the University in responding effectively to the changing environment in research opportunities, and provides a platform for its participation in collaborative research-related initiatives. The document is also a means for informing and promoting SFU’s research strengths to government, community partners and funding organizations.

A condensed SRP and summary also is required when working with the Canada Research Chairs (CRC) program, the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), and any federal granting agency program that requires an SRP, such as the Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERC) program. The condensed plan is linked to the full SRP and contains an overview of SFU’s seven major research themes and associated sub-themes, as well as information specific to the CRC program. Once a
university has filed the condensed SRP and SRP Summary, it may submit nominations for the Chair positions identified in the plan.

The Strategic Research Planning Process

The longer lead times characteristic of research planning, funding, executing and reporting require that the SRP takes a longer view than the Academic Plan. To that end, the SRP is a five-year plan. As with other major planning documents, the development of the SRP is a widely consultative process that strives to engage all University communities in the identification of research strengths and priority areas. Because interest in the SRP is greatest among active researchers, they also tend to be very active contributors to the planning process.

The 2010-2015 SRP builds on the SRP for 2005-2010. Development of the new Plan began in 2009 with a six-month University-wide consultation lead by the Vice President, Research. All community members were invited to provide input in writing and via a series of public forums at each campus. The resulting draft articulated the University’s strengths by amplifying the original five integrative research themes and by adding two new ones: Origins and Pedagogy. The critical role of fundamental research is emphasized in the new Plan.

A draft of the SRP was posted on the Vice President, Research website for a second round of public consultations. An amended “final” draft was posted for a third round of consultations before being submitted to the President and Vice Presidents. The approved Plan went to SCUP, Senate and the Board of Governors for information. The 2010-2015 SRP and the condensed CFI/CRC version are posted on the Vice-President, Research website.8

Major Objectives of the SRP

The SRP is intended to serve as a road map for establishing the focus, infrastructure, and capability needed to improve the research performance of the University. The major objectives of the SRP are to:

- Make the best use of opportunities for discovery and innovation;
- Promote internationally competitive research and scholarship;
- Cultivate excellence through selective investment in emerging areas of research;
- Facilitate collaborations across disciplinary and institutional boundaries;
- Recruit and retain outstanding students, research fellows and faculty;
- Encourage effective communication and dissemination of research results;
- Encourage the most efficient use of our research and scholarship resources;
- Recognize the full value of intellectual property;
- Achieve thematic coherence in the expression of SFU’s research interests;
- Engage all our communities for the benefit of society; and
- Integrate SFU’s research activity with federal and provincial strategies and priorities.

Strategic Research Themes

The SRP articulates SFU’s strengths within a matrix of themes that integrate research activity by crossing disciplinary and administrative boundaries. In defining strategic research themes, the

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8 www.sfu.ca/vpresearch/message.html
University intends to facilitate and encourage individual initiatives and new collaborations within its existing structures. This allows SFU to invest its resources efficiently, gives SFU a distinctive edge and competitive advantage and helps it to achieve its core theme goals of becoming the most research-intensive comprehensive university in Canada and competing more effectively in selected areas internationally.9

The SRP also strives to align SFU’s research activity with priority areas for research identified by the federal granting agencies. Such an alignment can help maximize the University’s access to federal funding.10

**Implementation and Assessment**

The Vice President, Research, in collaboration with the Vice President, Academic and the Faculty Deans, co-ordinates strategic investment in identified thematic areas using major granting opportunities such as those provided by the Canada Foundation for Innovation, Major Collaborative Research Institutes Grants, Community University Research Alliance Grants, National Centres of Excellence, Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR), Team Grants, and Genome BC.

Investments may take the form of strategic faculty positions, seed funding for workshops and conferences, distinguished scholar visits, research support for undergraduate students, and other initiatives as opportunities arise. Initiatives that are demonstrably cross-disciplinary receive high priority.

Periodic evaluations of research outputs are carried out in consultation with Faculty Deans using metrics deemed appropriate to the diverse array of individual and collaborative research activities and projects undertaken at SFU. Performance assessments are based on publications, conference proceedings, books, monographs, patents, government and public panel contributions, workshops, policy papers, artistic and cultural performances, exhibitions, other forms of research, and awards and distinctions. This task is accomplished by soliciting data from faculty through the Deans’ offices once a year at the time of salary review for faculty.

A common reporting framework is used to establish a baseline from which progress in a discipline can be gauged. Measures of output are obtained through the use of bibliometric analysis tools. Annual data from Re$earch Infosource and the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO) are used to evaluate SFU’s research performance relative to other Canadian universities, including measures of research income, publication intensity and publication impact.

Data are also solicited to evaluate the growth of SFU’s internationalization efforts as they pertain to research.

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9 A matrix of the seven strategic research themes and associated perspectives appears on page 5 of the current Strategic Research Plan. Individual faculty members are expected to locate their research interests within the matrix.

10 Federal research funding priorities are identified in “State of the Nation 2008: Canada’s Science, Technology and Innovation System” at www.stic-csti.ca/eic/site/stic-csti.nsf/eng/h_00011.html
The Annual Budget (Vice President, Finance and Administration)

Annual budgets are the most direct expression of an institution’s priorities and commitments. Funding is the most sensitive resource a university has, and its flow determines what courses are taught and who is hired to teach and support them; what buildings are built and how they are equipped and maintained; and what technology is available to carry out the mission. This has rarely been truer than in the past three years, when post-secondary institutions’ public and private funding sources, including their endowments, have been significantly constrained by difficult global economic conditions. SFU has addressed this challenge by moving to a performance-based budget model beginning with fiscal 2011/12.

The Budgeting Process

The University budget is developed annually following a process set out in the Budget Guidelines and managed by the Budget office. As with all major SFU plans, budgets are developed in, and informed by, extensive consultation with the University community. Budgeting begins each summer with forecasting and modeling based on planning assumptions for enrolment, government grants, research performance and known inflation for costs. The budget model is discussed and reviewed by the Vice Presidents and a proposed budget is presented to the University community. The President, Vice President, Academic, and Vice President, Finance and Administration hold open sessions to explain the model. Feedback arising from consultations is incorporated into the final budget model.

The Vice President, Finance and Administration also meets with members of the Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP) to discuss budget issues; two such meetings were held as the 2010/11 Budget was being developed. SCUP expressed serious concerns about the persistent inadequacy of government funding to cover the true cost of running a university, and recommended to the President that:

- frozen carry-forward funds should be released for immediate use; and
- consideration be given to producing a multi-year rolling budget that would encourage a longer view of the relationship between activities and funding and to enhance the involvement of chairs and directors in budget development and planning.

An information session with the Finance and Administration Committee of the Board of Governors is held prior to the presentation of the Budget for approval at the fall Board meeting. This enables questions and feedback to be considered prior to the Board meeting. Approval of annual budgets lies within the domain of the Board of Governors, and proposed Operating Budgets are typically presented for approval to the Board in March.

The Guiding Principles were developed in 2009, with revisions approved by the Board in March 2011. The Guiding Principles are used to inform budget allocation decisions. They are intended to ensure the budget model preserves funding for specific strategic and operational areas, as well as those that have non-discretionary obligations, such as contractual agreements, utilities, and expenses related to specific grants.

The 2011/12 Budget Model
Like many Canadian universities, SFU traditionally used a method of incremental budgeting to fund University operations and initiatives. Projected revenues were allocated to the Vice Presidents’ portfolios based on prior budget years. These “expense-based” budgets were decentralized and each Vice President apportioned budget adjustments within his or her own portfolio. In practice, increases and reductions were typically rolled out on an “across the board” basis, with all units gaining or losing a more or less equal percentage. In recent years, the combination of increasing constraints on funding and rising operating costs resulted in an annual financial gap of approximately $9 million. This situation led to a series of budget cuts and cash calls on fiscal reserves each year since 2004/05.

While incremental budgeting can provide limited short-term stability and adaptability during times of growth or restraint, it precludes the reallocation of base budgets to respond to changing priorities and circumstances. Incremental budgeting also offers no equitable method by which funding levels can be realigned to take account of changes in organizational structure or size. Finally, it creates little incentive to seek out or create revenue-generating opportunities. To remedy these shortcomings, support its focus on continuous improvement, and respond to feedback from stakeholder groups, SFU introduced a performance-based budget in fiscal 2011/12.

SFU’s new performance-based budget allocates University-wide revenues based on formulas that capture various revenues and flows. SFU’s provincial grant, tuition revenues and federal funding to cover the indirect costs of research are now allocated to Faculties based on their enrolments. This model is employed by a variety of universities, with each modifying the approach to suit its specific needs. SFU converted to performance-based budgeting because it more directly aligns with the Guiding Principles. How funding is tied to enrolments is discussed in more detail in the Enrolment Management section below.

The budget model for 2011/12 identifies four budget centres, three of which are performance-based:

- **Faculties**, whose budgets are based on the enrolment plan, provincial grant and funding to cover the indirect costs of research;
- **Research**, whose budget is based on a three-year historical trend in research funding;
- **Advancement**, whose budget is tied to success in meeting fundraising targets; and
- **Support units**, whose budgets are incremental, but are now explicitly tied to the overall growth of the University and subject to annual reviews.

A contingency fund also was established in the 2009/10 budget to cover the unavoidable costs that arise during the course of the year as a result of activities that were either unknown or could not have been anticipated during the budget planning cycle. In 2009/10 the emergency reserve level was established at 1% of the University’s operating revenues; this was doubled to 2% in fiscal 2010/11.

**Budget Alignment with Strategic Plans and Core Themes**
Financial resources are directed to support strategic priorities and, more specifically, core themes through the usual allocation of operating budgets or via special “grants” from the University Priority Fund (UPF). The University funds the UPF by special allocation each year to support worthy projects on a one-time basis. The “one-time” may be short-term or may entail funding over multiple years, but is specific to a project and is not rolled into base budgets. The UPF was funded for $4.3 million
in fiscal 2011/12, which represents 1% of the University’s Operating Budget. This will increase to 2% over the next two years.

**Budget Review Committee**

A Budget Review Committee (BRC) conducts budget cycle reviews of various portfolios to ensure that there is a process in place to annually review and recommend budget adjustments for specific portfolios that are not performance-based. The BRC is comprised of the Vice President, Academic, a Faculty Dean, and the Vice President, Finance and Administration. The Budget Review Committee provides SFU with an equitable process that is responsive, transparent and maintains the stability required to advance SFU’s institutional goals.

**The Strategic Enrolment Plan (Associate Vice President, Academic)**

A major link between the Academic Plan and the annual budget is provided by SFU’s Strategic Enrolment Plan, which establishes specific enrolment targets for individual Faculties.

Enrolment planning begins with receipt of the Letter of Expectations from BC’s Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED). The Letter notes the number of Full Time Equivalent undergraduate and graduate students (FTEs) SFU is expected to enrol in the coming year and the provincial funding rate for each.13 These figures form the basis of SFU’s Enrolment Plan.

The Enrolment Plan covers seven years (current year plus six years), with the current Plan extending to 2018/19. Enrolment Plans are also influenced by institutional decisions on the distribution of undergraduate and graduate students; the desired split between graduate and undergraduate student capacity; the targeted proportion of international enrolments relative to domestic; and identified areas of growth and strategic importance. Official enrolment targets for each Faculty are recommended to Senate for consideration and approval by the Senate Committee on Enrolment Management Planning (SCEMP).14 SCEMP is chaired by the Vice President, Academic and includes representatives of all Faculties, other senior University officers and two students.

With past incremental budgets, no direct relationship existed between enrolment targets and budget allocations. Faculty base budgets generally rolled over from year-to-year, with percentage increments added or subtracted based on whether the University’s funding increased or decreased.

The new performance-based budget links Faculty allocations to “course activity,” specifically to how many students are taking how many credits offered by various programs within the Faculty. Course activity is calculated based on a formula (# of students in a course [times] the # of credit hours in Faculty programs [divided by] 30) that provides a figure referred to as an “AFTE” (Activity FTE).

AFTE calculations set the foundation for a more complex determination of each Faculty’s “Weighted Activity FTE,” or WAFTE. Weights take into account factors that affect the cost of academic programming by a Faculty but which cannot be accurately assessed solely on the basis of the AFTE formula. Included in the calculation of WAFTEs are such factors as: whether students are graduate

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13 Letters identify FTE funding for three years, but funding commitments for future years have proven to be more suggestive than definitive.

14 [www.sfu.ca/Senate/SenateComms/SCEMP](http://www.sfu.ca/Senate/SenateComms/SCEMP)
or undergraduate; whether a course can accommodate large lectures or small classes; whether courses require labs and technical equipment; and so on. WAFTEs attempt to capture the relative costs of providing different kinds of courses and programs to students and reflect those costs in Faculty allocations.

The Enrolment Plan sets targets for each Faculty for domestic and international undergraduate and graduate students; enrolment targets are also set for each campus to manage the distribution of students and capacity. Planning at the Faculty level considers program capacity, faculty workload and student demand in conjunction with local and global economic conditions. To enable Faculties to respond quickly and efficiently to emerging enrolment conditions, each Faculty is provided with a web-based “enrolment dashboard” by IRP. Dashboards display enrolment figures relative to targets set each semester.

An ad hoc Strategic Enrolment Management Planning Committee (SEMPC) was established in 2009 to consider how enrolment management could be improved. A number of issues were identified by SEMPC, and it was determined that SFU needed a clear vision for what it wished to achieve through enrolment management. More attention was needed to improve retention of students already enrolled, with a better balance struck between recruiting and retaining students. Generally, it was noted that ownership of enrolment management was widespread within the University, but that communication among those involved needed improvement.

In the spring of 2011 a new Strategic Enrolment Management Council (SEMC) was established reporting to SCEMP. SEMC is charged with co-ordinating strategic enrolment activities across the University, evaluating data sources and information used to guide enrolment management practices, and identifying and recommending best practices for enrolment management for consideration by SCEMP.

**SFU’s Alignment with Ministry Objectives**

**(Director, Academic Planning and Budgeting)**

BC’s provincial government, through its Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED), is a major source of SFU’s funding. Although the University is an autonomous academic entity, many of its goals and strategies readily align with AVED’s own. As SFU notes in its government-mandated Institutional Accountability Plan and Report:

> The benefits of post-secondary education are far reaching and include providing people, communities and employers with needed knowledge, skills and training, thereby enabling citizens to participate fully in our society. The Ministry is responsible for ensuring accountability for the expenditures made related to our post-secondary system and for ensuring that the system meets the diverse needs and high standards of quality our citizens deserve.  

The following table demonstrates SFU’s strategic alignment with the Ministry’s Strategic Objectives and Performance Measures as set out in the Accountability Framework for public post-secondary education.

**Figure 3.3 Relationships between AVED Objectives and SFU Strategic Goals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ministry Objective</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Ministry Performance Measures</th>
<th>SFU Strategic Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity</strong></td>
<td>The public post-secondary system is sufficient in size to meet the needs of the province.</td>
<td>Student spaces Credentials awarded Sponsored research funding</td>
<td>• Offer quality programs from a diverse set of disciplines across all Faculties, with growth in areas of strategic importance <em>(Surrey expansion is contingent on funding)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Access</strong></td>
<td>All citizens have equitable and affordable access to public post-secondary education.</td>
<td>Aboriginal student headcount</td>
<td>• Engage and involve our many communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality</strong></td>
<td>The public post-secondary system is of sufficient quality to meet the needs of students, employers, and citizens.</td>
<td>Quality of instruction Student satisfaction with education Skill development</td>
<td>• Support and promote teaching excellence • Provide an outstanding student experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance</strong></td>
<td>The public post-secondary system is relevant and responsive to the needs of the province by providing the appropriate scope and breadth of post-secondary education.</td>
<td>Usefulness of knowledge and skills Unemployment rate</td>
<td>• Mobilize University resources and expertise to reflect the distinctive contributions we make to regional, national and global concerns • Increase the level and quality of research and promote our profile as a research-intensive university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Efficiency</strong></td>
<td>The public post-secondary system is able to deliver education programs to students in a timely and cost effective manner.</td>
<td>Bachelor degree completion rate</td>
<td>• Continuously improve our administrative systems and become financially flexible • Recruit, retain and engage the best people • Strengthen and leverage our infrastructure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SFU Academic Planning

**Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Recovery (Chief Safety Officer)**

SFU conducts extensive planning to prepare it to respond quickly and efficiently in the event of a campus emergency or a major disaster. Plans are specific to a range of events, and identify actions and assign departmental or individual responsibilities for events ranging from hazardous materials spills to severe weather to infectious disease.16

16 Links to specific plans are on the website for SFU’s Environmental Health and Safety Office: www.sfu.ca/ehs.html
Related policies include those on Response to Violence or Threatening Behaviour\(^{17}\) and Emergency Management,\(^{18}\) and the Unscheduled Cancellation of Classes.\(^{19}\) The critical role of the Public Affairs and Media Relations (PAMR) department in responding to disasters and other emergencies is set out in the PAMR Emergency Communications Plan.\(^{20}\)

As SFU’s largest campus is located at 370m (1200ft) above sea level on Burnaby Mountain, with access roads sometimes achieving a 7% grade, the most common source of disruptions is snowfall. Long experience with winter-related events has generated much planning and activity, but moving large numbers of people on and off the Mountain in winter weather remains a persistent challenge.

The University also prepares and monitors an Enterprise Risk Management Plan (ERMP), the purpose of which is to manage strategic risks that could prevent the University from achieving its objectives. The ERMP identifies, evaluates and prioritizes risks, assigns responsibility for managing them, and notes steps taken to mitigate them. Identified risks are monitored on an ongoing basis, with the ERMP operating on a three-year horizon, at which time it is reassessed to ensure that new and emerging risks are included. Where risk has been substantially reduced, it may be removed from the list. The ERMP was last reviewed and revised in spring 2011.

**Information Technology Business Recovery Plan (Chief Information Officer)**

SFU’s capacity to carry out key elements of its business relies ultimately on the information technology through which, among many other things, it enrolls students, collects tuition, delivers online courses and pays its employees. The University’s Enterprise Risk Management Report notes that “failure or performance issues of key IT systems” have the potential to significantly disrupt SFU’s business activities. Potential threats include physical damage to IT infrastructure (e.g., hardware or network connections) or damage to key data or files. In 2005, a detailed plan was developed that outlined specific threats to the University’s business processes managed via its IT infrastructure and assessed the costs and benefits of various responses to each.

As noted in Chapter 2, key data and files are backed up daily and stored in multiple locations off-site. Systems are constantly monitored and upgraded to detect and prevent intrusions, and an external auditor conducts an annual assessment to review general IT system controls. These audits have identified no significant system weaknesses. As of February 3, 2011, SFU’s Enterprise Risk Management Plan assesses the risk to business processes arising through a sustained (greater than two hours) disruption caused by server or network failure as having a probability of 3.2 with an impact of 3.4 (both on a scale of 5). The overall risk rating is 10.9 on a scale of 25, ranking seventh on SFU’s register of institutional risks.

A formal plan is in development that will address disasters such as a major thrust earthquake that damages core elements of the IT infrastructure needed to conduct SFU’s business.

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17 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp25.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp25.html)
18 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp31.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp31.html)
19 [www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp4.html](http://www.sfu.ca/policies/gazette/general/gp4.html)
20 Complete manual available to University staff only.
First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan
(Vice President, Academic and Director, Office for Aboriginal Peoples)

Approved by Senate in 2007, the First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan (FNP)\(^{21}\) represents an ancillary plan within SFU’s University Planning Framework. It serves as a useful example of the alignment of second-tier plans with the University’s Academic and Strategic Research Plans and demonstrates how fiscal resources are directed at fulfilling core theme objectives. It also provides an example of how institutional planning can mirror and implement government priorities.

The FNP was the result of a two-year comprehensive planning and visioning process to determine the shape of SFU’s First Nations strategy, and was built on a long-standing history of engagement, collaboration and partnership with First Nations peoples and communities. It was developed within a context of new understandings, new perspectives, new strategies and new partnerships with First Nations peoples, and seeks to transform the University’s approach to academic programming, community engagement, student support and, equally important, research on matters of direct relevance to Canada’s Aboriginal peoples.

The Plan acknowledged that its implementation would require a significant financial commitment, and anticipated the creation of 3.0 FTE positions, a new office with a director and administrative support, and the creation of at least one new faculty position in each of the University’s Faculties. Goals established in the FNP are reiterated in the goals set out in the Academic Plan and the Strategic Research Plan, and funding to advance these initiatives has flowed from the Annual Budget.

Since its approval, much progress has been made in addressing the goals and strategies set out in the FNP, and various initiatives are detailed in the November 2010 Report on First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan Initiatives submitted by the new director of the office for Aboriginal Peoples.\(^{22}\) The Report outlines the relationship between the University’s major Plans and the FNP. The financial commitment to implement the FNP is supported both in the Vice President, Academic’s budget and through special allocations from the University Priority Fund (discussed in the Budget section above), which allocates more than $1 million over three years (2011/12–2013/14) to support for Aboriginal students.

The FNP also aligns SFU’s activities with the AVED’s priority to increase Aboriginal participation in post-secondary education province-wide.

\(^{21}\) www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/strategic+plan.html

\(^{22}\) The change in name from First Nations to Aboriginal Peoples is intended to better represent the full spectrum of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit. The Report is available at www.sfu.ca/aboriginalpeoples/strategic+plan.html
Figure 3.4: Example, increase Aboriginal enrolments as a planning objective

Source: SFU Academic Planning
Meeting a need

In 2002 Simon Fraser University realized a longstanding ambition to bring a research campus to the City of Surrey, able to serve the region “south of the Fraser.” Metro Vancouver’s fastest-growing municipality, Surrey will eventually exceed in size the City of Vancouver, and will be anchored at a new city centre that includes recreation, city government, business towers—and SFU.

An urban university must be “of” as well as “in” the city, and SFU’s newest campus is expected to enhance Surrey’s ability to act as a regional hub of economic development and investment by offering distinctive programs in computing science, interactive arts and technology, mechatronic systems engineering, entrepreneurship, management and technology, mathematics operations research, criminology police studies, and world literature. Also offered are credit and non-credit continuing education programs.

Surrey campus appeals to students who value being part of a smaller, supportive community on an intimate, friendly campus. Over 3,300 students attend classes and, according to the Surrey School Board, expectations of Surrey high school students to attend university have increased 10% since 2005.

Serving the community

Conceived as a leading entrepreneurial and technology-intensive campus, Surrey has built a well-deserved reputation for cutting-edge programs and for fostering and mentoring first-year cohorts.

In addition to other University courses and programs, the Surrey campus offers exclusive community-oriented and high-tech streams, such as Punjabi Language and Culture, World Literature and Aboriginal University Prep.

The award-winning architecture of Surrey’s “millennial” campus is at the heart of Surrey’s mixed-use city centre, and will help shape its economy and meet the needs of its community well into the future.
Guiding growth

Research is an important component on this campus: over 60% of the faculty are research faculty, and almost 9% of the total campus area, or 28,000sf, are devoted to research space—a 17,000sf expansion in 2011 emphasizes wet labs for science. Canada’s National Research Council has advisors on campus to support both small and medium-sized companies.

Community engagement is the other side of the Surrey campus mandate. SFU faculty, staff and students participate on numerous local boards and councils, including Surrey’s Board of Trade, School District, an SFU Surrey Community Advisory Council, and the city’s Sustainability Task Force.

SFU attracts talented faculty to the region, acts as a conduit to global academic knowledge and international research networks, and contributes to a base of scientific knowledge available to local businesses.

Surrey campus growth, 2007-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate AFTEs</td>
<td>1665</td>
<td>2167</td>
<td>2412</td>
<td>2747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate AFTEs</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total AFTEs</td>
<td>2026</td>
<td>2559</td>
<td>2935</td>
<td>3308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Faculty and Staff</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space (sm)*</td>
<td>29,071</td>
<td>29,071</td>
<td>34,061</td>
<td>32,612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Gross Assignable Square Metres
Self Evaluation Study

Chapter 4

Core Theme Planning, Assessment and Improvement

The institution collects data related to clearly-defined indicators of achievement, analyzes those data, and forms evidence-based judgments of achievements of core theme objectives. It regularly and systematically applies clearly-defined evaluation procedures to appraise the relationship of institutional planning, resources, capacity, and practices to the objectives of its core themes; and assesses the extent to which it accomplishes those objectives and achieves the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. It uses assessment results to effect improvement and disseminates its findings to its constituencies.
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The practice of developing explicit and expected student learning outcomes for degrees and programs is not widely practiced at Canadian universities. SFU does adhere to the learning standards identified by the Canadian Council of Ministers of Education for general degrees (bachelor, master’s and doctoral).

The systematic evaluation of students’ achievement at the course level by appropriately qualified instructors, and the rigorous course requirements set for each program, ensure that students achieve these learning standards. In addition, some programs accredited through external bodies have developed learning outcome protocols.

One of the explicit objectives of the current Academic Plan (2010-2013) is that learning outcomes be defined for each SFU program.

University plans define clear objectives, specific outcomes and detailed indicators by which to assess progress toward their achievement. As a result of the accreditation process, plans are increasingly structured with reference to the “core themes,” and objectives, outcomes and indicators are being amended based on the results identified for this Self Evaluation. Results from all major assessment processes, including this Self Evaluation Report, are routinely published to the appropriate communities, most often via the University’s website.

Plans and planning processes take account of changing circumstances in internal and external environments, and emphasis is placed on the University’s ability to ensure its teaching and research strengths as well as its financial sustainability.
Introduction: The Core Theme Assessment Process

Although SFU’s mission has always centred on teaching students, conducting research and engaging with its diverse communities, prior to the accreditation process and as noted in Chapter 1, it had no formal mission statement and its “core themes” were most commonly articulated as components of the University’s Academic and Strategic Research Plans. As the University came to appreciate the requirements of the accreditation process, it adopted an official mission statement and core themes and began to engage with the new accreditation Standards.

It became evident that the heart of the Self Evaluation Report would be the assessment of the University’s performance with regard to its core themes, leading to a conclusion about whether it is fulfilling its self-defined mission. SFU has always carried out extensive and detailed assessments of its performance touching on virtually all areas of its institutional activity, with many assessments leading to operational and academic changes within the institution. For example, cyclical external reviews of academic programs always result in productive and focused change.

Still, SFU had not previously engaged in a University-wide assessment of its performance of the sort it carried out for this Report. This assessment has produced much fruitful debate and discussion that will result in the refinement of future assessment processes, in improved alignment of major institutional plans, and in improved performance by the University.

The assessment included in this Report relied on the work of four Core Theme Teams appointed in March 2010 by the Vice President, Academic and whose original task was to support the implementation of the Academic Plan 2010–2013. The development of the Academic Plan preceded the accreditation exercise, but nicely anticipated its structure. The alignment of academic plan themes with SFU’s core themes is reflected in the following chart. The Core Theme “Institutional Strength” is not assessed in Chapter 4. Attending to Institutional Strength enables SFU to carry out the four Core Themes it identifies as central to its mission, and is discussed in Chapter 5.

**Figure 4.1: Academic Plan Themes and Core Themes, July 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SFU Core Theme</th>
<th>Academic Plan Theme</th>
<th>Theme Team Lead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning in a Research University</td>
<td>Director, University Curriculum and Institutional Liaison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Research Intensity</td>
<td>Dean of Graduate Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Experience and Success</td>
<td>High-Quality Student Experience</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Citizenship</td>
<td>The University’s Role in the Community</td>
<td>Executive Director, Surrey campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Strength</td>
<td>Financial Sustainability and Institutional Strength</td>
<td>Associate Vice President, Academic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SFU Academic Planning

The Core Theme Teams began their work in the fall with a very tight timeline to carry out the assessment. Core theme Objectives, Outcomes and Indicators were typically adapted from the dynamic University Planning Framework document, with existing Objectives and Indicators sometimes amended or augmented by additions as each Team worked through its assessment.
In some cases, despite the wealth of institutional data available through SFU’s office of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) and elsewhere, some of the data sought for this assessment process were discovered to be unavailable. Often the desired data simply were not collected, or were not collected centrally. At other times, proximal data were available but were not sufficiently on-point to provide a reliable assessment of institutional performance.

The Core Theme Teams submitted their assessments at the end of February 2011. A round of clarifications and revisions followed, with an early draft reviewed by the Deans’ Council on March 9th and a revised version reviewed by the Steering Committee on April 27th.

A summary discussion of the recommendations for future assessments forwarded by the Core Theme Teams at the end of the assessment process follows the individual discussions of the four core themes.

A Word About Student Surveys
Several of the Core Theme Teams used as indicators data derived from four student and alumni survey instruments. To understand the data, it is important to know a bit about each survey. Survey data used in this evaluation include BC’s Baccalaureate Graduates Survey (BGS); the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC); SFU’s own Undergraduate Student Survey (UGSS); and the North American National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). All institutional surveys at SFU are conducted by IRP.

Begun in the early 1990s, the BGS is an annual survey, funded by the provincial government and designed to gather information on baccalaureate graduates’ satisfaction with their educational experience, education financing, student debt, and education activities and employment after graduation. The BGS model is based on graduate interviews two and five years following graduation. Results are reported by the Ministry responsible and are available by survey year and discipline, by institution and at the system level. The survey is intended to provide a consistent accountability tool that allows government to compare performance across its institutions. SFU uses the BGS as part of its mandated Institutional Accountability Plan.²

The CUSC is a group of Canadian universities working co-operatively to gain a better understanding of the undergraduate student population, with participation available to any member of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). CUSC surveys are administered to a random sample of 1000 domestic and international students at each participating institution; SFU has participated since 1998. CUSC results go to SFU’s AVP, Students, where Student Services uses it extensively to monitor performance in specific areas. Reports also are posted on the IRP website.

The UGSS is an in-house survey of SFU’s international and domestic undergraduate students conducted by IRP each fall since 1992. Data are collected by IRP and reported to the Vice Presidents, Deans and all others consulted during the survey design. Results are posted on the IRP website. Some core questions are repeated annually to gather trend data and monitor changes (e.g., questions on course accessibility). Others are added as new issues arise. UGSS data are of significant use to Faculties, and are used in the Academic Plan and in responding to government in the Accountability Plan.

² The role of the Institutional Accountability Plan is discussed in the Governance section of Chapter 2.
SFU first participated in the NSSE survey in 2009. Target populations are the first- and fourth-year students. IRP posts NSSE reports on its website and prepares a confidential report for senior administration that includes comparative results from two other BC research universities. Results are used in the Academic Plan and in the University Planning Framework.
Core Theme

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are core activities at SFU and fostering their development is a key commitment of the University. Indicators of student participation and achievement, support and promotion of high-quality teaching, the quality and diversity of learning experiences available to students during their time at the University, and the subsequent experience of its graduates, show that it successfully achieves its objective of providing high-quality university education. Throughout the assessment exercise, it has been clearly recognized that teaching and learning cannot be separated and that student perspectives are integral to the discussion of these processes. Accordingly, data that give voice to students have been important in this assessment process.

Core Theme Assessment

Objective 1

Students have academic opportunities to become informed, engaged global citizens

Outcome 1.1

Students achieve disciplinary program objectives by building knowledge and skills through diverse learning experiences

Undergraduate graduation rates are a useful measure of students having achieved disciplinary goals. Graduation signals the satisfactory completion of a prescribed curriculum that has incorporated rigorous learning assessment carried out by appropriately qualified faculty at many points throughout the program. Unfortunately, the data on graduation rates of SFU students do not include those who successfully transfer from SFU to programs at other institutions, especially programs such as Law and Medicine that SFU does not offer. The available data do, however, indicate that a substantial majority of students entering directly from high school graduate from SFU within seven years. For those who take more than four years to complete, delays tend to result from the need to mix part-time study with paid employment and from course accessibility issues.

Figure 4.2: 5- and 7-year graduation rates for grade 12 entrants, 2007–2010

Among graduate students, completion rates vary by program, but most of those seeking advanced degrees at SFU successfully complete them. Fully 86.8% of those who enrol in a master’s program
successfully complete their degrees, while 60.1% of those who enrol in a doctoral program graduate. Of those enrolled in professional and diploma programs, 82.1 and 77.5% respectively graduate from their programs.

Figure 4.3: 7-year graduate degree completion rates by program, 2007-2010

Another indicator of the knowledge and skills that students gain at SFU is the data from the BC Baccalaureate Graduate Outcomes Survey (BGS) on student opinions of their education. When former students are surveyed regarding the “usefulness of the knowledge, skills and abilities” they gained through their university education, four-fifths say that they are somewhat or very useful.

Figure 4.4: Alumni perceptions of the usefulness of their university education in their daily lives

To promote active learning experiences that facilitate the development of disciplinary knowledge and academic skills, all SFU Faculties and departments take advantage of the tutorial system. Tutorials break down larger lecture groups into smaller, seminar-style discussion groups led by graduate students or senior undergraduates from the relevant disciplines. (See the Education Resources section of Chapter 2.)

All academic units that offer undergraduate major programs also have one or more courses designated “writing intensive” (also called “writing across the curriculum”). The writing intensive pedagogy ensures undergraduate students learn the forms of writing most common to the discipline in which they intend to graduate. As outlined in Chapter 2, writing courses were introduced as a general education requirement at SFU in 2006, along with a similar requirement that all undergraduates must take at least two courses with a “Q” designation. Q courses are intended to develop students’ quantitative (numerical, geometric) or formal (deductive, probabilistic) reasoning, and to develop skills in practical problem solving, critical evaluation, or analysis.
Specialized arrangements, such as directed studies, honours programs and the Semester in Dialogue are available to students interested in alternative learning experiences that promote active learning beyond the regular curriculum. There are 63 directed studies and honours courses listed across 22 (of 30) academic departments. Each year 3-4% of undergraduate students take advantage of directed studies courses and the Semester in Dialogue. A further 1.5-2% enrol in honours programs, which require additional research and independent study. All Faculty and departments at SFU also make use of distance education and web-supported course delivery to enhance and supplement their on-campus, face-to-face course offerings.

Outcome 1.2
Students participate in credit-bearing interdisciplinary, international and experiential learning opportunities as part of their degree programs

Many SFU programs are designed to be interdisciplinary and to contribute to opportunities for students to experience and learn from interdisciplinary research and perspectives. Although interdisciplinary teaching and learning are deeply embedded within the Faculties and many departments, there is no reliable count of the number of students exposed to interdisciplinary learning opportunities because these approaches are often internal to departments or programs but are not explicitly identified as interdisciplinary. The proportion of students enrolled in formally designated interdisciplinary programs (from 6–7%) underestimates the extent of this exposure.

The importance of interdisciplinary learning is a founding value at SFU, and students’ widespread exposure to interdisciplinary learning opportunities at SFU is better suggested by the range of programs noted in Chapter 2’s discussion of the University’s strategies for incorporating it into everything from Faculty structures to its architecture. The continuation of this approach can be seen in the design and commitments of the new Faculties of Health Sciences and Environment. In addition, the large number of possible joint majors, major/minor and minor/minor programs options available, plus the unusual flexibility given students to create their own program combinations provide them with many opportunities to be exposed to different academic, disciplinary and research perspectives.

For international and experiential learning opportunities, data from IRP indicate that approximately 5% of all students each year (graduate and undergraduate) enrol in credit-bearing co-operative education or international study opportunities. Additional data indicate that by their fourth year (i.e., 90 credits or more), approximately 40% of undergraduate students have participated in a practicum, co-op, internship, international or domestic field study or clinical practicum.

A unique SFU program that provides its students with both experiential and international opportunities is the program in Public Administration and Community Services (also known as the “French Cohort Program,” or FCP) in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. With a current enrolment of 65, the FCP allows students to complete their baccalaureate in both of Canada’s official languages; requires them to undertake a third-year exchange at a francophone university in Quebec, France or Belgium; and includes a fourth-year research project relating to BC’s francophone community or to the application of Canada’s Official Languages policies with federal institutions.

An inventory is underway by the Experiential Education project to document credit-bearing, course-based experiential opportunities in the Faculties. Results for the two Faculties completed to date, Arts
and Social Sciences (FASS) and Environment (FENV), indicate that 71% of FENV and 40% of FASS courses evaluated provide experiential education opportunities. This inventory will be expanded to include all Faculties, where it is anticipated that high levels of credit-bearing, course-based experiential education will be found.

**Outcome 1.3**

**Students are well prepared for varied career paths**

Students who find employment in fields they identify as related to their academic programs usually have do so within five years of graduating. Based on data reported in the Baccalaureate Graduate Survey (BGS), virtually all SFU graduates in the labour force are working in paid employment five years after graduation, and seven out of ten responding believe their employment relates directly to their program of study at SFU. (For data two years out, see Student Experience and Success Outcome 1.4.)

**Figure 4.5: Post-graduation employment rates and relevance of program**

Students’ perceptions of the contribution to their education made by the Writing, Quantitative and Breadth (WQB) requirements have been more ambiguous. Asked directly about the WQB requirements, fewer than half of undergraduate students surveyed in recent UGS Surveys said these courses contributed to increasing their knowledge and skills. Of interest, however, is the increase in positive responses each year. A 2009 survey of SFU undergraduates by the Canadian University Survey Consortium (CUSC) found much higher ratings when students considered the contribution SFU made to their growth and development in writing, logical thinking, understanding abstract reasoning and mathematical skills. Among the 2009/10 graduates, 80% or more graded the contribution to their writing, analytical thinking and abstract reasoning as good or excellent.

**Figure 4.6: Student perceptions of the value of WQB requirements**

(% who agreed that a WQB course improved their skills)

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU
Based on these Indicators, it is determined that the University is doing a satisfactory job of achieving Objective 1. By the time they graduate, most SFU students have engaged in diverse learning experiences ranging from tutorials to “W” courses to honours courses to specialized arrangements; a large majority demonstrate their grasp of disciplinary knowledge and abilities by completing their degree requirements and graduating. An array of interdisciplinary courses and programs are available to students, and a substantial proportion of students participate in practicums, co-op, internship and field studies as they progress to graduation. Evidence collected through graduate surveys speaks to graduates’ belief that their education at SFU has contributed directly to skills and abilities related to their field of employment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>Students have academic opportunities to become informed, engaged global citizens</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.1</td>
<td>Students achieve disciplinary program objectives by building knowledge and skills through diverse learning experiences</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.2</td>
<td>Students participate in credit-bearing interdisciplinary, international and experiential learning opportunities as part of their degree programs</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.3</td>
<td>Students are well prepared for varied career paths</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective 2
Support and promote teaching excellence

Outcome 2.1
Faculty provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate teaching

A cornerstone of high-quality post-secondary education is that courses be taught by academically and professionally qualified faculty. More than 80% of SFU courses are taught by continuing and sessional faculty, as are 90% of graduate courses. The remaining courses are taught by external and industry
experts, or high-performing senior graduate students. In all cases, non-faculty lecturers are fully vetted by departments for their qualifications.

**Figure 4.9: Percentage of courses taught by continuing and sessional faculty**

![Percentage of courses taught by continuing and sessional faculty](source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU)

Support for teaching and learning is well-established at SFU. The newly reorganized Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) is mandated to support and enhance programs, curricula, courses, projects, and teaching; foster a positive community and culture around teaching and learning; and enable the growth of a scholarly approach to teaching. Its services are offered to, and used by, teaching staff at all levels of professional recognition from newly appointed teaching assistants to full professors. In addition to pre-designed workshops, TLC offers consultation and programs on a range of topics that support teaching development and improvement, including curriculum planning, course design, and best-practice uses of technology in teaching.

Because the TLC has recently been restructured, data on its activities are not yet available, but data from the 2007/08 activities of its predecessor body provide a benchmark on the range and extent of support available for teaching staff at SFU. In 2007/08 the Learning and Instructional Centre held 18 different styles of workshops and events, with attendance by almost 2500 participants. As the TLC completes its reorganization, it is consulting widely with the community to ensure that leading edge services are customized to meet teaching and learning needs at SFU.

SFU also houses an Institute for the Study of Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines (ISTLD), which is mandated to support innovation and enhance faculty-led enquiry into research questions related to teaching and learning. In conjunction with the ISTLD and the TLC, the Vice President, Academic provides grant funding to support relevant research projects. A key criterion of these grants is that evidence-based pedagogical knowledge be created and shared with the SFU community.

**Outcome 2.2**

**Faculty are recognized internally and externally for teaching excellence**

Recognizing and rewarding teaching excellence has long been an important aspect of SFU’s academic culture. The University Committee for the Excellence in Teaching Awards confers up to three annual awards, presented at SFU’s Awards Ceremony. The criteria for the awards are demanding and the process of determining the winners each year is rigorous. Nominators must demonstrate that nominees: a) are able to stimulate students to think creatively and critically; b) have demonstrated

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3 TLC succeeds the Learning and Instructional Development Centre (LIDC).
4 www.sfu.ca/teachlearn/tlgrants.html
they care for student learning; c) have a sustained record of excellent teaching; and d) teach a diversity of courses. Only CFL faculty who have taught at SFU for a minimum of five years are eligible for this award. As of March 2011, 85 faculty have earned an SFU Excellence in Teaching Award.

Several Faculties also recognize instructional excellence with awards. The Beedie School of Business awards up to two distinguished teaching prizes, with the winners selected by the Faculty’s Teaching Effectiveness Committee. The Faculty of Science acknowledges teaching excellence by graduate teaching assistants as well as by faculty. And the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences presents teaching awards to academic staff at the ranks of lecturer, assistant, associate and full professor. The survey of chairs and directors undertaken for the accreditation working group identified some individual departments that have or plan to institute a departmental teaching award.

Seven SFU faculty members have won 3M National Teaching Fellowships. These teaching fellowships, first awarded in 1986, are designed to reward exceptional contributions to teaching and learning at Canadian universities.

**Outcome 2.3**

**Students express a high level of satisfaction with teaching at SFU**

Survey responses examining student perceptions of the quality of teaching at SFU offer evidence that quality teaching is part of the SFU experience. When asked in the 2010 BGS survey, “overall, would you rate the quality of course instruction [at your alma mater] as very good, good, poor or very poor,” 94% of SFU graduates replied that the quality of course instruction was good or very good. The CUSC survey data cited in Chapter 3 further support the conclusion that students experience quality teaching at SFU.

Data on faculty academic qualifications reinforced survey results and suggest that SFU’s teaching faculty are both well qualified and well regarded by their students. The number of awards at all levels for teaching excellence provides further support for the belief that SFU supports and promotes teaching excellence. As a result, SFU’s performance in this area has been judged “outstanding.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.10: Objective 2 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.1 Faculty provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate teaching</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.2 Faculty are recognized internally and externally for teaching excellence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.3 Students express a high level of satisfaction with teaching at SFU</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Objective 3  
Offer high-quality academic programs from a diverse set of disciplines across all Faculties

Outcome 3.1  
SFU attracts well-respected researchers and teachers to its faculty

Evidence that SFU attracts well-respected researchers can be found in the number of Canada Research Chair (CRC) appointments to SFU; in the awards and honours received by faculty; and in the data on citations of publications by SFU faculty.

The Canada Research Chairs program is part of a national strategy to make Canada one of the world’s top countries in research and development. In 2000, Canada created a permanent program to establish 2000 research professorships in eligible degree-granting institutions across the country to attract and retain within Canadian higher education some of the world’s most accomplished and promising minds. Chairs are awarded to faculty who demonstrate research excellence in engineering and the natural sciences, health sciences, humanities, and social sciences. They improve the nation’s depth of knowledge and quality of life, and strengthen Canada’s international competitiveness. CRCs help to train the next generation of highly skilled people through supervising student researchers, carrying out cutting-edge research, and co-ordinating the work of other researchers. The allocation of CRCs requires an external peer-reviewed process in which the institution at which the CRC is awarded does not participate. SFU is currently allocated 42 Canada Research Chairs.

Over the past two years, SFU faculty earned 85 other awards for personal and professional achievement, ranging from the highest honour granted to a citizen of BC—the Order of British Columbia—to appointments to the Royal Society, a Canadian organization that recognizes excellence in learning, research and accomplishments in the arts, humanities and science.

Citation data on articles by SFU faculty come mainly from the science-related disciplines and do not accurately capture academic activity in the humanities. Though partial, these data are noteworthy and indicate that, among the articles included in the Citation Index database, the total number of citations given to publications by SFU faculty is substantial. In 2007 there were over 25,000 citations to SFU publications, which had grown to over 36,000 by 2009.5

Outcome 3.2  
Programs evolve dynamically, constantly informed by cutting edge research

SFU offers many and diverse programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. With over 370 undergraduate programs (e.g., baccalaureate, diploma, certificate) and more than 120 graduate programs, students may access a wide range of programs. The curriculum continues to evolve at the course and program level. Instructors frequently revise courses, and 70 to 130 new courses and an average of eight new programs are approved each year. SFU also offers a vibrant selection of non-credit programs to the broader community.

Academic units regularly review their curriculum. All Faculties report that unit-level curriculum reviews are conducted as part of the regular external review cycle and are done on schedule (every

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5 These figures refer to citations of materials published since 1981.
seven years). (See Chapter 2 for the external review process.) External reviews provide timely and relevant data regarding the currency and relevance of course offerings and program design. A number of SFU programs also hold external accreditation and conduct regular reviews as part of their discipline-specific accreditation processes.

Many off-cycle reviews of curriculum are internally initiated to incorporate new faculty teaching and research interests into existing curricula, or because a department believes it worthwhile to refresh its programming and respond to student interests. From 2001 to 2006, SFU undertook a comprehensive review of its undergraduate curriculum at the behest of Senate, resulting in the implementation of Writing, Quantitative and Breadth requirements to complete any first baccalaureate degree at SFU.

SFU has guidelines for the establishment and discontinuation of programs. (See the Education Resources section of Chapter 2.) Courses not offered in a period of six semesters (two years) are examined annually, and a number are deleted, ensuring a continuous cycle of review and renewal. As SFU moves closer to the 2011 implementation of its new web-based curriculum management system (CurricUNET), course and program learning objectives will be systematically required, leading to the improvement of the University’s ability to assess outcomes against objectives across its curriculum.

Future assessments should examine the question of program cohesion in which learning outcomes are reviewed for indications that courses are “vertically integrated” and are not simply collections of courses within a common discipline.

Outcome 3.3
SFU attracts diverse and academically well-prepared students, who become part of a vibrant community of learners

Demand for admission to SFU is strong, although it has fluctuated over the last decade in response to economic conditions, demographic changes and the elevation of several other BC post-secondary institutions to university status. In the last three years, competition by applicants for undergraduate admission has grown, while the number of students admitted has remained almost the same. Demand for graduate admission peaked in the last two years, as did admission numbers. Funded FTE targets are set by the province (through AVED) each year for both graduate and undergraduate students in each university’s “Letter of Expectations.”

The ratio of students admitted to number of applicants indicates that SFU remains a top choice for prospective students. The high entering GPA for admitted students (currently B+ and above) suggests the large majority of students who come to SFU are academically competent and well-prepared to engage in university-level learning.

One measure of the perceived strength of a learning community is its ability to attract new members from afar as well as nearby. It is suggested that future assessments review the source (e.g., outside the Lower Mainland, BC and Canada) as an additional measure of SFU’s ability to attract a diverse student body.
Student assessments of their education at SFU provide some indirect confirmation that students become part of a vibrant community of learners. Over 90% of those responding to the BGS indicate they are satisfied or very satisfied with their education at SFU.

When asked whether “given [your] experiences in [your program] would you select the same program again,” four-fifths of respondents said they would.
Finally, CUSC surveys of graduating students found that more than 80% of SFU graduates said their experience at SFU met or exceeded their expectations.

The strength of faculty performance as evidenced in the number and prestige of major teaching and research awards suggests that SFU’s faculty are recognized internally and externally for their achievement as teachers and researchers. The breadth and depth of SFU’s undergraduate and graduate curriculum, and the evidence of its continuous renewal and refreshment, speak to the currency of SFU’s academic offerings. Demand for admission demonstrates that the education offered by SFU is highly valued by aspiring students, and student assessments of their academic experience at SFU indicate that the University achieves its objective of offering high-quality programs from a diverse set of disciplines across all Faculties.
Summary of Core Theme Assessment: Teaching and Learning

In carrying out this assessment, three primary objectives were established, all of which are based on objectives established in the University’s current Academic Plan. Objective 1, “students have academic opportunities to become informed, engaged global citizens,” focuses on the degree to which SFU succeeds in providing rich opportunities to become globally aware and engaged. Objective 2 reflects the University’s concern for excellence in teaching as an essential contributor to student learning. Objective 3 seeks to ensure program content and structures appropriately support the quality of learning and teaching to which SFU aspires.

Based on the available indicators, the assessors determined that the University’s performance ranged from Satisfactory to Outstanding, depending on the outcome measured. Most students participate in learning experiences beyond simply attending lectures in classrooms. Small tutorials are commonplace, writing-intensive courses are required, a substantial minority participate in co-operative education, and many also participate in various internships, practicums, field schools and international exchanges. Survey responses by graduates strongly suggest that graduates believe their SFU education provided them with skills and knowledge pertinent to their subsequent employment.

Awards to faculty for teaching and research excellence, and student survey data on the quality of teaching they received at SFU, provide much of the data on which the assessors base their conclusion that teaching at SFU is outstanding. This assessment comes with several provisos. Measuring teaching performance is difficult: although the tenure and promotion process calls for evidence of teaching quality, the University does not centrally track individual teaching activity or quality assessment, and the extent to which evidence of teaching quality is used in promotion or merit decisions cannot be confirmed. Future assessments should consider whether it is worthwhile to develop a means to determine the degree to which assessments of teaching quality play a role in the tenure and promotion process.

The assessors also recommend that SFU begin to collect data and engage in continuous assessment on teaching and learning issues where it has not previously done so. Existing student surveys, for instance, should be revised to include questions that shift the response from tallying inputs and
perceptions to begin assessing outcomes. Serious consideration should be given to expanding the groups surveyed to include faculty members and employers of SFU students and former students.

The state of SFU’s curriculum appears strong. External reviews are conducted regularly as specified by policy. New programs are added in response to changing social and market needs, and existing programs are revised as disciplinary perspectives and standards evolve. The steady growth of demand for entry to SFU from domestic and international aspirants demonstrates the respect with which the University is held.

The assessors believe that external benchmarking against appropriate Canadian comparator institutions would be useful. For instance, benchmarks that establish the number of internal and external teaching awards at other universities would provide valuable perspective on SFU’s awards.

Finally, the assessors believe that the greatest benefit of this assessment will be the improvement it will bring to future assessments and, from there, to future performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.16: Overall Core Theme summary results, Teaching and Learning</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td>Students have academic opportunities to become informed, engaged global citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>Support and promote teaching excellence</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Offer high-quality academic programs from a diverse set of disciplines across all Faculties</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Research
Core Theme
Research

In its 46 years, SFU has earned an international reputation for its research strengths. It has been awarded more than 40 Canada Research Chairs in areas that complement its strategic research goals, including Tier 1 Chairs for outstanding researchers who are world leaders in their fields, and Tier 2 Chairs for exceptional emerging researchers with the potential to lead in their field.

SFU has 39 Royal Society of Canada Fellows, distinguished Canadian scholars selected by their peers for their outstanding contributions to the natural and social sciences, the arts and the humanities. It is an institutional goal to become the most research-intensive comprehensive university in Canada, able to compete effectively in defined areas with Canada’s top tier institutions and internationally renowned for the excellence of the research it conducts.

As a research-intensive institution, SFU promotes and facilitates advanced research activity by its faculty. As a comprehensive university committed to both teaching and research, research is a major instructional activity that requires close work involving both graduate and undergraduate students in a wide variety of research settings. Within the University, knowledge generation and transfer occur most basically in the interactions between researchers and their students. Because students benefit significantly from direct exposure to, and participation in, research activity, SFU makes it an explicit goal to engage more undergraduate students in its diverse research activities.

As a core theme, research is typically inseparable from, and strengthens the success of, SFU’s other core theme activities. Core theme Objectives on which this assessment was carried out are based on Objectives and Indicators set out in the current Academic and Strategic Research Plans.

Core Theme Assessment

Objective 1
Increase the level and quality of research and promote SFU’s profile as a research-intensive university

Outcome 1.1
Establish a strong research infrastructure

This objective addresses the volume and quality of research undertaken and the dissemination of SFU research results.

The dollar value of investment and spending on research infrastructure is one way to measure the University’s commitment to building research capacity. The total external funding SFU is able to attract to support its research infrastructure depends in part on the operating and granting cycles established by Canada’s national granting programs. One of the largest of these, the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) program, does not issue grants annually or on a regular cycle. SFU’s success in attaining CFI grants has been creditable, ranging from six to eight million dollars annually for the academic years from 2007/08 to 2009/10. However, including such grants as a measure of yearly progress is problematic because they are not issued annually or on a regular cycle.
In contrast, the National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) equipment grants are issued annually and offer a more reliable indicator. SFU’s increased success rate measured in dollars attracted reflects the quality of its research programs and, to an extent, the institutional research environment. Funding attracted in NSERC equipment grants has increased by approximately 60% over the last two years and accounts for 1.4% of SFU’s total research income for 2009/10.

Although much of SFU’s research funding comes from external sources, the University devotes a significant portion of its operating budget to the support of research activities. One indicator of the University’s commitment to research support is its total internal spending to maintain and support its animal care and library facilities. SFU demonstrates its ongoing commitment to its key research infrastructure by maintaining its support in the range of $9.4–10M annually, despite the economic stressors to which all public institutions have been subject in recent years.

The level of research activities undertaken in University-sponsored research facilities is measured using central facilities such as the library and the animal care facility. Use of these facilities, as measured by cost recovery for animal care and library resource contracts, has more than doubled between 2007/08 and 2009/10, growing from $81,046 to $176,454, indicating that SFU’s investment in the animal care facility and library collections is reaping dividends.

As a future indicator, it is suggested that SFU’s ratio of research space to teaching space be measured and benchmarked against other high-performing institutions as a means to track the strength of its research infrastructure.

Figure 4.17: Total research infrastructure spending ($millions)

Source: Vice President, Research

Outcome 1.2
Develop well-regarded research programs

The quality of SFU’s institutional research is measured using indicators based on research income, “research intensity” (research income per faculty member), and research impact as evidenced by publications and citations generated by SFU researchers. While variations will exist in total annual research income (see Table 4.18), it has increased overall by 8% since 2007/08, with research intensity remaining relatively constant over the same period. Publications and citations generated by SFU researchers have both increased since 2007/08. The number of publications increased from 1307 to 1661 in 2009/10 and, as described above in the section on Teaching and Learning, citations similarly increased from almost 26,000 to over 36,000.
It is significant that the impact of research by SFU researchers measured using the number of publications and citations per year outpaces by a substantial margin the increase in research faculty. The increase in total research faculty between 2007/08 and 2009/10 was 7%, while the increase in publications was 27%.

**Outcome 1.3**

**Translate ideas into new and innovative ventures**

The extent to which SFU contributes to “research and development” (as opposed to basic research) and its success and effectiveness in translating research findings and outcomes into practical applications, can be partly assessed using strategic and corporate funding received, the number of new disclosures, and income from royalties. All indicators have increased since 2007/08: industry-focused and strategic research partnership income has grown by 45%; new disclosures have grown by 34%; and royalty income has increased by 330%. The latter increased from $339,007 in 2007/08 to $1,458,973 in 2009/10.
Based on the assessment indicators used within this framework and as illustrated above for all indicators in reference to Objective 1, the overall assessment for the Objective is satisfactory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>Increase the level and quality of research and promote SFU’s profile as a research-intensive university</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.1</td>
<td>Establish a strong research infrastructure</td>
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<td>Outcome 1.2</td>
<td>Develop well-regarded research programs</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.3</td>
<td>Translate ideas into new and innovative ventures</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 2**

**Incorporate research into teaching and learning**

**Outcome 2.1**

**Strengthen graduate student research**

This Objective provides a measure of the University’s drive to expand the role of research activity within the broader curriculum by providing opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students to perform research.

In Canada, the “Tri-Councils” are the three major federal research-granting agencies: the National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), and the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR). Research-focused graduate programs are those whose students are eligible for Tri-Council funding because their programs include research methods courses and require a “capstone course,” thesis or major project to complete.

The number of international graduate students studying at SFU provides a measure of the global recognition of the graduate and research training available at SFU. From 2007/08 the number of international graduate students has increased by 20% (from 667 to 800). However, the Theme Team recommends that the University refine its ability to develop and collect meaningful data to identify
the number of post-doctoral fellows and “visiting” (graduate student) scholars at SFU. No data were available on this measure of the global recognition for SFU’s research training.

Dedicated funding for graduate research is used to measure the University’s commitment to fund graduate students engaged in research activity. From 2007/08 to 2009/10, funding for graduate students has risen steadily and dramatically: by 8% (to $36.4M in 2008/09) and 16% (to $39.6M in 2009/10).

The Research Core Theme Team identified as future goals the need to increase the relative number of graduate students engaged in research and to increase the financial support per student.

Measures of graduate student research, publications and presentations are needed to identify graduate student participation in research outputs. Data on the financial support provided to graduate students to attend and present at scientific meetings in relation to the scholarly output would be beneficial.

**Outcome 2.2
Engage undergraduate students in research**

Although research is embedded in many of SFU’s undergraduate courses through internal debate, selected readings and the assignment of journal articles, the teaching and use of statistics and the writing of papers based on research, this kind of activity is very difficult to quantify. For this assessment, enrolment in a limited subset of research courses—honours, projects and directed studies—were counted.

Honours degrees in Canada typically require that disciplinary content be covered in greater depth and breadth than the usual requirements for a major program. At SFU most major programs require a minimum 120 credits to complete, while honours programs require at least 132 credits. Honours programs also require more credits in the upper-division of the discipline and completion of disciplinary courses specific to the honours designation. Among such courses are capstone courses and directed studies leading to an honours thesis. Directed studies and project courses typically involve writing papers or reports or research-based projects.

The percentage of undergraduate students enrolled in research-focused courses as described above has increased since 2007/08 relative to the number of undergraduate students, with no change in the absolute number of students completing an honours degree.

**Figure 4.22: Undergraduate students in research courses**

![Graph showing the number of undergraduate students in research courses from 2007/08 to 2009/10](source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU)
A pilot project funded by the Vice President, Research has been created to increase opportunities for undergraduate participation in research activities. It will provide 16 weeks of research training to undergraduate students in the sciences, the applied sciences, the social sciences and the humanities. Trainees will receive awards of $2250 or $4500 based on whether they are enrolled in courses during the tenure of the award. Awards will be supplemented by an additional \( \frac{1}{4} \) support from supervisors’ grant funds. This program complements those for graduate student research support and increases the opportunities to gain research experience at an earlier stage of academic development.

In addition to the undergraduates who experience research through coursework, others are employed as research assistants through the NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Awards (USRA) program. The USRA program encourages undergraduate students to undertake graduate studies and pursue a research career in their fields by matching an undergraduate student with an NSERC grant-holder. The faculty member outlines a research project and how the student’s work can contribute to it. Students employed through the USRA program work on the research project full-time for a minimum of 16 weeks. The student’s salary is covered jointly by NSERC (\( \frac{3}{4} \)) and the faculty member’s grant (\( \frac{1}{4} \)). The number of NSERC USRA holders averaged approximately 100 over the years from 2007/08 to 2009/10. Faculty members also hire undergraduates to work in their labs as research placements through the University’s co-op education programs. From 2007/08 to 2009/10, undergraduate co-op research placements at SFU more than doubled, increasing from 33 to 77.

Although some undergraduates are benefitting from the USRA programs funded by NSERC and SFU, other data suggest that the University needs to do more to improve its performance getting undergraduates to participate directly in research activity through coursework, and that more accurate means of tracking that experience also are needed. As a result, Outcome 2.2 “needs improvement.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.23: Objective 2 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.1</td>
<td>Strengthen graduate student research</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.2</td>
<td>Engage undergraduate students in research</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Core Theme Assessment: Research**

Overall research goals at the time of this assessment were, and remain, to improve the quality and quantity of research and to incorporate the research more fully into our teaching and learning. Collectively the data suggest that, as an organization, SFU is meeting the majority of its research goals. It is apparent that the University’s research impact as measured using citations and research publication data is increasing, as are its industry partnerships and industrial innovations and royalty income. The number of graduate students pursuing a research degree is increasing relative to the rate of increase in overall graduate student numbers, and undergraduates are gaining research experience at an increasing rate. However, undergraduate participation in research-related coursework still appears to be relatively low and difficult to confirm.
While SFU has identified some reasonably good indicators to assess its research activities, those available to assess the extent to which research is embedded in its undergraduate teaching could be improved through detailed analysis of all undergraduate courses to see whether they integrate research into their curriculum and learning outcomes.

The University should examine why only a small subset of undergraduate students appear to gain substantial research experience through existing directed studies courses or honours theses, and through other means of integrating research activity into the first three years of academic experience. Institutional targets should be established to ensure undergraduates in all areas benefit from meaningful exposure to research methods and activities. Strengthening the links between research and teaching through more work-integrated learning opportunities is an important objective.

During the assessment process several provisional long-term goals were identified by the Research Core Theme Team to be considered in the longer term:

- to build research capacity;
- to develop institutional benchmarks for the most appropriate ratio of classroom to research space;
- to maintain total internal spending on animal care and library collections; and
- to have utilization rates parallel internal support of the animal care facility and library collections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.24: Overall Core Theme summary results, Research</th>
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<tr>
<td>Objective 1 Increase the level and quality of research and promote SFU’s profile as a research-intensive university</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective 2 Incorporate research into teaching and learning</td>
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</table>
Student Experience and Success
Core Theme
Student Experience and Success

At SFU the term “Student Experience” refers to the overall feelings and beliefs a student has regarding their time at the institution. It encompasses the totality of students’ experience of the University, including their sense of how the University values them; ultimately, a student’s experience will define her or his enduring memories of the institution and whether these are positive. In this sense, Student Experience has clear implications for a number of critical institutional issues and outcomes, among which are student recruitment and retention, institutional reputation and alumni support.

Recognizing that students’ success is rooted in their collective experiences, and their success is of utmost importance to the entire institution, it would be challenging to uncouple experience from success. So, for the purposes of this assessment, these two concepts have been strategically entwined into a single theme: “Student Experience and Success.”

For operational purposes SFU defines “Student Success” more narrowly as “academic success.” Students succeed most fundamentally by learning, and by demonstrating their learning by meeting the academic standards set by their respective disciplines. Inevitably, the objectives set for the student experience and success core theme interweave with those for teaching and learning.

Results derived from student survey questions play a significant role in documenting the subjective experience of SFU students in their various engagements with the University’s academic and co-curricular activities and its administrative processes. The evaluation of SFU’s progress in improving student experience and student success is ongoing and reflects the dynamic nature of institutional planning in a constantly changing market.

Put briefly, Student Experience and Success at SFU is built on a foundation of an engaging student experience fostered by a supportive learning and living environment that contributes to a vibrant campus community.

Core Theme Assessment

Objective 1
Provide an engaging student experience

Outcome 1.1
Students develop global perspectives, critical thinking and transferable skills

By creating multiple opportunities for students to establish meaningful contact with their discipline, with each other, with their communities, and with the University, SFU provides students with opportunities to develop as individuals and citizens. Identifying strong indicators for the first two outcomes has, however, proven to be quite challenging. It is possible to see how many students participate in some of SFU’s diverse pedagogical offerings, but it is more difficult to assess the influence of the programming on their development. The learning outcomes from these diverse opportunities need to be clearly identified and supported by specific curricula. A commitment to
provide students with an engaging university experience is, in essence, a commitment to continued institutional evolution.

Participation in co-op education is a significant contributor to experiential learning for many SFU students. Approximately 2400 students are placed in co-op jobs each year, with another 2500 either preparing to seek co-op positions or actively seeking them. There remains significant room for growth in this area provided that the local economy can absorb more students.

Figure 4.25: Students applying to co-op, seeking a co-op placement or placed

![Graph showing students applying to co-op, seeking a co-op placement, or placed over years 2008 to 2010.]

Source: SFU Co-operative Education

SFU’s exemplar of focused interdisciplinary learning, the Semester in Dialogue program, is full at 145 students each year, and approximately 250 students annually exploit various study abroad opportunities. By the time students reach their fourth year (90 or more credits), 40% report having completed a practicum, internship, field experience, co-op placement or clinical assignment.

As indicated in the Teaching and Learning core theme assessment, SFU is just beginning to document the extent of experiential learning that occurs in its credit-bearing courses. Preliminary results suggest that opportunities for experiential education are substantial in some programs. The Undergraduate Student Survey (UGSS) sheds light on the value students associate with experiential learning opportunities: over 80% feel that they would be interested in participating in experiential learning programs that result in academic credit towards an SFU degree, with 55% saying they believe experiential learning programs are of sufficient value that, regardless of their credit value, they should be required for degree completion.

Figure 4.26: Student participation in diverse pedagogies

![Graph showing student participation in service and community-based activities, Semester in Dialogue, and study abroad programs from 2007/08 to 2009/10.]

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU
outcome 1.2
Students report gaining applied experience relevant to their academic study and personal/professional goals

A substantial test of the benefits and relevance of an education is how those who are educated experience its value as they engage with a wider world through work or advanced studies. Results from the BGS show that, two years after graduation, 81% of graduates believe that the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired at SFU are either very or somewhat useful to their day-to-day life.

Gaining experience in one’s field while still at school prepares students for an effective and successful transition to full-time work following graduation. Among SFU graduates, 55.8% of those responding to the CUSC survey participated in various forms of work experience facilitated or offered by SFU, including co-op employment, work experience, practicums, internships, or service learning activities. Among those who participated in these varied forms of experiential learning during their studies, exactly half felt these experiences contributed “very much” to their growth and development.

outcome 1.3
Students progress to complete their identified credential

Although many of the indicators used in this assessment of student experience are subjective, student progress to degree completion is more easily and objectively quantified. The UGSS provides information on course availability and on the ability of students to understand and move effectively through their programs (“navigable curriculum”); the BGS sheds light on post-completion career and schooling choices; and data kept by the University’s IRP measure issues related to success, retention and transition.

SFU has long identified “course accessibility” as an impediment to degree completion. For the past decade SFU has worked to improve course availability and reduce incidences of delayed degree completion. In 2003, a Task Force on Course Accessibility identified a number of systemic
contributors to course accessibility, including insufficient classroom space, an artificially compressed scheduling day, the trimester system, overly extensive pre-requisite structures for some programs, and the unpredictability of undergraduate registration patterns. Many of these issues have since been addressed. In 2005, for instance, a new course scheduling policy imposed some key efficiencies on the scheduling process. Participation in a cohort tends to improve progress by offering students predictable access to required courses in a regular sequence and schedule. A number of first-year cohort programs are now offered at SFU’s Surrey campus (i.e., BusOne, TechOne, Science Year One, SystemsOne and Explorations) and provide the benefits of small, integrated courses with guaranteed registration to those accepted.

Despite these efforts, 55% of those responding said their progress to degree completion was delayed by their inability to enrol in required or elective courses when they were ready to do so. Satisfaction with course availability decreases as course level increases: nearly 80% of first-year students report being satisfied with course availability, but satisfaction decreases to under 60% by the time students reach their fourth year.

Some students choose to reduce their course loads and/or to take courses that do not specifically relate to their degree. For instance, students in the Beedie School of Business report the highest level of delayed completion (61%), but also note that their delays are caused by competition to enter the School’s highly touted co-op program. Since the co-op program is designed to provide work experience and enhance their educational experience, longer times to completion for Beedie students may represent greater opportunity rather than delayed progress.

Figure 4.28: UGSS fall survey, question 14

How satisfied were you with your overall SFU experience with course availability?
[Percentage who responded Very/Somewhat Satisfied]

Although course accessibility and curriculum navigability remain challenges at SFU, the University places great emphasis on providing students with the tools they need to succeed as scholars in its programs. SFU practices a shared model of academic advising, with responsibility for undergraduates distributed among the Academic Advising and Student Success units of Student Services and individual academic departments.

Student Services advises newly admitted and “exploratory” students in their first and second years (i.e., students who have not yet declared a major) and students in academic difficulty. Academic departments advise students already accepted into their programs (i.e., “declared” students) and undecided students with 70 or more credits accrued. Student Services offers advising at all three
campuses through a mix of individual sessions (drop-ins, appointments and instant messaging) and group workshops. Departmental advising is typically available at each department’s home office.

Academic advising at SFU is informed by two philosophies: developmental and intrusive. Advisors assist students with clarifying their life and career goals and developing educational plans to realize them. This approach requires an understanding that academic advising is a responsibility shared by the student and the advisor. At times, particularly with “at-risk” students, a more proactive, “intrusive” approach is taken that involves initiating contact with a student who otherwise may not seek help before difficulties arise.

The presence of sound academic advising principles helps students define academic goals: in 2010, 72% of students at SFU had a declared major, up from 68.4% in 2007. Helping students navigate their progress at SFU may also help them succeed in their chosen programs.

A Degree Progress Report has been built into the Student Information System (SIMS) to allow students to audit their degree progress directly, or to review progress with an advisor. Students make ample use of these resources to navigate their programs: 79.4% of UGSS respondents say the academic Calendar was “very” or “somewhat useful,” as were advisors, instructional staff and various University websites.

**Figure 4.29 UGSS fall survey, question 21**

How useful are the following sources in helping you to plan your path through your program requirements?

- Program website: 69.2%
- SFU’s academic calendar: 79.4%
- Other students: 76.1%
- Program academic advisor: 76.1%
- Professors/Instructors/TAs: 49.7%

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU

In 2010, retention rates from first to second year were 82%, which represents a slight slip from 2007, when 86% of students successfully transitioned from first to second year. Completion rates have slowed very slightly over the last three years: a student entering directly from grade 12 will usually complete his or her program in 5.3 years, up from 5.2 in 2007. A transfer student will complete in 3.7 years, up from 3.4 three years ago. While this is not a large increase, it remains an area of strategic importance and concern.

**Figure 4.30: Retention rates of students entering from BC12**

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU
Outcome 1.4
Students effectively transition to degree-related employment or to further studies

Within two years of completing their programs, most graduates have either found employment or gone on to further study. BGS responses show that within two years of graduation 95% of respondents are either working at or have a paying job lined up. Of those, 67% say their main job is either “very” or “somewhat” related to the program from which they graduated. Although 33% of respondents believe their main job is not directly related to their studies at SFU, a large majority (83%) say the knowledge, skills and abilities they acquired through their SFU studies are “very” or “somewhat useful” in their work. (For data five years out, see Teaching and Learning Outcome 1.3.)

The 2009 BGS results also show that 54% of respondents undertook further studies within two years of graduation, with 25% at the master’s level. The primary reason given for continuing studies was for employment reasons (77%), with almost a quarter of respondents engaging in further studies to challenge themselves intellectually or to pursue areas of personal interest (24%).

Objective 1 of Student Experience and Success is that SFU will “provide an engaging student experience.” Outcome 1.1 echoes Objective 1 from the Teaching and Learning core theme in encouraging students to “develop global perspectives, critical thinking and transferable skills.” The University tries to achieve this in part by making available a number of different learning experiences that address different learning styles and environments. Participation in co-op, for instance, allows students to experience job requirements and workplaces, and to test beforehand their expectations and understanding of the skills and knowledge needed to prosper in discipline-related work. Interdisciplinary cohorts such as the Semester in Dialogue allow students to engage with a subject from multiple perspectives, and encourage them to see issues while learning about the processes by which issues are managed and, where possible, resolved. Overall, however, data measuring whether students develop the perspectives and skills identified in Outcome 1.1 are elusive. Because evidence for measuring progress toward this outcome is lacking, the assessment team has judged that improvement is required.

Timely student access to courses required to complete their programs, and to some elective courses, remains a challenge at SFU according to student surveys, and grows more difficult as students achieve the upper division of their programs. Although some students voluntarily delay their graduation to participate in field schools, domestic and international co-op opportunities and to work, others are stymied by the unavailability of the courses they require at the time they require them. The assessment team deems that the University needs to take steps to improve its performance around completion times. On the other hand, graduate surveys suggest that, once they complete their programs, SFU graduates are exemplary in their ability to find degree-related employment in a reasonable time. Data are currently unavailable for students progressing to advanced or other second degrees.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>Provide an engaging student experience</th>
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<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<td>Outcome 1.3</td>
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<td>Outcome 1.4</td>
<td>Students effectively transition to degree-related employment or to further studies</td>
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</table>

**Objective 2**  
**Provide a supportive student learning and living environment**

**Outcome 2.1**  
**Students experience a welcoming and diverse campus community**

The diversity of SFU’s student body mirrors that of BC’s Lower Mainland and, on a larger canvas, reflects Canada’s rapidly changing population. SFU’s international student body has grown from 3,461 in 2007 to 4,718 in 2010, with students representing 126 countries (up from 114 in 2007). International students are welcomed by informal student groups, and are introduced to and oriented by staff and peer volunteers for the numerous specialized student services, advising and mentoring programs offered by SFU International, and by services provided to all students through Student Central, Ulife, Arts Central and the office of the Associate Vice President, Students.

**Figure 4.32: International student enrolment**

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU

A stroll through any SFU campus will show that Canadian domestic students are as diverse as their international counterparts, and informal and programmatic supports also exist for them. Among programs available are pre-arrival advising, residence-life and University orientation, wellness programs, the Centre for Students with Disabilities, peer and professional tutoring, career services, leadership training programs (e.g., LEAD), interfaith opportunities, the office for Aboriginal Peoples and Ulife programming.
Back on Track, a program originally designed to assist students whose poor academic performance made them “Required to Withdraw” (RTW), has been extended to students On Academic Probation (OAP) in an effort to increase effectiveness through earlier intervention. Back on Track’s success rate in improving the marginal performance of at risk students has demonstrated the value of the program to SFU and the students who were able, with the help of the program, to recover and remain in school. Many Faculties also provide retention-oriented activities (e.g., peer mentoring in the Faculty of Health Sciences), particularly to students in Year One, and have introduced problem-specific interventions where warranted (e.g., calculus support in the Faculty of Science).

Figure 4.33: Back on Track program

Outcome 2.2
Students access transparent and efficient administrative systems

Student feedback suggests that student access to SFU’s administrative systems needs improvement; how SFU measures student access also is problematic. According to CUSC, 67% of respondents feel they are “part of this university,” a positive if nebulous response. However, 60% of students responding to the same survey said they “got the run-around” when dealing with SFU’s administrative services. This less-glowing response indicates a feeling of discontent with processes and administrative services and suggests that the delivery of administrative services requires attention. Student responses also suggest a need for more substantive indicators (or points of data collection) for this assertion, such as a standing question in SFU’s annual UGS Survey of students that clearly addresses this issue.

Outcome 2.3
Students are provided supportive and healthy environments for study and community activities

Students appear reasonably satisfied with services that support their academic studies, but give mixed reviews to some University services that may or may not directly relate to them—for example, food services, study space and computer lab space.

Food services on the Burnaby campus are well used, but not particularly well liked. In 2008, 89.9% of CUSC respondents reported using various food outlets on campus, but only 42% reported being “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their experience.7 Student responses reflect the difficulty of having a single food service provider attempt to meet the needs of both students in residence and commuting

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7 Data on satisfaction with food services was not collected in 2009.
students (as well as faculty and staff). Residence food services must be ample, tasty, nutritious and available for long hours seven days a week; commuting students are looking for quick service, reliable quality and a variety of relatively inexpensive options.

To provide greater flexibility, the food service contractor for the Burnaby campus is licensed to operate outlets of several popular Canadian food services, including Tim Horton’s, White Spot and Subway, all of which are well-received by students. The Simon Fraser Student Society also operates several food services, and sub-leases space to several external food service operators. Off-campus food options (at Burnaby) are accommodated in the UniverCity development and have provided some much desired variety in food and price. Because SFU’s Vancouver and Surrey campuses are located in the midst of urban commercial districts, students at those campuses are able to make use of many different food outlets.

Library and quiet study space are adequate, and robust wireless Internet service is available throughout the campus. Parking pressure has eased since the introduction of the Universal Transit Pass (UPASS) and according to Translink, ridership is constantly growing and service to the Burnaby campus is the highest for any route in the Lower Mainland, with buses leaving every two minutes during peak hours from the Production Way/University Skytrain station.

Other services are more positively received, with most approved by the significant majority of respondents. Residence and student life programs were highly regarded, and recreational, athletic and computer facilities received very positive responses.

Figure 4.34: CUSC level of satisfaction (% Very Satisfied/Satisfied) with University services

![Diagram showing satisfaction levels]

Source: Institutional Research and Planning, SFU

Objective 2 expresses the University’s intention to provide an environment that supports student learning and life in mutually productive ways. Evidence supports the conclusion that SFU provides a supportive and inclusive environment for its diverse student body. Extensive orientations are held for new students, with targeted orientations also held for students with specific needs or interests (e.g., disabled, residence, or international students). Additional supports are provided for continuing students through ULife, as well as various leadership and other development programs. For students who find themselves struggling to succeed academically, the University created its Back on Track program, and various Faculty-specific mentorship programs have been developed at the disciplinary level.
Students also are provided with supportive and healthy environments. The Library provides ample study space and learning resources; transit use at SFU is the highest in the Lower Mainland; and residence and student life programs are highly regarded. Systems support is significant and well regarded. Student satisfaction with available food services remains modest, and a majority of students responding feel that they have, at one time or another, “got the run around” in their dealings with SFU’s administrative systems. This last perception has resulted in an assessment that improvement is required to make those systems more transparent and efficient.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 2</th>
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<th>Outstanding</th>
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<td>Objective 2.2</td>
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<td>Objective 2.3</td>
<td>Students are provided supportive and healthy environments for study and community activities</td>
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**Objective 3**

**The University creates vibrant campus communities**

**Outcome 3.1**

**Students participate in multiple opportunities to engage in a vibrant campus life**

Students have many opportunities to engage in co-curricular activities at SFU. In 2009/10, the UGSS asked students “how likely are you to participate in each of these types of activities at SFU?” Responses ranged from a low of 32% who would attend athletic events to a high of 62% who would attend free lectures and speakers. SFU continues to seek ways to increase student interest in co-curricular activities.
Recognition that much of what students learn at university is learned outside the classroom has led to the need to develop a means to record valuable non-academic experiences at SFU. Student Services is currently collecting data from a pilot testing of a new co-curricular record, “My Involvement,” which is expected to provide excellent data about how students participate in campus life outside the classroom. Current records provide detail on students’ involvement as peer educators, orientation leaders, residence community advisors, LEAD and LEAD 2 participants and some Recreation positions. When implemented, “My Involvement” will ultimately record participation in Faculty initiatives and other SFU activities that foster personal development, leadership and civic engagement.

**Outcome 3.2**
**Students and graduates contribute to the social and economic well-being of their communities**

Community engagement by students and alumni is well reflected in SFU’s Outstanding Alumni Awards. Since 1983, these awards have recognized achievement in Academic Achievement, Arts and Culture, Athletic Achievement, Public Service, Service to the Community, Professional Achievement and Service to the University. Among recipients of SFU’s outstanding alumni awards are distinguished artists, authors, filmmakers, researchers, community and thought leaders, current and former members of the provincial and federal governments, and several Olympic medalists. Recipients of the Award represent the breadth and depth of contributions made by SFU graduates to the well-being of their communities.

The Baccalaureate Graduate Survey shows that two years after graduation 95% of alumni had paid employment or had employment lined up. Across Canada, higher education leads to higher rates of income, better health for the graduates and their families, intergenerational financial security and other benefits that continue to positively affect the economic and social well-being of communities within which graduates live and work.

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8 [www.sfu.ca/alumni/our-alumni/outstanding.html](http://www.sfu.ca/alumni/our-alumni/outstanding.html)
Outcome 3.3
Students choose a lifelong relationship with SFU

Although SFU is only 46 years old, financial support from its 100,000-plus alumni has been consistently strong. In 2009/10, alumni pledged $1,045,888. This level of donations has been relatively stable in recent years, although the recession of 2008 significantly affected gifts for that year. In 2011, father and son Keith and Ryan Beedie donated over $22 million to SFU’s Faculty of Business Administration, which was renamed “The Beedie School of Business” in acknowledgement of their generosity. When indicating the reason for their donation, both men cite their close relationship with SFU and Ryan, in particular, his academic and student experience.

Figure 4.37: Alumni support, 2007-2010

The Core Theme Team considers that the Outcomes for Objective 3 are being satisfactorily achieved by SFU. Students have numerous and wide-ranging opportunities to participate in campus life, whether through student clubs, recreational or athletic activities, volunteer and service activities, public lectures by internal and external senior scholars, and in other forms. SFU students and graduates contribute to their communities through active participation in community and cultural events and through the positive economic and social impact their presence brings to their communities. Alumni donations and participation in events sponsored by the Alumni Association demonstrate the awareness by SFU graduates of the role the University has played in their intellectual and financial growth.

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>engage in a vibrant campus life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.2 Students and graduates contribute to the social</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and economic well-being of their communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.3 Students choose a lifelong relationship with</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary of Core Theme Assessment: Student Experience and Success

SFU’s overall performance in the Student Experience and Success core theme is satisfactory, although some important areas are in need of improved performance. Students take advantage of opportunities to participate in experiential learning through such options as field schools, international exchanges, and co-op work placements, sometimes deferring their graduation to do so. At other times, students’ progress to graduation is delayed because required and elective courses are not available when students want to, or must, take them. The assessors believe the University’s performance should improve in this area.

The Core Theme Team also decided it lacked sufficient data to determine whether students are developing a global perspective, critical thinking and transferable skills; the absence of meaningful data led the team to assess that improvement is needed.

Improvement in administrative systems and processes was also deemed to be necessary to address student perceptions that these are unduly complex and circuitous (the “run around”). Further work is needed to identify what systems and processes are problematic so focused action can be taken to address them.

The University performs well in providing students with a supportive learning and living environment. Programs and services to address virtually any student need are available, and substantial effort is expended to ensure that students are aware of them. Students in academic difficulty, for instance, are contacted and encouraged to participate in programs like Back on Track, and most of those participating recover academically. Faculties and disciplines also develop and support programs that assist students to succeed and prosper in their unique academic settings. One sign of the University’s general success in supporting its students is that alumni donate to support University activities.

Overall, the Core Theme Team judges that SFU is achieving its core theme objectives for Student Experience and Success. A significant benefit of this assessment process has been to identify areas in which data collection can be improved, or where objectives, outcomes and indicators can be better aligned. For instance, additional data measuring graduate students’ experiences at SFU are needed. Some changes to student survey questions have also been identified, and SFU has begun working with NSSE to develop data more relevant to SFU’s purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 1</th>
<th>Provide an engaging student experience</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>Provide a supportive student learning and living environment</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>The University creates vibrant campus communities</td>
<td>Outstanding</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Needs improvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Community and Citizenship
Core Theme

Community and Citizenship

Community engagement is a foundational value at SFU; the University’s “Statement on Values and Commitments” invites communities to expect much of SFU, and promises reciprocal engagement with its communities in building a robust and ethical society. Nowhere is SFU’s determination to engage its communities more evident than in its two urban campuses. Their establishment (Vancouver in 1989, Surrey in 2002) in BC’s two largest city centres was a result of strategic decisions intended to keep the University close to the centres of BC’s civic life.

The Vancouver Sun has called SFU the “intellectual heart of Vancouver,” and the Surrey campus is an acknowledged anchor to that city’s revitalized urban core. In both cities, SFU works extensively with the municipalities, community development groups, not-for-profits, school boards, business associations and others to continue and expand its contributions to the public good.

SFU’s programs extend well beyond BC’s Lower Mainland. In the Faculty of Education, for instance, the Alaska Highway Consortium on Teacher Education (AHCOTE) has been providing professional teacher training in BC’s north for over 20 years. Education also offers short-term, non-credit professional training in Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Greenland and the Philippines, among other countries.

In 2009, SFU’s work was acknowledged with the Gold Award for public-sector leadership in education from Canada’s Institute of Public Administration and Deloitte, which recognized SFU’s pioneering moves to become firmly rooted in the communities beyond its original Burnaby Mountain campus.

Although SFU has always been a major and conscientious contributor to BC’s public life, finding and implementing meaningful ways to measure the impact of its many activities is new. Extensive discussions were conducted to identify meaningful and measurable objectives and outcomes for these activities. At present, no systematic processes exist to collect information for many of the measures identified at the outset of this process. The University recognizes the need to develop more explicit and documented methods for assessing its outreach and engagement activities and to test whether they are conducted efficiently and fruitfully.

In conducting the assessment of community engagement and citizenship, a number of quantitative and qualitative indices were employed. Often, the results were suggestive rather than definitive, and numerous recommendations emerged for the improvement of measures for activities falling within this Core Theme. In many instances, the absence of identified internal thresholds or external benchmarks made the business of gauging success a significant challenge, and it is strongly recommended that future assessments identify suitable benchmarks and thresholds where possible. The assessment process itself can focus and promote awareness of community engagement and citizenship efforts in academic and administrative departments, and can encourage the collection of data and development of profiles related to these essential activities.

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9 The Vancouver Sun, May 5, 2009: www.canada.com/vancouversun/news/editorial/story.html?id=3b37eabe-3c03-4af2-b449-6e4c3f71e3e
Objective 1
Engage and involve SFU’s many communities

Outcome 1.1
Provide learning opportunities to diverse communities

The Core Theme Team identified several Indicators by which to assess SFU’s performance in providing learning opportunities to diverse communities: enrolment in non-credit programs; attendance at public lectures; and enrolments by international, mature and Aboriginal students.

Although the vast majority of SFU’s academic offerings are for credit, Continuing Studies has provided non-credit academic programming since 1971. In 2011, Continuing Studies was incorporated into the larger Lifelong Learning unit, which also offers specialized for-credit programming in conjunction with the other academic Faculties.

Non-credit programs and activities make the University’s academic resources available to a much broader constituency and often are tailored to meet the needs or interests of specific community sectors, stakeholders and constituencies who might otherwise be unable to access them. These programs also encourage the University to broaden its contacts and widen its perspectives.

Based on the available data from a range of programs offered through Continuing Studies, non-credit programs continue to meet the needs of a growing and diverse number of community members. This success is reflected by steady enrolments in most programs, with significant increases in some (e.g., Writing and Publishing, Interdisciplinary Studies, and the Dialogue Programs).

Figure 4.40: Enrolment in non-credit programs

By sponsoring events such as public lectures, the community experiences some of the direct and tangible benefits of their investment in advanced education, which enhances public support for, and interest in, the University. Public events provide a broad stage on which to present the expertise and talents of University faculty, students and staff while also creating a locus for the exchange of ideas among the University and its diverse and widely-spread communities.
An initial but partial capture of public lectures in 2009/10 shows that a range of Faculties and departments organized at least 84 public lectures at SFU’s three campuses. However, attendance at these events is inconsistently monitored, and the degree to which an event is successful is typically a local decision based on data that are not broadly reported. Participation in community events should be a valuable indicator of the success of individual initiatives and offerings. One way to make the indicator more comprehensive and valuable may be to adapt Lifelong Learning’s course management system to allow other programs to collect data through it on their own non-credit offerings (e.g., symposia, colloquia and other public events).

In the absence of recorded and available data on attendance for most University events, this indicator was limited to attendance at SFU’s unique Philosophers’ Cafés, which provide a useful if narrow measure of community demand for SFU events that engage the “life of the mind.” Philosophers’ Café is a series of informal public discussions on interesting and provocative concepts or important issues of the day. The Cafés attract people of all ages and from all walks of life who share a passion for lifelong learning. Begun in 1998, the program has welcomed over 70,000 participants to over 1100 Cafés and other events at 90-plus venues in 10 BC towns and cities. Neighbourhood demand for Philosophers’ Cafés resulted in a 35% growth in Café locations from 2009 to 2010.10

Figure 4.41: Offerings/participation in Philosophers’ Cafés

International enrolments reflect the institution’s engagement with the demands of the global marketplace and the need to expose domestic students to opportunities to interact, engage and exchange views and information with their peers around the world. Enrolment of international students has increased by 36% from 2007/08 to 2009/10, confirming that such enrolments are succeeding beyond expectations: indeed, rapid growth has resulted in over-enrolment by international students and created extraordinary pressure on SFU’s instructional and support capacity.

Aboriginal enrolments have dropped in the past year, at least in part as a result of the closing of a small satellite campus in Kamloops, BC. Increased enrolment and academic success of Aboriginal students is an explicit target in the Academic Plan and the ongoing implementation of a recent First Nations Strategic Plan is expected to help achieve that increase. To this end, the Vice President, Academic has funded the continuation of an Aboriginal Bridge Program to assist Aboriginal applicants with entry to SFU’s degree programs.

10 www.sfu.ca/philosopherscafe/about.htm
The University also recognizes the need to provide educational opportunities to a maturing demographic, particularly students 25 years or older. BC’s population is aging, so the traditional predominance of admissions from grade 12 is likely to slow. At the same time, there is a growing need for people to return in mid-career to pursue professional enhancement or other life goals. Enrolment by students 25 and older remains steady and, given demographic shifts from BC’s aging population, it should be considered whether greater emphasis ought to be placed on addressing the needs of this market.

Figure 4.42: Enrolment by diverse groups

Results for Outcome 1.1 suggest that the University’s performance is strong. Enrolments in non-credit programs remain generally vigorous. A host of community events are offered and, at Philosophers’ Cafés—the one event where attendance is centrally tracked—attendance continues to rise and the number of individual events is increasing. Enrolments by diverse groups are very strong, although there has been a temporary dip in Aboriginal enrolments following the closure of the Kamloops campus. Measureable performance for Outcome 1.1 is considered satisfactory.

Outcome 1.2
Encourage community service and engagement

This outcome also proved challenging to assess in the absence of systematic data collection across the relevant programs. Both qualitative and quantitative data were used where they could be found. Formal community partnerships and relationships were identified where possible. Instances of community recognition were noted, and information was sought regarding such diverse activities as fundraising, attendance at athletic events and measures of alumni engagement such as fundraising and attendance at Alumni Association events.

Qualitative examples of community relationships, partnerships and activities were provided by Faculty Deans and supplemented by searching SFU websites. The resulting picture shows a broad disciplinary involvement by the University in community activities that demonstrate institutional responsibility and leadership in many areas. For example, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) sponsors hundreds of public lectures, including “The Bard Explained” (in association with Vancouver’s Bard on the Beach theatre) and the Mirhady Annual Lecture in Iranian Culture. Psychology offers its annual “Psych in the City” lecture series and, as participants in SFU’s Directory of Experts, faculty from across the University play a prominent role in offering perspectives on issues and events to people in BC and across Canada.
SFU Faculties also carry out significant mentorship programs. The Beedie School of Business works with Vancouver’s Board of Trade Leaders of Tomorrow program and the Top 100 Women in Business Summit. Education organizes the Friends of Simon tutoring program for students in local high schools, and the Your Education Matters TV series. Lifelong Learning is conducting a two-year Literacy Lives project to improve the literacy and life skills of adults in Vancouver’s troubled Downtown Eastside. These examples are offered simply to indicate the scope of community contributions made by SFU’s academic units. More extensive lists of Faculty partnerships and activities appear in the Academic Unit Descriptions appended to this Report.

Enrolments in co-op, internships, practicums, service-learning and other courses with domestic field experiences provide another measure of the extent to which SFU programs offer their students opportunities to participate in and contribute to community activities. Performance here appears to be stable, with strength demonstrated through significant growth in co-op education and community-based service learning. These indicators, however, need to be clarified and refined to provide a more reliable index of this activity.

Figure 4.43: Enrolment in community-based and service-learning courses, and in internships, 2007-2010

Financial donations to SFU by organizations and private individuals are another measure of how the public perceives the University’s relevance to their community. The impact of the recent recession had a significant and adverse impact on SFU’s ability to raise donations across its donor communities, but a marked recovery was experienced in 2009/10, with improvement expected to continue.11

11 Partial data for 2010/11 show that SFU will exceed 2007/08 figures.
Universities always hope the experience their alumni had as students will make them highly motivated proponents of their school once they graduate and establish themselves. Attendance at SFU Alumni Association events is growing, as is the number of locations hosting such events. Although the dollar value of alumni donations declined in the 2009 calendar year (corresponding with a general economic decline), the number of alumni donating grew; both the number and dollar value of alumni donations rebounded significantly in 2010. Total alumni donations remain relatively steady. SFU is still a young institution, and it is expected that alumni donations will grow in number and dollar value as its alumni continue to mature in their careers and economic influence. It should be noted, however, that the culture of alumni giving in Canada is not as strong as in the USA. Valuable indicators of alumni engagement for future assessments might include numbers of SFU co-op students or graduates hired by alumni, participation in alumni activities, and activity by alumni associations worldwide.

The SFU summer camp program is well-established and reaches youth of all ages. For many participants, attendance at an SFU summer camp is the beginning of a long familiarity and relationship with SFU. Participation in athletic events and summer camps is consistent and should provide a useful measure of public engagement with SFU, and purchasing a ticket to watch an SFU athletic event is a good measure of how committed that interest is. It would be useful in future for Athletics to gather data on attendance and paid attendance at events.
Figure 4.46: Athletics events/summer camps participation (source: SFU Athletics)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of athletic events</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different types of camps offered</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of summer camps offered</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at summer camps</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>5423</td>
<td>5432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall performance for Outcome 1.2 is deemed to be satisfactory, although good quantitative data were hard to come by. Student activity within the community is broad and well developed, occurring through a range of different academic and work-related options. In common with institutions around the world, fundraising dropped significantly with the recession, but appears to be recovering, and some major donations have been made in the last year. Attendance at athletic and alumni events is growing, although neither of these activities tends to generate the intense interest in Canada that is common in the USA.

Taken as a whole, SFU’s performance for Objective 1 is considered satisfactory, but much work is needed to produce better data and perhaps more incisive indicators.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.48: Objective 1 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td>Engage and involve SFU’s many communities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.1</td>
<td>Provide learning opportunities to diverse communities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.2</td>
<td>Encourage community service and engagement</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective 2

Provide opportunities for international collaboration and partnerships

Outcome 2.1

Students participate in international exchange opportunities and field schools

International collaboration and partnerships should involve students, faculty and staff, and provide opportunities to expand their perspectives and experiences within the context of the increasing globalization of contemporary society. The assessment of progress here is based on international exchange opportunities available to students and the number of students choosing to participate in them. Exchange opportunities were measured using registrations in international co-op, outbound exchanges, international exchange courses and the number of countries participating in exchange agreements. For a measure of faculty and staff involvement in international collaboration, using the Thomson-Reuters InCites database, journal articles co-authored by SFU authors with international authors were counted. The results show a substantial and growing proportion of publications by SFU researchers are internationally co-authored.

Participation in an international exchange program represents a significant opportunity to become informed by experiencing and interacting with new people, ideas and values. It carries, however,
significant financial and opportunity costs that may place it out of reach for many students. Work or family commitments may limit students’ ability to participate in such exchanges. It should be noted, too, that a high number of SFU students classified as “domestic” are recent immigrants and may not feel a strong need for international experience.

The available data on foreign exchanges show participation rates are growing despite the costs associated with attending other universities. The number of international co-op placements declined coincidentally with the recession and has remained stable since. Participation in international field schools was stable, as was the number of outbound students participating in international exchanges. In the absence of benchmark data from other institutions, it was difficult to assess how well SFU is doing when compared with similar institutions in Canada or elsewhere. This is one area where external benchmarks would greatly improve evaluation.

In 2009/10 SFU held field schools, had formal exchange agreements with other institutions, or had international co-op placements in the following countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, China-Hong Kong, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, England, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, South Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Russia, Scotland, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and the USA. Study abroad options are available in more than 50 countries.

In future it would also be useful to measure student involvement in international research projects and international practicum placements as indicators of international collaboration. For instance, in the past two years the Faculty of Education has carried out International Teacher Education modules in Mexico and Dharamsala and a Professional Development Program course in Xian, China. Future indicators should take account of how these kinds of institutional activities provide reciprocal benefits to both students and the communities that host them.

**Figure 4.48: Offerings/enrolment for international exchange (source: SFU International)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment in identified foreign exchange courses (FEP)</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of student enrolment this represents</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
<td>0.12%</td>
<td>0.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of international co-op placements</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of international field school students outbound</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of outbound student semesters for international exchange</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Outcome 2.2**

**Faculty and staff jointly publish articles with international partners**

Published articles by SFU authors with international co-authors show that faculty and staff involvement with the international community is growing. SFU does not have a systematic way to document involvement in international research projects; if this indicator is to be used again, it would be improved by having access to a central inventory of active institutional agreements with international organizations. Access to aggregate data from the University’s CV databank also could

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12 The figure provided by Thompson Reuters InCites does not capture all published work.
make this a more useful indicator. Although data from the Staff Mobility Initiative is small, it is accurate and reflects a different dimension of activity and could be considered in future assessments.

**Figure 4.49: Journal co-authorship (source: IRP – Thomson Reuters InCites database)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of SFU articles with an international co-author</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of SFU articles</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>1,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of internationally co-authored articles</td>
<td>35.52%</td>
<td>39.67%</td>
<td>43.90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Providing opportunities for students, faculty and staff to participate in international activities and to be exposed to other perspectives is of great benefit individually, and to the communities to which those people belong. The ability to understand and prosper within the complex environment posed by a global community is a cornerstone of modern higher education, and “internationalization” has been an important value at SFU for years. Despite this, the number of participants in SFU-provided international opportunities remains relatively low. External benchmarking would make it clearer whether SFU’s participation rates are low relative to its own expectations or, more importantly, to similar institutions. Because of this, it is assessed that improvement is needed to achieve Outcome 2.1.

Academic collaboration with international partners is growing at SFU, and may be even stronger than indicated. It is also suggested that participation by SFU faculty and staff on international advisory panels, boards and similar entities be measured and reported. Progress toward achieving Outcome 2.2 is deemed satisfactory.

Overall, SFU’s performance for Objective 2 is considered to be satisfactory. The University should consider whether participation in international student exchanges and related programs is of sufficient importance to facilitate through additional funding in the form of subsidies, grants or other means of offsetting costs.

**Figure 4.50: Objective 2 summary results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective 2 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2: Provide opportunities for international collaboration and partnerships</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.1: Students participate in international exchange opportunities and field schools</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.2: Faculty and staff jointly publish articles with international partners</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Objective 3**

**Mobilize resources and expertise that reflect regional, national and global interests and that address concerns about environmental sustainability**

**Outcome 3.1**

**SFU’s research, teaching and service strengths and impacts are widely communicated and employed**

One of the primary means for a post-secondary institution to extend its resources into its surrounding communities is to disseminate new information and perspectives. It can do this through media.
releases and “tips,” where the incidence of “take-up” by media outlets serves as a measure of public interest. Access to information through other electronic media via web traffic to University sites and social media channels also provides a useful measure of public impact and interest. Media releases and media tips have grown over the course of the past three years. Social media activity is modest, but SFU is only in its first year of tracking this activity.

**Figure 4.51: News releases and media tips, Twitter and Facebook data, print media coverage (source: PAMR)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of media releases</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of media tips</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of people following SFU Twitter</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>3661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook average number of daily active users</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook average number of weekly active users</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook average number of monthly active users</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>1114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print media coverage of SFU / SFU stories in print media</td>
<td>8506</td>
<td>5701</td>
<td>5607</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SFU systematically documents coverage of SFU activities by non-SFU print media, which shows a decline in recent years, but a strong media presence (with more than 5000 print stories). The decline in print stories is traceable to an overall decline in print media, which took hold in 2009 as advertising revenue also dropped, leading to a general decline in the amount of space available to print any kind of stories, including those about SFU’s activities. It would be useful to track coverage in other media, including broadcast media, and to determine whether sufficient information is available to benchmark these data against other institutions.

As noted in Chapter 2, SFU’s Internet use is sufficiently extensive that it ranked 2nd among universities in Canada, 31st in North America, and 37th worldwide in the 2011 Webometrics Ranking of World Universities.13

**Figure 4.52: Website traffic (source: PAMR)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of visits to SFU website</td>
<td>10,714,868</td>
<td>11,815,610</td>
<td>12,009,292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of unique visitors</td>
<td>2,898,306</td>
<td>3,299,230</td>
<td>3,528,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of new visits</td>
<td>26.16%</td>
<td>27.00%</td>
<td>28.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of page views</td>
<td>14,998,301</td>
<td>16,269,766</td>
<td>17,995,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of pages/visit</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time spent on site (minutes:seconds)</td>
<td>2:02</td>
<td>2:05</td>
<td>2:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of visitors from outside of Canada</td>
<td>8.25%</td>
<td>8.00%</td>
<td>9.20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Excellent evidence of SFU’s impact on the surrounding communities comes from a data collection service contracted by SFU’s Public Affairs and Media Relations (PAMR) department to track media references to SFU. These are distributed weekly and are posted on PAMR’s website.14 References are too many and diverse to tabulate, but a review of media citations of SFU-based experts reflects both the breadth and depth of SFU’s success in serving as a public resource for important information on issues of current importance and interest.

14 [www.sfu.ca/sfunews/people.html](http://www.sfu.ca/sfunews/people.html)
Taken overall, there is ample evidence that SFU is a major resource of academic expertise and informed perspectives for its surrounding communities. Faculty, students and staff are common contributors to local, regional and national media, providing expert opinion and analysis on subjects of popular interest. SFU’s web presence is disproportionate to its size, and visits to its website are growing rapidly. In view of this evidence, SFU’s performance is assessed as outstanding in achieving Outcome 3.1.

Outcome 3.2
The importance of sustainability values and achieving sustainability goals is communicated to, and understood by, SFU’s communities

Climate change is an established fact, and post-secondary institutions have an obligation to provide public leadership in determining and communicating how its effects can be mitigated and in preparing to adapt to it. SFU signed the Talloires Declaration in 1990, and approved a policy announcing its intention to be an institutional leader in environmental, economic and social sustainability in 2008.

To assess its performance in the area of sustainability, indicators were chosen to test its public profile on the subject as evidenced by sustainability-related media stories. Community engagement was measured by reviewing student, faculty and staff involvement in University-sponsored initiatives, curricular offerings in academic areas related to sustainability, and student-led activities broadly related to “citizenship.”

Media stories on SFU’s efforts to become a more sustainable institution, and faculty, staff and student involvement in sustainability initiatives are both useful indicators of the University’s activities in this area of strategic importance. PAMR only began tracking SFU sustainability stories in 2011, but this discovered an average of one story per day, suggesting that SFU’s public presence in this area is noticeable and should have growing impact.

In 2008, led by the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC), SFU created the Sustainability Ambassadors program. Ambassadors are staff and faculty volunteers with a personal interest in learning more about advancing environmental values at SFU and beyond. Ambassadors undertake two major campaigns each year directed at “greening” the day-to-day performance within their workplace. Ideally, they also take the skills and information they acquire as Ambassadors into other communities, creating a widening sphere of influence where behavioural change can be affected. Other structured programs include the formation of departmental “Green Teams,” the Green Labs program, and the hosting of annual events such as the fall Sustainability Festival.

The student and alumni group Sustainable SFU was formed to facilitate SFU’s transition into a model sustainable institution, and was instrumental in the creation of the University’s Sustainability Advisory Committee in 2004. Sustainable SFU is funded through a fee approved by student referendum in 2010. Members conduct research, offer resources and collaborate with SFU community members on sustainability-related projects. A major initiative is the creation of a new student-based sustainability

15 www.ulsf.org/programs_talloires.html
16 Annual reports by the Sustainability Advisory Committee cover a broad range of activities and initiatives and are available on the SAC website: www.sfu.ca/sustainability/sac.
17 www.sfu.ca/sustainability/sac/ambassadors
ambassador program intended to produce influential student sustainability educators and advocates in
Faculties, clubs and other student organizations.

SFU is a charter member of the American Association of Sustainability in Higher Education
(AASHE), and has earned a Silver designation in its 2011 assessment of activities ranging from human
resources practices to carbon emissions reduction. For instance, in the period 2007 to 2010 SFU
reduced its overall GHG emissions by 8.4% despite a 7.5% growth in building area over the same
period.

The Burnaby campus has 29 buildings with Building Operators and Managers Association (BOMA)
Go Green ratings. SFU also earned BC Hydro’s 2010 BC Hydro Power Smart Leader award for
excellence for its long and continuing work on energy conservation. In spring of 2011, the need
for a comprehensive Sustainability Plan covering the University’s diverse activities was added to the
University Planning Framework, with a draft reviewed by the Vice Presidents in late July.

Figure 4.53: Sustainability media stories/faculty, staff and student involvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of SFU sustainability stories in the media</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of departments with Sustainability Ambassadors and/or Green Teams</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students in a Sustainability Educators program</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SFU Sustainability Advisory Committee

Substantive and definitive information on curricular offerings and enrolments in courses that focus
on environmental, sustainability and citizenship matters was also sought. Although it was possible
to identify numerous disciplines, departments, courses and related enrolments that touch on
environmental issues, those data emerged as suggestive rather than definitive. Findings were taken
from a survey of the Calendar.

Important work is being carried out through an academic collaboration sponsored by SAC and the
Faculty of Environment, leading to a draft definition to identify appropriate “Sustainability” courses.
A preliminary inventory based on that definition is underway. SFU’s rigorous approach to defining
and counting “sustainability-related” academic work is expected to generate a more meaningful
indicator of the academic contribution being made to this critical area of knowledge.

Figure 4.54: Enrolment for courses involving environment, sustainability and citizenship (source: IRP, SFU)
SFU’s performance in achieving Outcome 2.2 is judged to be satisfactory. The importance of University-based expertise in providing insight around issues of community interest and concern is outstanding. Significant progress is being made in addressing sustainability on SFU’s campuses and in bringing awareness of the importance of behavior change to members of the SFU community. As a result, SFU’s progress toward achieving Objective 3 is deemed satisfactory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.55: Objective 3 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilize resources and expertise that reflect regional, national and global interests and that address concerns about environmental sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFU’s research, teaching and service strengths and impacts are widely communicated and employed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The importance of sustainability values and achieving sustainability goals is communicated to, and understood by, SFU’s communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of Core Theme Assessment: Community and Citizenship**

The objectives and indicators used to assess SFU’s community and citizenship efforts provide a useful baseline of data for future, more sophisticated assessments. The assessment demonstrates SFU’s strong commitment to provide a broad range of learning opportunities to diverse communities through both credit and non-credit offerings.

SFU faculty, staff and students are clearly involved with community and there are many examples of reciprocal community engagement at all levels of the institution. However, the assessment of success in achieving Objectives and Outcomes relies ultimately on the strength of the data available through the chosen indicators. It became clear during the assessment process that more structured support is needed to identify indicators that correlate strongly with the Objectives and to ensure the data for those indicators are now collected or to initiate their collection.

SFU is recognized in the community for its engagement efforts and these efforts could be more widely recognized and celebrated. Many SFU courses and programs provide opportunities to participate in a practicum or co-op component. Fundraising efforts are successful and represent active support from community groups, businesses, foundations, government, estate donors, SFU employee donors and alumni. Indicators should be developed that permit a broader measure of alumni engagement than fundraising.

Faculty and staff are obviously involved in international partnerships and research activities, but information about this valuable activity is not collected or documented except in counts of publications. Student involvement in international opportunities can be limited by student resources; if “the international experience” is to succeed as intended, the University may need to identify some financial support for interested students. Documentation of the international experience is again an issue here. Perhaps the new “My Involvement” discussed in the Student Experience and Success core...
theme will augment the documentation available for participation in these activities. Support and documentation for student involvement in international research projects that do not require travel may also be of value.

The University's media presence is sophisticated and SFU “experts” are in high demand. SFU’s Internet profile is exceptional and growing. SFU’s activities in the area of sustainability and citizenship appear to be increasingly fruitful and able to demonstrate its institutional commitment to leadership in the area of climate change and sustainability.

In general, the absence of identified thresholds and benchmarks made the assessment process for this Core Theme more complicated and the results less rigorous than they could be. Much of SFU’s activity around Community and Citizenship involves individual faculty and staff, and the scarcity of centralized records that compile and aggregate reportable information about these activities made the assessment difficult. Despite these challenges, there is sufficient quantitative and qualitative information to carry out a first assessment, and one result of that assessment is the conclusion that SFU’s performance in most areas is at least satisfactory.

Academic and administrative departments were very helpful in their efforts to provide data. However, improved processes for data collection are required. Without some central resource tasked with collecting and reporting on community and citizenship matters for the institution, it will continue to be difficult to conduct more detailed and comprehensive assessments for this Core Theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.56: Overall Core Theme summary results, Community and Citizenship</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td>Engage and involve SFU’s many communities</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for international collaboration and partnerships</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Mobilize resources and expertise that reflect regional, national and global interests and that address concerns about environmental sustainability</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary Discussion of Key Theme Team Recommendations for Future Assessments

This assessment process has presented many important and valuable lessons for SFU to consider in preparing its future plans and deciding how it can measure and demonstrate its accomplishments.

The introduction to this chapter noted that the University has a wealth of data about its own performance. Matching existing data sets against the Objectives, Outcomes and indicators identified for this inaugural assessment, however, presented a challenge for the Core Theme Teams who worked on the project. This was the case where indicators were supplied by existing plans, as well as where new indicators were identified to augment existing ones.

Objectives and indicators taken from plans that pre-existed the accreditation exercise (e.g., the Academic Plan) often proved difficult to adapt for this large-scale assessment. At SFU, many planning goals focus on targeted areas chosen for special attention. Much of the University’s ongoing activity and day-to-day business are not addressed in major plans because these are monitored by normal, well-established processes. Those processes allow plans to focus on areas of significant change and new strategic importance.

For instance, the Academic Plan calls for an increase of 10% in enrolments of Aboriginal/First Nations students by 2013. This target is consistent with provincial goals, and activity is reported to the province in the University’s annual Institutional Accountability Plan and Report. Although growing Aboriginal enrolment is important for all concerned—SFU, governments, and especially Aboriginal students and communities—at approximately 1.7% of SFU’s student body, Aboriginal enrolment represents a small aspect of activity on which to focus an institutional assessment.

Measuring the University’s success in fulfilling its mission and achieving its core theme objectives could be enhanced by setting some objectives on more comprehensive institutional activities.

Broad participatory planning exercises are a hallmark of inclusive academic decision-making at SFU. However, they may serve to multiply the objectives identified as an outcome of such exercises. The resulting objectives often become open-ended, expressed as simple increases or decreases (e.g., increase the number of field schools; decrease the number of course-full turn-aways). Identifying targets, thresholds or external benchmarks for important goals adds weight to the assessments, and may improve performance by establishing an explicit expectation of accountability to achieve them. It may also be useful to reduce the number of objectives set in future plans, and/or to establish clear priorities among them.

Future assessment processes would benefit from bringing more participants into the process. In this iteration, Core Theme Teams originally constituted to help implement Academic Plan objectives were later tasked with carrying out the accreditation assessments. This was a necessary efficiency given the relatively short timeline in which the assessment had to be completed. The schedule of future assessments is now known, and the University better understands the effort required to perform them.
A new home

When the development now known as UniverCity was first proposed, community feeling strongly desired that it exemplify sustainable values. UniverCity was conceived and developed based on a Community Vision Statement as a compact, mixed-use and transit-oriented residential community founded on Sustainability’s Four Cornerstones: Environment, Equity, Economy and Education.

The SFU Community Trust is charged with creating a range of housing, shops, services, amenities, schools and parks, all on land adjacent to Burnaby campus and connected by pedestrian paths and bike trails. The community is currently home to over 3,000 residents and will have more than 10,000 when complete. Almost 40% of residents are associated with the University, mostly as students—market rentals are an alternative to student residences for those who wish to live on campus—and 20% of the residents are faculty or staff. The creation and preservation of affordable housing is also emphasized. Covenants for the Verdant project, for instance, preserve in perpetuity a unit cost 20% below market.

A new way of thinking

To meet its sustainability and affordability goals, the Trust has implemented market-oriented green building requirements and an award-winning stormwater management system, while achieving LEED Gold certification through energy-efficient construction, improved air quality and water conservation measures. UniverCity has also adopted a new green zoning bylaw, the first of its kind in North America, with requirements for each site that ensure all new development is built to be a minimum of 30% more energy efficient and 40% more water efficient than conventionally constructed buildings.

The Trust is committed to such future innovations as a transit gondola to campus from the Skytrain system at the base of Burnaby Mountain (to reduce the impact of diesel buses), and a biomass plant for thermal energy to heat buildings and water for the campus and residents. This proposed plant will reduce GHG emissions by up to 67% and cut SFU’s cost for thermal energy by 14%.
A new way to use resources

A key goal in creating UniverCity was to create an endowment fund to support teaching and research at SFU. To date, the Trust has given $26 million to the University’s endowment, with the ultimate goal of raising an estimated $170 million by completion of the project.

In addition to raising research funds, the Trust works with students on academic research projects concerning UniverCity, and mentors students studying urban planning and sustainable development, often offering student internships and bursaries.

UniverCity awards

2011 Canadian Institute of Planners Award for Excellence: Neighbourhood Planning
2009 Urban Land Institute’s Award for Excellence: The Americas
2008 Canada Mortgage and Housing Award for Best Practices in Affordable Housing
2008 LivCom Gold Award and third place overall in Sustainable Projects
Self Evaluation Study

Chapter 5

Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation and Sustainability

Based on its definition of mission fulfillment and informed by the results of its analysis of accomplishments of its core theme objectives, the institution develops and publishes evidence-based judgments regarding fulfillment of its mission. The institution regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact its mission and its ability to fulfill that mission. It demonstrates a capability to adapt as necessary its mission, core themes, programs, and services to accommodate changing and emerging needs, trends, and influences to ensure enduring institutional relevancy, productivity, viability, and sustainability.
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The University’s operational scale is appropriate to fulfill its mission and carry out its core themes. Enrolment targets at the undergraduate and graduate levels are consistently met and often exceeded. Over-enrolment creates unusual pressure on resources, but is also generating financial flexibility during a prolonged period of stagnant provincial funding while SFU implements its performance-based budget process.

Academic and support staff are employed in numbers adequate to allow the institution to carry out its mandates to teach, conduct research and engage communities.

SFU, like other Canadian universities, faces a major challenge in addressing its deferred maintenance. The University benefits from having a number of new and renovated buildings at each campus, with all new buildings and major renovations now required to meet LEED Gold standards. An inventory of deferred maintenance is being reviewed and updated, and a plan being prepared to address it.

The University’s academic operations increasingly depend on the smooth and efficient functioning of its IT infrastructure. Whether in the form of course delivery media, enterprise resource planning software, bandwidth or other facets of IT, the constant updating of the IT infrastructure requires ever-increasing financial and staff resources to maintain and grow.

Although higher provincial funding rates per FTE student would be both very welcome and most useful, and the restoration of previous capital renewal funding is greatly needed, this Report and its appendices demonstrate that SFU’s current resources are well managed, adequate for their intended purposes, and appropriately allocated to achieve the University’s mission now and for the foreseeable future.
Planning and Assessment

Planning and assessment are continuous across all levels of the institution, from the larger Faculties and administrative areas to the individual academic and services units that comprise them. The University Planning Framework (UPF) offers the most comprehensive overview of SFU’s major plans, including the interrelationships among various objectives, outcomes and indicators.

Planning objectives set out in major plans typically find expression in related plans; for instance, Faculty plans will appropriately incorporate and reflect the overarching goals of the Academic Plan. Final versions of major plans explain in detail the consultation and approval processes that led to their creation, with all being the result of extensive consultation within the relevant communities. Planning and assessment processes are supported by the continuous collection of data conducted primarily through the University’s Institutional Research and Planning office. Chapter 3 (Institutional Planning) describes SFU’s planning processes in more detail.

Assessments are aimed at improving performance and taking advantage of new opportunities as they arise. Committees are struck, reports issued, resources allocated and results tracked as circumstances require. For example, interest in renewing SFU’s emphasis on supporting teaching and learning led in 2008 to the creation of a Teaching and Learning Task Force charged with reviewing current conditions and recommending improvements. Terms of Reference were set in fall 2008, broad community consultations took place in spring 2009, and early recommendations were issued in summer 2009, followed by further consultation and recommendations in spring 2010.

Recommendations from the Task Force have been incorporated into the new Academic Plan, and have led to the creation of a University Teaching Fellow within each Faculty, and to the major reorganization of the former Learning and Instructional Development Centre (LIDC) into the new Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC), with a much sharper focus on providing instructional staff with the tools they need to facilitate learning. The TLC now publishes quarterly updates on all aspects of its revised mandate and activities.

Examples of planning assessments and reviews carried out by SFU on a regular or as-needed basis include:

- Three-Year Academic Plan (annual progress review)
- Five-Year Strategic Research Plan (annual progress review)
- Operating Budget and Financial Plan (annual, with monthly financial activity updates)
- Institutional Service Plan/Accountability Report (annual report on institutional performance to BC’s Ministry of Advanced Education)
- External Reviews of academic units (at least every seven years)
- Administrative reviews of non-academic units (on a rotating basis or as circumstances require)
- University Risk Register (semi-annual review)

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1 Documents related to the Teaching and Learning Task Force’s reports and recommendations can be found at www.sfu.ca/vpacademic/committees_taskforces/Ad_Hoc_Committees/tftl.html
2 tlcentre.sfu.ca
• *Carbon Neutral Action Report on Greenhouse Gas emission reductions (annual review and report to the Climate Action Secretariat in BC’s Ministry of Environment)*

• *Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS)— (continuous updating, reported tri-annually)*

All major planning documents can be found, reviewed and downloaded from University websites.

**Assessment for the Self Evaluation Report**

SFU’s cycle of assessment and review now includes assessments required to respond to the NWCCU’s accreditation standards, and the University Planning Framework incorporates the structure and language of Core Theme reporting.

The process by which objectives, outcomes and indicators were identified for this first Self Evaluation Report was affected by time-constraints, and by the fact that this was the first comprehensive institutional assessment SFU has conducted. Most objectives and indicators were adopted from current plans, with Core Theme Teams identifying additional indicators where these were expected to be useful.

This process produced mixed results. Although all Core Theme Teams believed that the evidence justified a conclusion that SFU is fulfilling its mission, all also remarked on the absence of centrally collected and reliable quantitative evidence for some of the indicators identified, whether these came from the UPF or were later chosen by the Teams. References to some of these “data deficits” appear in each Core Theme discussion, with some general suggestions to improve the assessment process collected at the end of Chapter 4.
Evaluating Mission Fulfillment

Simon Fraser University is extraordinary among North American public post-secondary institutions in seeking its first institutional accreditation at age 46. In the United States, institutional accreditation is a gateway to credibility and to some federal funding programs and no public university of SFU’s size would be “unaccredited” at this stage in its history. In Canada, control of institutional quality is achieved by means other than accreditation (described in detail in Chapter 2), and determinations of suitability for government funding are made through peer review and other established processes. As a result, only two other Canadian post-secondary institutions have sought or are seeking accreditation: Athabasca University in Alberta, which is an accredited online and distance institution; and Vancouver’s Capilano University, currently at Candidate status with the NWCCU regional accrediting body.

SFU has grown from its origins in 1965 as a small, forward-looking institution with an enrolment of 2500 into a respected comprehensive university with for-credit enrolment of over 35,000 undergraduate and graduate students, including a fast-growing population of international students. Its academic programs and research activities are highly-regarded nationally and internationally, and the unique degree of its engagement in the community arises in part from its activist roots.

For ten years SFU’s Statement on Values and Commitments (now incorporated into its Mission Statement) has confirmed the University’s determination to be a place where “risks can be taken and bold initiatives embraced.” The statement itself is bold, and poses a continuing challenge to the University to live up to its values. In this spirit, SFU has voluntarily sought accreditation as a way of both demonstrating and achieving greater transparency and accountability.

SFU is well practiced in assessing its activities, but it has not until now asked itself the exhaustive question: “Are we fulfilling our mission?” Institutional assessments have instead focused on measuring progress towards achieving plan-specific objectives such as targeted enrolment increases, higher rates of research funding or the ability of students to complete degree requirements in a timely way. The production of this first Self Evaluation Report, therefore, has been both unprecedented and revealing. It asks the University to take a more exacting view of its component parts and how they relate to one another, and to consider at greater length how its mission is being, and can continue to be, fulfilled.

To complete this initial self-evaluation, SFU approached the question of mission fulfillment in two ways. One is based on a consideration of qualitative evidence from both its history and its current circumstances; the other is the largely quantitative (and often indirect) evidence collected and evaluated during this assessment. Ultimately, the review of the available, albeit sometimes flawed, evidence confirms our belief that SFU is fulfilling its mission satisfactorily, achieving excellence in some respects, needing improvement in others.

At the outset, it was provisionally agreed that mission fulfillment would be determined by “consolidating the assessments of the Core Themes and then determining an overall evaluation of institutional performance.” Each objective and its associated outcomes would be judged as “Outstanding,” “Satisfactory” or “Needs Improvement.” Few objectives came with quantifiable or qualitative targets, so assessments often relied on the judgment of each Team to determine the relative

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4 www.sfu.ca/pres/mission.html
5 See Chapter 1.
degree to which progress is being made. No objectives were set to maintain or monitor a “stable state” as a desirable outcome. Instead, most objectives assume the desired target is progress toward a general “increase” or “improvement.”

Because most members of the Core Theme Teams were not directly involved in drafting their objectives or identifying indicators, three of the four Core Theme Teams (excluding Research) also sought additional indicators. It was hoped these would provide valuable nuance and “granularity” to their assessments, but—as noted in Chapter 4—it was often difficult to collect clear data for chosen indicators.

Based on the Core Theme assessments, the University is fulfilling its mission and successfully carrying out all of its Core Themes. A simple tabulation shows that all objectives for each Core Theme have ultimately been assessed as “Satisfactory.” Overall, only one objective was assessed as being achieved at the “Outstanding” level: Support and promote teaching excellence. The Teaching and Learning Core Theme Team concluded that the demonstrable combination of excellent faculty performance and high student satisfaction with teaching at SFU merited an assessment of Outstanding.

Although no objectives were judged “Needs Improvement,” several outcomes were. The Research Core Theme Team found that too few undergraduate students are actively engaged with or exposed to research and that further investigation is needed into why this is true. It recommends that institutional targets be set to encourage improvement.

The Student Experience and Success Team identified three outcomes where improvement is needed. For one of these, “students develop global perspectives, critical thinking and transferable skills,” the assessment was given because there was insufficient data to determine otherwise. The need to improve course accessibility and timely degree completion is a longstanding issue at SFU, and has been the focus of previous task forces, policy changes and other initiatives. Despite increasing academic advising resources and changes to course scheduling, the Theme Team (and many students) judge that further improvement is needed. Survey results suggest that students still are not satisfied with the transparency and efficiency of administrative processes.

Finally, the Community and Citizenship Core Theme Team concluded that, despite the proliferation of international opportunities on offer to students, too few students are taking advantage of them, perhaps for financial reasons. They suggest the University seek ways to subsidize or otherwise reduce the cost of participating in international activities so that more students can afford to benefit from them.

Based on the experience gained in conducting this assessment, improvements are needed to identify suitable institutional goals, appropriate outcomes and strong indicators. Where useful, specific targets, thresholds and external benchmarks should be established to assist in marking SFU’s progress toward achieving its objectives, and indicators should be chosen for which reliable data are available.

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6 See Appendix A for a summary of assessments organized by Core Theme and Objective.
Other Evidence

Despite the issues outlined above, the evidence is ubiquitous that SFU is fulfilling its mission. Regular external reviews of academic programs confirm that academic standards meet disciplinary norms. Faculty earn major teaching and research awards at the provincial, national and international levels. SFU students in all Faculties win awards and competitions for their achievements, creativity, problem-solving abilities and community service. SFU graduates advance to prestigious graduate programs in their disciplines or in others. Research conducted at SFU continues to grow in impact and influence, with products, patents, and social and commercial utility.

For some disciplines, quality is additionally assessed and approved through professional accrediting bodies in Canada, North America or Europe. These include the:

- Department of Archaeology (Register of Professional Archaeologists)
- Beedie School of Business (European Quality Improvement System—EQUIS, and the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business);
- Department of Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology (Canadian Council of University Physical Education and Kinesiology Administrators);
- Department of Chemistry (Canadian Society for Chemistry);
- PhD program in Clinical Psychology (American and Canadian Psychological Associations);
- Department of Earth Sciences (Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of BC);
- School of Engineering Science and, individually, the Mechatronic System Engineering program (Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board);
- Master of Resource Management (Planning) program (Canadian Institute of Planners and the Planning Institute of BC); and
- Faculty of Health Sciences (Council on Education for Public Health).

Many SFU researchers are prominent in their disciplines, and SFU’s research profile is disproportionate to its size and mandate as a comprehensive university. In the last decade, SFU increased its research funding by 271%, the largest such increase among Canadian comprehensive universities. A significant indicator of confidence in the strength of SFU researchers is that 78% of SFU’s research funding comes from the federal and provincial governments or granting agencies.

Students are admitted to SFU on a competitive basis and, through rigorous admission standards, the University has been able to balance its commitments to serve BC’s high school graduates and university transfer students against its commitment to academic excellence. Demand for an SFU education remains high and enrolment targets are consistently met.

Students progress through their general education and disciplinary requirements, with 68% completing their academic programs and graduating within seven years. Within five years of graduating, 96% are employed, with 70% reporting their work relates to their field of study. Many graduates go on to further studies at SFU or at other institutions. Graduates express high levels of satisfaction with the education they received at SFU, and the evidence demonstrates that graduates meet the expectations of employers and other post-secondary institutions.
Our students also garner extraordinary success at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, with SFU students annually winning major awards in local, national and international competitions. For example, in spring of 2011, SFU doctoral students won 2 of the 14 available national Trudeau Scholarships (valued at $180,000), which are intended to encourage “emerging talent by awarding scholarships to the most talented doctoral students in the humanities and social sciences”; only students at the University of Oxford did as well.

Many entering students have the skills, intelligence and drive to succeed at any university, but it is true at SFU as elsewhere that some are not prepared for the intensity, responsibility and cognitive demands university-level studies impose. For these, SFU provides additional academic and skills supports (e.g., the Learning Commons, Arts Central), and most survive these early challenges to graduate. The success rate for the Back on Track program for students On Academic Probation or Required to Withdraw is almost 75%.

Student opinions of the University’s performance have played an important role in this assessment, especially with regard to their experience at SFU. Although this information gives an important voice to students, more objective and verifiable measures are needed to supplement survey results, and survey questions may need revising to achieve greater usefulness.

Given the constraints on resources and the importance of efficiency and coherence, it is important that metrics complement each other and serve to integrate plan objectives.
Adaptation and Sustainability

SFU regularly evaluates the adequacy of its resources—human, financial and physical—in relation to its mission and institutional priorities. Institutional investments have consistently been targeted to address continuing and new requirements identified through cyclical reviews carried out as part of the University’s regular planning processes.

These processes range from the major plans discussed in Chapter 3 (academic, research, budget and enrolment) to the supporting plans identified in the University Planning Framework “wheel” (e.g., Library, Student Services, Faculty Renewal) and to contributing departmental, Faculty and other unit plans. All are reviewed and renewed according to schedule or as changing circumstances require.

Two examples demonstrate how institutional strength and sustainability are planned and prepared for, and how SFU’s ongoing monitoring of its internal and external environments leads to significant organizational change. First, for internal purposes SFU identifies a fifth core theme: “Institutional Strength” represents SFU’s interest in ensuring it can sustain itself by setting long-term objectives intended to maintain and grow its resources and capacity. Attending to Institutional Strength enables SFU to carry out the four Core Themes central to its mission.

Second, examples are provided that show the University’s ability to achieve longer-term goals and priorities by recognizing and seizing opportunities as they arise. Some key institutional goals and strategies are presented in tabular format to show their origins in, and relationships to, internal and external developments.

Institutional Strength

Institutional strength is foundational; it flows from a recognition that the University’s resources must be responsibly managed to enable it to fulfill its mission and carry out its Core Themes on a continuing basis. Institutional strength requires the University to account for its resources, to understand its priorities, and to allocate those resources in alignment with the priorities it sets. The following summary reflects some decisions taken by SFU in the past year to maintain its institutional strength in key areas.

SFU sets the following objectives to maintain institutional strength, each of which is highlighted in one or more major plans:

1. To continuously improve our administrative systems and become financially flexible;
2. To recruit, retain and engage the best people; and
3. To strengthen and leverage infrastructure.

1) Improve administrative systems

The continuous improvement of administrative systems is addressed in the Annual Budget, where significant University Priority Fund allocations have been made to upgrade SFU’s web content management system ($220K) and the PeopleSoft ERP system ($435K). Although not an administrative system, classroom technology renewal has received Priority Fund allocations of $800K
over the next three years. In addition, a schedule to review administrative units has been developed, with reviews of Human Resources/Academic Relations and of Facilities Management already conducted. Future reviews are scheduled for Financial Services, Environmental Health and Safety, and the administrative functions of Graduate Studies and Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries.

**Improve financial flexibility**

Financial flexibility has been greatly constrained by the combination of stagnant FTE grant funding, the capping of tuition increases at 2% annually since 2003, the virtual elimination of provincial funding for capital maintenance, and the 2008 collapse of the financial markets. The combination of these circumstances created a major financial challenge that led to numerous changes. Of these, the one that promises the greatest impact is the introduction of the new performance-based budget model introduced in 2011/12.

The new budget model is intended to achieve several goals:

*Financial sustainability:* After several years of cuts and cost focus, financial flexibility was exhausted, and the new model, which is revenue-based as opposed to cost-based, is expected to shift the emphasis to revenue growth and diversification.

*Local decision-making:* Units have greater understanding and input into the factors that determine their budgets. Autonomy for budget decisions is given to those best positioned to make choices.

*Transparency:* The model provides an explicit rationale for the budget tied to performance. For units that do not generate revenue, it ensures that resources are reviewed annually by an independent committee.

*Strategic alignment:* The model incorporates a mechanism to seed strategic initiatives such as research growth and course accessibility.

*Stakeholders sought change in budgeting:* The model addresses concerns raised about the historical biases perpetuated by incremental budgeting.

To smooth the transition to the new budget model, $2M has been allocated over the next three years to help departments adjust from incremental to performance-based budgeting.

2) **Recruit, retain and engage the best people**

Institutional strength depends on the quality of the faculty and staff who carry out its various mandates, so it is essential that the best people available be hired and retained. The University’s Faculty Renewal Plan addresses the need to attract and keep the best faculty, and a Human Resources Strategic Plan is in development.

**Faculty**

The ability to attract and retain outstanding faculty is one hallmark of institutional strength and must be accomplished even in an era of fiscal constraint. SFU continues to pursue its goal of being the most research-intensive comprehensive university in Canada, competing effectively with the top-
tier institutions in the country. A report prepared for the Research Universities’ Council of British Columbia (RUCBC) predicted more than 2200 faculty positions will turn over in the next decade due to retirement and attrition. Continued recruitment of top faculty is imperative for SFU, especially with respect to establishing a reputation in the fields of health sciences and environment.

Faculty planning occurs annually with the development of a Faculty Renewal Plan. The Plan identifies specific recruiting requirements for the next fiscal year and provides an outline of the achievements and proposed activities for recruiting and retaining faculty. Over 240 SFU faculty are expected to retire in the coming decade, although the elimination of “mandatory retirement” and poor economic conditions are expected to reduce the number of actual retirees. Faculty renewal in the face of competition from other institutions (some of them better funded than SFU) facing similar issues will be a priority.

As of 2010/11, vacant faculty positions are not automatically refilled. Vacancies are now reviewed by the Vice President, Academic to determine whether the positions should be eliminated or reallocated to better serve strategic needs. Overall growth in faculty numbers currently depends on generating revenue or saving through new efficiencies.

Administrative and support staff
Retirements among key administrative and support staff are expected to present similar challenges, and many incentives available to faculty apply equally to other continuing staff. Recruitment and retention of non-academic staff is enhanced by the attractive working conditions described in more detail in the Human Resources section of Chapter 2, with SFU designated one of Canada’s 100 Best Employers, and one of BC’s 50 Best Employers, for the past four years. All staff have free access to the University’s fitness centre and various health-promotion and wellness programs.

SFU’s attractive working environment also offers career enhancement through educational opportunities such as the Tuition Waiver program, professional development programs available on- and off-campus, and leadership training. Excellent performance is recognized through public acknowledgement; merit-based payments have been tried on occasion, but have proven very difficult to implement on a continuing basis.

SFU also supports a respectful and inclusive workplace. Almost all non-academic staff belong to collective bargaining units, and the University places a premium on maintaining productive and collaborative relationships with them.

3) Strengthen and leverage infrastructure

Maintenance of the built environment, and of the increasingly “virtual” University carried out through its information technology, is essential to fulfillment of SFU’s mission. Information technology provides instructional capacity for online education and support for face-to-face courses, and builds the platforms on which the University manages its communications and business operations.

Achieving a number of SFU’s objectives relies on the strength, flexibility and currency of its IT infrastructure, and the University continues to invest heavily in maintaining it. In fiscal 2011/12,
IT-related funding commitments include $655K to upgrade its PeopleSoft ERP system and its web content management systems. Another $800K is being provided over the next three years to renew classroom technology. An Information Technology Strategic Plan is being developed.

Physical Infrastructure
The University's Five-Year Capital Plan 2011/12 to 2016/17 outlines SFU's needs and focuses on capital funding requests for building and infrastructure renewal. The renewal of existing facilities is an identified priority of government and is of particular concern at the Burnaby campus, where original buildings are now over 45 years old. Aging campus facilities are experiencing ever-increasing issues related to health and safety deficiencies, lack of functionality, and unreliable and inefficient building systems.

Over 37% of the funding required for capital projects in the current Plan is targeted to the renewal or replacement of existing facilities and infrastructure. Recent dramatic reductions in provincial funding for the Annual Capital Allowance will contribute significantly to the deferred maintenance backlog and the demand for renewal.

According to the University's recent facilities audit index, 53% of the SFU building portfolio is in “poor” condition, with another 27% only “fair.” This does not include deferred maintenance on roads, utilities and other campus infrastructure. Based on these figures, renewal is urgently needed to support SFU's vision, mission and values and to:

- Improve learning conditions for students;
- Improve research delivery areas;
- Improve community social spaces;
- Mitigate the cost of deferred maintenance; and
- Ensure that facilities are fiscally and environmentally sustainable.

Over the past decade, undergraduate enrolment has grown by 45.6%, graduate student enrolment by 68.8% and academic employees by 41.2%. Over the same period, SFU's space inventory has increased by approximately 34%. Despite the physical growth of the three campuses, the total space inventory continues to be 16% below the space allocation of the BC Space Planning Standards.

A priority for SFU is expansion of its Surrey campus to enable it to become a comprehensive campus and meet the predicted demographic demand for university access south of the Fraser River. Enrolment pressure is such that FTE targets and facilities have reached capacity earlier than anticipated. With the opening in summer 2011 of the 54,000sf Podium2 expansion at Surrey, $500K was allocated from the University Priority Fund to outfit the new science labs, providing on-campus “wet labs,” improving access and eliminating the need for students to travel to the Burnaby campus for lab sections.

Funding for other University priorities
Allocations from the University Priority Fund address other key institutional goals and priorities set out in the Core Themes and elsewhere. Among these are:

- Diversify our pedagogy: Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC): $200K/annually through 2013/14
Create multiple admission routes to attract a diverse student body: Aboriginal Students: $350K annually through 2013/14

Increase interdisciplinary exposure: Interdisciplinary teaching in Faculty of Environment: $420K over three years

Recruit and retain outstanding students, research fellows and faculty: Graduate scholarships: $1.35M over three years

Undergraduate Research Scholarships: $2.025M over five years

Monitoring of Internal and External Environments

Although SFU’s budget is not structured to allocate resources to specific Core Themes, it is easy to trace the relationship among allocations and Themes, and detail has been provided in Chapter 3 and elsewhere showing how funding supports specific Core Themes and other objectives. Chapter 3 also discusses how the University responds to provincial priorities and objectives, and demonstrates how SFU’s planning objectives and resources align with those of government.

SFU’s ability to adapt and sustain itself demands that it constantly monitor its internal and external environments, and that it be nimble in its responses to changing circumstances. For example, SFU realized decades ago that two markets, one present and one future, needed attention if the University was to prosper while serving its constituencies. Downtown Vancouver was, in the late 1980s, the largest North American downtown without a significant university presence to serve its increasingly dense urban population. SFU opened its first Vancouver campus in leased space at Harbour Centre in 1989, and has since moved from strength to strength, growing to a multi-site campus with extensive for-credit and non-credit offerings. In 2010, SFU’s initiative was recognized with the Institute for Public Administration in Canada Educational Leadership Award for “coming down from the mountain.”

SFU also foresaw that significant future unmet need in BC’s educational marketplace would develop in the area known as “south of the Fraser (River).” An early attempt to expand in the 1990s was not successful. In 2002, the province decided the continued independent operation of the Technical University of BC was not financially sustainable. SFU’s longstanding interest in serving the area contributed to its successful bid to assume in its place responsibility for TechBC’s students, its programs and its Surrey facilities. SFU’s Surrey campus has burgeoned, earning a reputation for innovative programming, achieving its enrolment targets at the earliest possible dates, and serving as an anchor in a massive urban renewal project in what has become BC’s second largest city.

Similar examples of seizing the time can be seen in SFU’s creation of new Faculties of Health Sciences (2004) and Environment (2009), in the continuing expansion of the Vancouver campus, and in SFU’s varied projects to “internationalize” both its curriculum and its student body.
Figure 5.1: Examples of SFU responses to external challenges and opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Major Strategies</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>External Factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>Establish an SFU campus in an under-served region (“south of the Fraser”)</td>
<td>Unexpected opportunity arises with government decision to close the Technical University of BC (TechBC) in 2002 SFU had attempted to introduce University programming to Fraser Valley in the early 1990s, but lacked the resources to establish itself</td>
<td>Government decision to close TechBC and transfer students and programs to SFU (becomes Surrey campus)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>City of Surrey and intense business and community support persuade government that a research university is needed to serve Surrey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation</td>
<td>Creation of the Faculty of Health Sciences to diversify programs and increase research intensity Building of Blusson Hall to house the new Faculty of Health Sciences</td>
<td>A Task Force established in 1991 on Applied Health Programs to advise on possible strategies to develop strength in health field In 1994, recommends the development of a new unit for delivery of Health Studies program Institute for Health Research and Education created in 2001 to promote interdisciplinary research and develop a graduate program in health studies Faculty of Health Sciences established in 2004, and receives majority of new growth funding allocated to SFU by government</td>
<td>Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) established by Canada in June 2000 2004–2009 expansion of 3,000 student spaces at SFU as part of 25,000 provincial growth initiative and capital funding New federal government funding of indirect costs of research Increasing importance of research funding to rankings and prestige</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Build-out of Surrey campus and new SFU buildings in downtown Vancouver campus</td>
<td>Surrey campus: Unexpected opportunity resulting from government policy decision to close TechBC Wosk Centre for Dialogue (Vancouver campus): Credit courses and dialogue programs cultivate a spirit of dynamic conversation among all sectors of the community Segal Graduate School of Business (Vancouver campus) relocates from Burnaby to Vancouver to be nearer heart of business community Goldcorp Centre for the Arts (Vancouver campus): School for the Contemporary Arts relocated from Burnaby campus to Vancouver's Downtown Eastside to anchor cultural renewal</td>
<td>City of Surrey and community support for a research university to locate to Surrey's new city centre Increased provincial government interest in Woodward's reclamation project to improve social housing supply in Vancouver's most economically challenged neighbourhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internationalization</td>
<td>Creation of SFU International in 2001 to co-ordinate and support the pursuit of international goals Increase targets for international students from 7% to 10% of the undergraduate population in 2003, with all subsidies removed over a 5-year period. A target of 15% is proposed</td>
<td>President Stevenson identifies strategic importance of internationalization in his Installation Address and creates SFU International Search for institutional links and dual degrees leads to partnership with one of China’s leading universities The search for sustainable, reliable and high-quality international recruitment identifies Fraser International College opportunity Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences creates the School for International Studies</td>
<td>General budget pressures leading to greater reliance on international student fees Negative issues in other countries including barriers to student visas and immigration and increasing attractiveness of Canadian universities Awareness of improved opportunity to immigrate to Canada if an international student graduating from a Canadian university</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self Evaluation Study

Conclusion

This Self Evaluation Report is Simon Fraser University’s formal response to the Standards set for institutional accreditation by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) and is submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements to progress to Candidate status.

Much has been learned through the process of engaging with those Standards, and carrying out the Core Theme assessments at the heart of this Report has provided the University with important information about some of its strengths and some deficiencies. Results of the assessments offer a foundation on which future reviews and reports can be greatly improved; a number of possible improvements are suggested at various points in Chapter 4 (Core Theme Planning, Assessment and Improvement).

A major change has been the growing assimilation of the language and culture of accreditation in SFU’s planning discussions and documents, and Core Themes will form a significant structural element in future plans and in SFU’s University Planning Framework. It is expected that the NWCCU’s upcoming Site Visit in mid-October 2011 and its subsequent report will further contribute to the adoption of a culture of accreditation across the University.
Appendix A

Summary of Objectives and Outcomes Assessments

Core Theme, Teaching and Learning ................................................................. 232
Core Theme, Research .................................................................................. 234
Core Theme, Student Experience and Success ............................................. 235
Core Theme, Community and Citizenship..................................................... 237
Appendix A
Summary of Objectives and Outcomes Assessments

Core Theme
Teaching and Learning

Objective 1
Students have academic opportunities to become informed, engaged global citizens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.8: Objective 1 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.1</td>
<td>Students have academic opportunities to become informed, engaged global citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.2</td>
<td>Students achieve disciplinary program objectives by building knowledge and skills through diverse learning experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.3</td>
<td>Students participate in credit-bearing interdisciplinary, international and experiential learning opportunities as part of their degree programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.3</td>
<td>Students are well prepared for varied career paths</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Objective 2
Support and promote teaching excellence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.10: Objective 2 summary results</th>
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<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.1</td>
<td>Faculty provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.2</td>
<td>Faculty are recognized internally and externally for teaching excellence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.3</td>
<td>Students express a high level of satisfaction with teaching at SFU</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective 3
Offer high-quality academic programs from a diverse set of disciplines across all Faculties

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Figure 4.15: Objective 3 summary results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Offer high-quality academic programs from a diverse set of disciplines across all Faculties</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.1</td>
<td>SFU attracts well-respected researchers and teachers to its faculty</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.2</td>
<td>Programs evolve dynamically, constantly informed by cutting-edge research</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.3</td>
<td>SFU attracts diverse and academically well-prepared students, who become part of a vibrant community of learners</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Core Theme Summary Results: Teaching and Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.16: Overall Core Theme summary results, Teaching and Learning</th>
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<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td>Students have academic opportunities to become informed, engaged global citizens</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>Support and promote teaching excellence</td>
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<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Offer high-quality academic programs from a diverse set of disciplines across all Faculties</td>
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</table>
Objective 1
Increase the level and quality of research and promote SFU’s profile as a research-intensive university

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Figure 4.21: Objective 1 summary results</th>
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<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.1 Establish a strong research infrastructure</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.2 Develop well-regarded research programs</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.3 Translate ideas into new and innovative ventures</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Objective 2
Incorporate research into teaching and learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.23: Objective 2 summary results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2 Incorporate research into teaching and learning</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.1 Strengthen graduate student research</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.2 Engage undergraduate students in research</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Overall Core Theme Summary Results: Research

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1 Increase the level and quality of research and promote SFU’s profile as a research-intensive university</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2 Incorporate research into teaching and learning</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
## Core Theme

### Student Experience and Success

### Objective 1

**Provide an engaging student experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.31: Objective 1 summary results</th>
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<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1: Provide an engaging student experience</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.1: Students develop global perspectives, critical thinking and transferable skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.2: Students report gaining applied experience relevant to their academic study and personal/professional goals</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.3: Students progress to complete their identified credential</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.4: Students effectively transition to degree-related employment or to further studies</td>
<td>X</td>
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</table>

### Objective 2

**Provide a supportive student learning and living environment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.35: Objective 2 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2: Provide a supportive student learning and living environment</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.1: Students experience a welcoming and diverse campus community</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.2: Students access transparent and efficient administrative systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.3: Students are provided supportive and healthy environments for study and community activities</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
### Objective 3
The University creates vibrant campus communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.38: Objective 3 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>The University creates vibrant campus communities</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.1</td>
<td>Students participate in multiple opportunities to engage in a vibrant campus life</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.2</td>
<td>Students and graduates contribute to the social and economic well-being of their communities</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.3</td>
<td>Students choose a lifelong relationship with SFU</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Overall Core Theme Summary Results: Student Experience and Success**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.39: Overall Core Theme summary results, Student Experience and Success</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
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<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
<td>Provide an engaging student experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>Provide a supportive student learning and living environment</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>The University creates vibrant campus communities</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Core Theme  
Community and Citizenship

Objective 1  
Engage and involve SFU’s many communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.48: Objective 1 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage and involve SFU’s many communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide learning opportunities to diverse communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 1.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage community service and engagement</td>
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Objective 2  
Provide opportunities for international collaboration and partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.50: Objective 2 summary results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for international collaboration and partnerships</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students participate in international exchange opportunities and field schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 2.2</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty and staff jointly publish articles with international partners</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Objective 3  
Mobilize resources and expertise that reflect regional, national and global interests and that address concerns about environmental sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4.55: Objective 3 summary results</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
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<th>Needs improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobilize resources and expertise that reflect regional, national and global interests and that address concerns about environmental sustainability</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFU’s research, teaching and service strengths and impacts are widely communicated and employed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outcome 3.2</td>
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<td>The importance of sustainability values and achieving sustainability goals is communicated to, and understood, by SFU’s communities</td>
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### Overall Core Theme Summary Results: Community and Citizenship

<table>
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<th>Objective</th>
<th>Summary Description</th>
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<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
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<td>Engage and involve SFU’s many communities</td>
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<td>Objective 2</td>
<td>Provide opportunities for international collaboration and partnerships</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3</td>
<td>Mobilize resources and expertise that reflect regional, national and global concerns</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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NWCCU Accreditation Standards

1  Mission, core themes and expectations

The institution articulates its purpose in the form of a mission statement and identifies core themes that manifest essential elements of that mission. It defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it identifies an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

1.A  Mission

1.A.1 The institution has a widely-published mission statement—approved by its governing board—that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts, and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.

1.A.2 The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.

1.B  Core Themes

1.B.1 The institution identifies core themes that individually manifest essential elements of its mission and collectively encompass its mission.

1.B.2 The institution establishes objectives for each of its core themes and identifies meaningful, assessable, and verifiable indicators of achievement that form the basis for evaluating accomplishment of the objectives of its core themes.

2  Resources and capacity

By documenting the adequacy of its resources and capacity, the institution exhibits the potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered. Through its governance and decision-making structures, the institution establishes, reviews regularly, and revises, as necessary, policies and procedures which promote effective management and operation of the institution.

2.A  Governance

2.A.1 The institution demonstrates an effective and widely understood system of governance with clearly-defined authority, roles, and responsibilities. Its decision-making structures and processes make provision for the consideration of the views of faculty, staff, administrators, and students on matters in which they have a direct and reasonable interest.

2.A.2 In a multi-unit governance system, the division of authority and responsibility between the system and the institution is clearly delineated. System policies, regulations, and procedures concerning the institution are clearly defined and equitably administered.

2.A.3 The institution monitors its compliance with the Commission’s standards for accreditation, including the impact of collective bargaining agreements, legislative actions, and external mandates.
Governing Board

2.A.4 The institution has a functioning governing board* consisting of at least five voting members, a majority of whom have no contractual, employment, or financial interest in the institution. If the institution is governed by a hierarchical structure of multiple boards, the roles, responsibilities, and authority of each board—as they relate to the institution—are clearly defined, widely communicated, and broadly understood.

2.A.5 The board acts only as a committee of the whole; no member or subcommittee of the board acts on behalf of the board except by formal delegation of authority by the governing board as a whole.

2.A.6 The board establishes, reviews regularly, revises as necessary, and exercises broad oversight of institutional policies, including those regarding its own organization and operation.

2.A.7 The board selects and evaluates regularly a chief executive officer who is accountable for the operation of the institution. It delegates authority and responsibility to the CEO to implement and administer board-approved policies related to the operation of the institution.

2.A.8 The board regularly evaluates its performance to ensure its duties and responsibilities are fulfilled in an effective and efficient manner.

Leadership and Management

2.A.9 The institution has an effective system of leadership, staffed by qualified administrators, with appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability, who are charged with planning, organizing, and managing the institution and assessing its achievements and effectiveness.

2.A.10 The institution employs an appropriately-qualified chief executive officer with full-time responsibility to the institution. The chief executive officer may serve as an ex officio member of the governing board, but may not serve as its chair.

2.A.11 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified administrators who provide effective leadership and management for the institution’s major support and operational functions and work collaboratively across institutional functions and units to foster fulfillment of the institution’s mission and accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

Policies and Procedures

Academics

2.A.12 Academic policies—including those related to teaching, service, scholarship, research, and artistic creation—are clearly communicated to students and faculty and to administrators and staff with responsibilities related to these areas.

2.A.13 Policies regarding access to and use of library and information resources—regardless of format, location, and delivery method—are documented, published, and enforced.

2.A.14 The institution develops, publishes widely, and follows an effective and clearly-stated transfer-of-credit policy that maintains the integrity of its programs while facilitating efficient mobility of students between institutions in completing their educational programs.

Students

2.A.15 Policies and procedures regarding students’ rights and responsibilities—including academic honesty, appeals, grievances, and accommodations for persons with disabilities—are clearly stated, readily available, and administered in a fair and consistent manner.
2.A.16 The institution adopts and adheres to admission and placement policies that guide the enrollment of students in courses and programs through an evaluation of prerequisite knowledge, skills, and abilities to assure a reasonable probability of student success at a level commensurate with the institution’s expectations. Its policy regarding continuation in and termination from its educational programs—including its appeals process and readmission policy—are clearly defined, widely published, and administered in a fair and timely manner.

2.A.17 The institution maintains and publishes policies that clearly state its relationship to co-curricular activities and the roles and responsibilities of students and the institution for those activities, including student publications and other student media, if offered.

Human Resources
2.A.18 The institution maintains and publishes its human resources policies and procedures and regularly reviews them to ensure they are consistent, fair, and equitably applied to its employees and students.

2.A.19 Employees are apprised of their conditions of employment, work assignments, rights and responsibilities, and criteria and procedures for evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.

2.A.20 The institution ensures the security and appropriate confidentiality of human resources records.

Institutional Integrity
2.A.21 The institution represents itself clearly, accurately, and consistently through its announcements, statements, and publications. It communicates its academic intentions, programs, and services to students and to the public and demonstrates that its academic programs can be completed in a timely fashion. It regularly reviews its publications to assure integrity in all representations about its mission, programs, and services.

2.A.22 The institution advocates, subscribes to, and exemplifies high ethical standards in managing and operating the institution, including its dealings with the public, the Commission, and external organizations, and in the fair and equitable treatment of students, faculty, administrators, staff, and other constituencies. It ensures complaints and grievances are addressed in a fair and timely manner.

2.A.23 The institution adheres to a clearly-defined policy that prohibits conflict of interest on the part of members of the governing board, administration, faculty, and staff. Even when supported by or affiliated with social, political, corporate, or religious organizations, the institution has education as its primary purpose and operates as an academic institution with appropriate autonomy. If it requires its constituencies to conform to specific codes of conduct or seeks to instill specific beliefs or world views, it gives clear prior notice of such codes and/or policies in its publications.

2.A.24 The institution maintains clearly-defined policies with respect to ownership, copyright, control, compensation, and revenue derived from the creation and production of intellectual property.

2.A.25 The institution accurately represents its current accreditation status and avoids speculation on future accreditation actions or status. It uses the terms “accreditation” and “candidacy” (and related terms) only when such status is conferred by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
2.A.26 If the institution enters into contractual agreements with external entities for products or services performed on its behalf, the scope of work for those products or services—with clearly-defined roles and responsibilities—is stipulated in a written and approved agreement that contains provisions to maintain the integrity of the institution. In such cases, the institution ensures the scope of the agreement is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, adheres to institutional policies and procedures, and complies with the Commission’s standards for accreditation.

Academic Freedom
2.A.27 The institution publishes and adheres to policies, approved by its governing board, regarding academic freedom and responsibility that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.

2.A.28 Within the context of its mission, core themes, and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to examine thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Moreover, they allow others the freedom to do the same.

2.A.29 Individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately, and objectively. Derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property, and personal views, beliefs, and opinions are identified as such.

Finance
2.A.30 The institution has clearly-defined policies, approved by its governing board, regarding oversight and management of financial resources—including financial planning, board approval and monitoring of operating and capital budgets, reserves, investments, fundraising, cash management, debt management, and transfers and borrowings between funds.

2.B Human Resources
2.B.1 The institution employs a sufficient number of qualified personnel to maintain its support and operations functions. Criteria, qualifications, and procedures for selection of personnel are clearly and publicly stated. Job descriptions accurately reflect duties, responsibilities, and authority of the position.

2.B.2 Administrators and staff are evaluated regularly with regard to performance of work duties and responsibilities.

2.B.3 The institution provides faculty, staff, administrators, and other employees with appropriate opportunities and support for professional growth and development to enhance their effectiveness in fulfilling their roles, duties, and responsibilities.

2.B.4 Consistent with its mission, core themes, programs, services, and characteristics, the institution employs appropriately-qualified faculty sufficient in number to achieve its educational objectives, establish and oversee academic policies, and assure the integrity and continuity of its academic programs, wherever offered and however delivered.

2.B.5 Faculty responsibilities and workloads are commensurate with the institution’s expectations for teaching, service, scholarship, research, and/or artistic creation.
2.B.6 All faculty are evaluated in a regular, systematic, substantive, and collegial manner at least once within every five-year period of service. The evaluation process specifies the timeline and criteria by which faculty are evaluated; utilizes multiple indices of effectiveness, each of which is directly related to the faculty member’s roles and responsibilities, including evidence of teaching effectiveness for faculty with teaching responsibilities; contains a provision to address concerns that may emerge between regularly scheduled evaluations; and provides for administrative access to all primary evaluation data. Where areas for improvement are identified, the institution works with the faculty member to develop and implement a plan to address identified areas of concern.

2.C Education Resources
2.C.1 The institution provides programs, wherever offered and however delivered, with appropriate content and rigor that are consistent with its mission; culminate in achievement of clearly-identified student learning outcomes; and lead to collegiate-level degrees or certificates with designators consistent with program content in recognized fields of study.

2.C.2 The institution identifies and publishes expected course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Expected student learning outcomes for courses, wherever offered and however delivered, are provided in written form to enrolled students.

2.C.3 Credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement and awarded in a manner consistent with institutional policies that reflect generally-accepted learning outcomes, norms, or equivalencies in higher education.

2.C.4 Degree programs, wherever offered and however delivered, demonstrate a coherent design with appropriate breadth, depth, sequencing of courses, and synthesis of learning. Admission and graduation requirements are clearly defined and widely published.

2.C.5 Faculty, through well-defined structures and processes with clearly-defined authority and responsibilities, exercise a major role in the design, approval, implementation, and revision of the curriculum, and have an active role in the selection of new faculty. Faculty with teaching responsibilities take collective responsibility for fostering and assessing student achievement of clearly-identified learning outcomes.

2.C.6 Faculty with teaching responsibilities, in partnership with library and information resources personnel, ensure that the use of library and information resources is integrated into the learning process.

2.C.7 Credit for prior experiential learning, if granted, is: a) guided by approved policies and procedures; b) awarded only at the undergraduate level to enrolled students; c) limited to a maximum of 25% of the credits needed for a degree; d) awarded only for documented student achievement equivalent to expected learning achievement for courses within the institution’s regular curricular offerings; and e) granted only upon the recommendation of appropriately-qualified teaching faculty. Credit granted for prior experiential learning is so identified on students’ transcripts and may not duplicate other credit awarded to the student in fulfillment of degree requirements. The institution makes no assurances regarding the number of credits to be awarded prior to the completion of the institution’s review process.

2.C.8 The final judgment in accepting transfer credit is the responsibility of the receiving institution. Transfer credit is accepted according to procedures which provide adequate safeguards to ensure high academic quality, relevance to the students’ programs, and integrity of the receiving institution’s degrees. In accepting transfer credit, the receiving institution ensures that the credit accepted is appropriate for its programs and comparable in nature, content,
academic quality, and level to credit it offers. Where patterns of student enrollment between institutions are identified, the institution develops articulation agreements between the institutions.

**Undergraduate Programs**

2.C.9 The general education component of undergraduate programs (if offered) demonstrates an integrated course of study that helps students develop the breadth and depth of intellect to become more effective learners and to prepare them for a productive life of work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment. Baccalaureate degree programs and transfer associate degree programs include a recognizable core of general education that represents an integration of basic knowledge and methodology of the humanities and fine arts, mathematical and natural sciences, and social sciences. Applied undergraduate degree and certificate programs of thirty (30) semester credits or forty-five (45) quarter credits in length contain a recognizable core of related instruction or general education with identified outcomes in the areas of communication, computation, and human relations that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes.

2.C.10 The institution demonstrates that the general education components of its baccalaureate degree programs (if offered) and transfer associate degree programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that are stated in relation to the institution’s mission and learning outcomes for those programs.

2.C.11 The related instruction components of applied degree and certificate programs (if offered) have identifiable and assessable learning outcomes that align with and support program goals or intended outcomes. Related instruction components may be embedded within program curricula or taught in blocks of specialized instruction, but each approach must have clearly-identified content and be taught or monitored by teaching faculty who are appropriately qualified in those areas.

**Graduate Programs**

2.C.12 Graduate programs are consistent with the institution’s mission; are in keeping with the expectations of their respective disciplines and professions; and are described through nomenclature that is appropriate to the levels of graduate and professional degrees offered. They differ from undergraduate programs by requiring greater depth of study and increased demands on student intellectual or creative capacities; knowledge of the literature of the field; and ongoing student engagement in research, scholarship, creative expression, and/or appropriate high-level professional practice.

2.C.13 Graduate admission and retention policies ensure that student qualifications and expectations are compatible with the institution’s mission and the program’s requirements. Transfer of credit is evaluated according to clearly-defined policies by faculty with a major commitment to graduate education or by a representative body of faculty responsible for the degree program at the receiving institution.

2.C.14 Graduate credit may be granted for internships, field experiences, and clinical practices that are an integral part of the graduate degree program. Credit toward graduate degrees may not be granted for experiential learning that occurred prior to matriculation into the graduate degree program. Unless the institution structures the graduate learning experience, monitors that learning, and assesses learning achievements, graduate credit is not granted for learning experiences external to the students’ formal graduate programs.

2.C.15 Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research, professional practice, scholarship, or artistic creation are characterized by a high level of expertise, originality, and
critical analysis. Programs intended to prepare students for artistic creation are directed toward developing personal expressions of original concepts, interpretations, imagination, thoughts, or feelings. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for research or scholarship are directed toward advancing the frontiers of knowledge by constructing and/or revising theories and creating or applying knowledge. Graduate programs intended to prepare students for professional practice are directed toward developing high levels of knowledge and performance skills directly related to effective practice within the profession.

Continuing Education and Non-academic-Credit Programs

2.C.16 Credit and non-credit continuing education programs and other special programs are compatible with the institution’s mission and goals.

2.C.17 The institution maintains direct and sole responsibility for the academic quality of all aspects of its continuing education and special learning programs and courses. Continuing education and/or special learning activities, programs, or courses offered for academic credit are approved by the appropriate institutional body, monitored through established procedures with clearly-defined roles and responsibilities, and assessed with regard to student achievement. Faculty representing the disciplines and fields of work are appropriately involved in the planning and evaluation of the institution’s continuing education and special learning activities.

2.C.18 The granting of credit or Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for continuing education courses and special learning activities is: a) guided by generally-accepted norms; b) based on institutional mission and policy; c) consistent across the institution, wherever offered and however delivered; d) appropriate to the objectives of the course; and e) determined by student achievement of identified learning outcomes.

2.C.19 The institution maintains records which describe the number of courses and nature of learning provided through non-credit instruction.

2.D Student Support Resources

2.D.1 Consistent with the nature of its educational programs and methods of delivery, the institution creates effective learning environments with appropriate programs and services to support student learning needs.

2.D.2 The institution makes adequate provision for the safety and security of its students and their property at all locations where it offers programs and services. Crime statistics, campus security policies, and other disclosures required under federal and state regulations are made available in accordance with those regulations.

2.D.3 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution recruits and admits students with the potential to benefit from its educational offerings. It orients students to ensure they understand the requirements related to their programs of study and receive timely, useful, and accurate information and advising about relevant academic requirements, including graduation and transfer policies.

2.D.4 In the event of program elimination or significant change in requirements, the institution makes appropriate arrangements to ensure that students enrolled in the program have an opportunity to complete their program in a timely manner with a minimum of disruption.

2.D.5 The institution publishes in a catalog, or provides in a manner reasonably available to students and other stakeholders, current and accurate information that includes:
2.D.5a Institutional mission and core themes;
2.D.5b Entrance requirements and procedures;
2.D.5c Grading policy;
2.D.5d a) Information on academic programs and courses, including degree and program completion requirements, expected learning outcomes, required course sequences, and projected timelines to completion based on normal student progress and the frequency of course offerings;
2.D.5e Names, titles, degrees held, and conferring institutions for administrators and full-time faculty;
2.D.5f Rules, regulations for conduct, rights, and responsibilities;
2.D.5g Tuition, fees, and other program costs;
2.D.5h Refund policies and procedures for students who withdraw from enrollment;
2.D.5i Opportunities and requirements for financial aid; and
2.D.5j Academic calendar.
2.D.6 Publications describing educational programs include accurate information on:
2.D.6a National and/or state legal eligibility requirements for licensure or entry into an occupation or profession for which education and training are offered;
2.D.6b Descriptions of unique requirements for employment and advancement in the occupation or profession.
2.D.7 The institution adopts and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the secure retention of student records, including provision for reliable and retrievable backup of those records, regardless of their form. The institution publishes and follows established policies for confidentiality and release of student records.
2.D.8 The institution provides an effective and accountable program of financial aid consistent with its mission, student needs, and institutional resources. Information regarding the categories of financial assistance (such as scholarships, grants, and loans) is published and made available to prospective and enrolled students.
2.D.9 Students receiving financial assistance are informed of any repayment obligations. The institution regularly monitors its student loan programs and the institution’s loan default rate.
2.D.10 The institution designs, maintains, and evaluates a systematic and effective program of academic advisement to support student development and success. Personnel responsible for advising students are knowledgeable of the curriculum, program requirements, and graduation requirements and are adequately prepared to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. Advising requirements and responsibilities are defined, published, and made available to students.
2.D.11 Co-curricular activities are consistent with the institution’s mission, core themes, programs, and services and are governed appropriately.
2.D.12 If the institution operates auxiliary services (such as student housing, food service, and bookstore), they support the institution’s mission, contribute to the intellectual climate of the
2.D.13 Intercollegiate athletic and other co-curricular programs (if offered) and related financial operations are consistent with the institution’s mission and conducted with appropriate institutional oversight. Admission requirements and procedures, academic standards, degree requirements, and financial aid awards for students participating in co-curricular programs are consistent with those for other students.

2.D.14 The institution maintains an effective identity verification process for students enrolled in distance education courses and programs to establish that the student enrolled in the distance education course or program is the same person whose achievements are evaluated and credentialed. The institution ensures the identity verification process for distance education students protects student privacy and that students are informed, in writing at the time of enrollment, of current and projected charges associated with the identity verification process.

2.E Library and Information Resources

2.E.1 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution holds or provides access to library and information resources with an appropriate level of currency, depth, and breadth to support the institution’s mission, core themes, programs, and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

2.E.2 Planning for library and information resources is guided by data that includes feedback from affected users and appropriate library and information resources faculty, staff, and administrators.

2.E.3 Consistent with its mission and core themes, the institution provides appropriate instruction and support for students, faculty, staff, administrators, and others (as appropriate) to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness in obtaining, evaluating, and using library and information resources that support its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

2.E.4 The institution regularly and systematically evaluates the quality, adequacy, utilization, and security of library and information resources and services, including those provided through co-operative arrangements, wherever offered and however delivered.

2.F Financial Resources

2.F.1 The institution demonstrates financial stability with sufficient cash flow and reserves to support its programs and services. Financial planning reflects available funds, realistic development of financial resources, and appropriate risk management to ensure short-term solvency and anticipate long-term obligations, including payment of future liabilities.

2.F.2 Resource planning and development include realistic budgeting, enrollment management, and responsible projections of grants, donations, and other non-tuition revenue sources.

2.F.3 The institution clearly defines and follows its policies, guidelines, and processes for financial planning and budget development that include appropriate opportunities for participation by its constituencies.

2.F.4 The institution ensures timely and accurate financial information through its use of an appropriate accounting system that follows generally-accepted accounting principles and through its reliance on an effective system of internal controls.
2.F.5 Capital budgets reflect the institution’s mission and core theme objectives and relate to its plans for physical facilities and acquisition of equipment. Long-range capital plans support the institution’s mission and goals and reflect projections of the total cost of ownership, equipment, furnishing, and operation of new or renovated facilities. Debt for capital outlay purposes is periodically reviewed, carefully controlled, and justified, so as not to create an unreasonable drain on resources available for educational purposes.

2.F.6 The institution defines the financial relationship between its general operations and its auxiliary enterprises, including any use of general operations funds to support auxiliary enterprises or the use of funds from auxiliary services to support general operations.

2.F.7 For each year of operation, the institution undergoes an external financial audit, in a reasonable timeframe, by professionally-qualified personnel in accordance with generally-accepted auditing standards. Results from the audit, including findings and management letter recommendations, are considered in a timely, appropriate, and comprehensive manner by the administration and the governing board.

2.F.8 All institutional fundraising activities are conducted in a professional and ethical manner and comply with governmental requirements. If the institution has a relationship with a fundraising organization that bears its name and whose major purpose is to raise funds to support its mission, the institution has a written agreement that clearly defines its relationship with that organization.

2.G Physical and Technological Infrastructure

Physical Infrastructure

2.G.1 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution creates and maintains physical facilities that are accessible, safe, secure, and sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure healthful learning and working environments that support the institution’s mission, programs, and services.

2.G.2 The institution adopts, publishes, reviews regularly, and adheres to policies and procedures regarding the safe use, storage, and disposal of hazardous or toxic materials.

2.G.3 The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a master plan for its physical development that is consistent with its mission, core themes, and long-range educational and financial plans.

2.G.4 Equipment is sufficient in quantity and quality and managed appropriately to support institutional functions and fulfillment of the institution’s mission, accomplishment of core theme objectives, and achievement of goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services.

Technological Infrastructure

2.G.5 Consistent with its mission, core themes, and characteristics, the institution has appropriate and adequate technology systems and infrastructure to support its management and operational functions, academic programs, and support services, wherever offered and however delivered.

2.G.6 The institution provides appropriate instruction and support for faculty, staff, students, and administrators in the effective use of technology and technology systems related to its programs, services, and institutional operations.
2.G.7 Technological infrastructure planning provides opportunities for input from its technology support staff and constituencies who rely on technology for institutional operations, programs, and services.

2.G.8 The institution develops, implements, and reviews regularly a technology update and replacement plan to ensure its technological infrastructure is adequate to support its operations, programs, and services.

3 Institutional Planning

The institution engages in ongoing participatory planning that provides direction for the institution and leads to fulfillment of its mission, accomplishment of its core theme objectives, and achievement of the identified goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. The resulting plans reflect the interdependent nature of its operations, functions, and resources in achieving intended results. The institution demonstrates that its planning and implementation processes are sufficiently flexible to address unexpected circumstances with the potential to impact the institution’s capacity to accomplish its core theme objectives and fulfill its mission. It demonstrates that its plans are implemented and influence practice, resource allocation, and application of institutional capacity.

3.A Institutional Planning

3.A.1 The institution engages in ongoing, purposeful, systematic, integrated, and comprehensive planning that leads to fulfillment of its mission. Its plans are implemented and made available to appropriate constituencies.

3.A.2 The institution’s comprehensive planning process is broad-based and offers opportunities for input by appropriate constituencies.

3.A.3 The institution’s comprehensive planning process is informed by the collection of appropriately-defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate fulfillment of its mission.

3.A.4 The institution’s comprehensive plan articulates priorities and guides decisions on resource allocation and application of institutional capacity.

3.A.5 The institution’s planning includes emergency preparedness and contingency planning for continuity and recovery of operations should catastrophic events significantly interrupt normal institutional operations.

4 Core Theme Planning, Assessment and Improvement

The institution collects data related to clearly-defined indicators of achievement, analyzes those data, and forms evidence-based judgments of achievements of core theme objectives. It regularly and systematically applies clearly-defined evaluation procedures to appraise the relationship of institutional planning, resources, capacity, and practices to the objectives of its core themes; and assesses the extent to which it accomplishes those objectives and achieves the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services. It uses assessment results to effect improvement and disseminates its findings to its constituencies.

3.B Core Theme Planning

3.B.1 Planning for each core theme is consistent with the institution’s comprehensive plan and guides the selection of programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to accomplishment of the core theme’s objectives.
3.B.2 Planning for core theme programs and services guides the selection of contributing components of those programs and services to ensure they are aligned with and contribute to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of the respective programs and services.

3.B.3 Core theme planning is informed by the collection of appropriately-defined data that are analyzed and used to evaluate accomplishment of core theme objectives. Planning for programs and services is informed by the collection of appropriately-defined data that are used to evaluate achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of those programs and services.

4.A Assessment
4.A.1 The institution engages in ongoing systematic collection and analysis of meaningful, assessable, and verifiable data—quantitative and/or qualitative, as appropriate to its indicators of achievement—as the basis for evaluating the accomplishment of its core theme objectives.

4.A.2 The institution engages in an effective system of evaluation of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered, to evaluate achievement of clearly-identified program goals or intended outcomes. Faculty have a primary role in the evaluation of educational programs and services.

4.A.3 The institution documents, through an effective, regular, and comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement, that students who complete its educational courses, programs, and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, achieve identified course, program, and degree learning outcomes. Faculty with teaching responsibilities are responsible for evaluating student achievement of clearly-identified learning outcomes.

4.A.4 The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of programs and services with respect to accomplishment of core theme objectives.

4.A.5 The institution evaluates holistically the alignment, correlation, and integration of planning, resources, capacity, practices, and assessment with respect to achievement of the goals or intended outcomes of its programs or services, wherever offered and however delivered.

4.A.6 The institution regularly reviews its assessment processes to ensure they appraise authentic achievements and yield meaningful results that lead to improvement.

4.B Improvement
4.B.1 Results of core theme assessments and results of assessments of programs and services are: a) based on meaningful institutionally-identified indicators of achievement; b) used for improvement by informing planning, decision-making, and allocation of resources and capacity; and c) made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.

4.B.2 The institution uses the results of its assessment of student learning to inform academic and learning-support planning and practices that lead to enhancement of student learning achievements. Results of student learning assessments are made available to appropriate constituencies in a timely manner.
5 Mission Fulfillment, Adaptation and Sustainability

Based on its definition of mission fulfillment and informed by the results of its analysis of accomplishments of its core theme objectives, the institution develops and publishes evidence-based judgments regarding fulfillment of its mission. The institution regularly monitors its internal and external environments to determine how and to what degree changing circumstances may impact its mission and its ability to fulfill that mission. It demonstrates a capability to adapt as necessary its mission, core themes, programs, and services to accommodate changing and emerging needs, trends, and influences to ensure enduring institutional relevancy, productivity, viability, and sustainability.

5.A Mission Fulfillment
5.A.1 The institution engages in regular, systematic, participatory, self-reflective, and evidence-based assessment of its accomplishments.

5.A.2 Based on its definition of mission fulfillment, the institution uses assessment results to make determinations of quality, effectiveness, and mission fulfillment and communicates its conclusions to appropriate constituencies and the public.

5.B Adaptation and Sustainability
5.B.1 Within the context of its mission and characteristics, the institution evaluates regularly the adequacy of its resources, capacity, and effectiveness of operations to document its ongoing potential to fulfill its mission, accomplish its core theme objectives, and achieve the goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, wherever offered and however delivered.

5.B.2 The institution documents and evaluates regularly its cycle of planning, practices, resource allocation, application of institutional capacity, and assessment of results to ensure their adequacy, alignment, and effectiveness. It uses the results of its evaluation to make changes, as necessary, for improvement.

5.B.3 The institution monitors its internal and external environments to identify current and emerging patterns, trends, and expectations. Through its governance system it uses those findings to assess its strategic position, define its future direction, and review and revise, as necessary, its mission, core themes, core theme objectives, goals or intended outcomes of its programs and services, and indicators of achievement.