“REMOVING BARRIERS: A DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE OF SFU”

Phase 2 Task Force on Academic Structure Discussion Paper

Presented to the University Community
December 17, 2007

from the members of the Phase 2 Task Force on Academic Structure

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VOLUME VI – IMPLEMENTATION AND PROCESS FORWARD

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The recommendations contained throughout this report are recognizably both substantial and ambitious. As a consequence, we have attempted to carefully think our way through at least some of the issues that will arise with the implementation of the initiatives and structural changes we have identified. Over the forthcoming sections we will discuss issues of impact on faculty, staff and student complements, provide our best assessment as to the potential cost implications of our recommendations, and propose an implementation timeframe for their execution. We will also outline the next steps in our process, identifying opportunities for consultation with the University community and the imagined timelines for consideration by Senate and the Board of Governors.

Implementation Issues

Implementation Issues for Students, Faculty and Staff

The most important implementation issue arising from our recommendations is the potential impact of our proposals on students, faculty, and staff. We assure all members of the University community that the work of the Task Force over the past year has been carefully guided by the Senate approved principles, and notably principle 8:

8. Any proposed change to the University’s academic structure should be based on carefully considered analysis of the reasons and need for change, its impact on members of the unit as well as other academic units affected by the proposed changes, its respectfulness of members of the University community, its transparency, and its opportunity for meaningful collegial engagement throughout.

Students

Throughout our process we have attempted to seek the input and engagement of students. There has been notable engagement by student representatives from Communication, Contemporary Arts, and various of the disciplines and programs in environmental areas, and the graduate student caucus of the School of Computing Science. The engagement of these students has been critical to our understanding and consideration of the potential impact of various proposals. Generally, students have encouraged us to be forward thinking, to increase visibility and profile in the areas that we have designated for new Faculty creation, and to provide more coherent and easily navigable ways for the pursuit of their studies in both disciplinary and interdisciplinary contexts. We have been buoyed by their enthusiasm and reminded of the critical mission of the University to provide outstanding educational opportunities and experiences for students.

The most critical issues of implementation confronting the student body with regard to the academic structure recommendations we believe are as follows:
• That there will be seamlessness in the implementation of new Faculty alignments, unit relocations, and new governance relationship and that these occur in a way that ensures that educational programming remains stable and of the highest quality.
• That the degree credentials in which students are currently registered remain intact, highly respected, and internationally recognized.
• That students registered in the Bachelor of General Studies, Applied Science, will be able to complete their program of study despite the dissolution of the Faculty of Applied Science.

We recommend that, should Senate approve the recommendations of this report, that the above three issues be accepted as commitments that must be guaranteed to students.

As the recommendations of the Task Force also include the onset of significant new opportunities for students in terms of experiential learning and new program opportunities, we further recommend that Senate recognize the following principles for students:

• That the introduction of a system of experiential credit initiative be undertaken with careful thought for undergraduate students in its relationship to the W, Q, B initiative, and for both graduate and undergraduate students in the ways in which it will provide a value-added component to the educational experience at Simon Fraser University without leading to an overall increase in degree credit requirements.
• That the opportunities for students to pursue new educational programming that may develop in each of the new Faculties, as elsewhere in the University, be designed with appropriate structures of transference that recognize the existing educational achievements and credit learning of students at Simon Fraser University.
• That appropriate “opportunity portals” be developed so that students have greater clarity in terms of the educational opportunities that exist for them in the areas of studying health, environmental issues, language training, and in the diverse array of experiential opportunities that are available across the University.

Faculty Members

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

Nonetheless, we also recognize that there will be a very few faculty members within directly affected units who will not see the proposed Faculty location for them as being the opportune environment for their intellectual research and teaching development and career. We believe it imperative that the University work with these individuals to ensure that suitable academic homes are found. While we recognize that there is an existing University process for relocation from one academic unit to another, we would suggest that the University develop a streamlined and expedited process for relocation. Further, we recommend that the Vice-President, Academic
identify an appropriate bridge-to-the-future style financial strategy to facilitate a smooth transition without negative consequence for the unit of departure or reception.

Staff Members

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

It is not in our power to guarantee positions to all affected staff. However, notwithstanding the limitations of our power, the creation of three new Faculties, all requiring new administrative infrastructure, should actually lead to a substantial number of additional position opportunities. As a consequence, we are highly optimistic, that all staff affected by our recommendation to dissolve the Faculty of Applied Science will find an opportunity for a continued employment relationship with the University.

We have confirmed with the Vice-President, Legal Affairs, that the full extent of all staff related employment policies and provincial labour regulations will be the foundation for decisions and that the University will make considerable effort to find suitable employment opportunities for all affected staff.

Implementation Issues for Administrative Areas, Systems and Infrastructure Support

The comprehensive nature of our recommendations will lead to significant transitional activities in various areas of the University’s administrative offices, processes, systems, and infrastructures. Further, the interrelated and multifaceted nature of our recommendations will require concerted leadership, management and timely execution. To effectively steer this process forward, the Vice-President, Academic will establish a Senior Administrative Implementation Steering Committee that will oversee the management and implementation of the administrative changes. This Steering Committee will be comprised of the Vice-President, Academic, Associate Vice-President, Academic, Vice-President, Legal Affairs, Vice-President, Finance and Administration, Vice-President, Research, Associate Vice-President, Students and International, Chief Information Officer, Director, University Secretariat, Registrar and Senior Director, Student Enrollment, and Project Coordinator. A Working Group will also be established with membership from Human Resources, Academic Relations, Budgeting, Financing, Institutional Research and Planning, Graduate Studies, Student Services, and others as required.

While we cannot identify all administrative and implementation issues that will be undertaken, we are aware of at least the following categories:
• Academic leadership search processes for Faculty Deans, Dean of the College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning, Director of Office for Interdisciplinary Collaboration
• Staff searches for administrative offices of new Faculties
• Substantive changes to academic and research policies resulting from the direct recommendations of our report
• Changes to Senate Committee and Subcommittee membership and elections processes
• Editorial changes to academic, administrative and personnel policies that reference academic structural entities, bodies, or representatives
• Changes to registration systems, enrollment processes, calendar changes, advising, recruitment materials
• Degree designation matters including potentially new degree designations, grandfathering for Bachelor of General Studies, Applied Science and Applied Science degrees
• Financial systems changes and budget redistribution across new Faculties
• Personnel system changes and notifications for academic, professional and clerical staff
• Significant programming and reports changes by Institutional Research and Planning to ensure ongoing meaningful institutional data records
• Re-categorization process for Centres/Institutes
• Various new information documentation, media announcements, and publicity to prospective students, counselors, potential donors and the external community in general
• Eventual physical relocations of units to provide for clustering of Faculty activities

While the above represent the general implementation issues that will be required, we note two specific implementation issues that arise directly from the creation of new Faculties. First, the Deans’ search policy will need to be examined in terms of faculty member representation for Faculties with fewer than four units. Further, the anticipated asymmetrical configuration of the new Environment Faculty will require a further amendment to the ratification procedure so that each department and school has a meaningful voice in the selection of the Dean. Second, the relocation of the Environmental Science Program from the Faculty of Science to the new Environment Faculty as an independent program will require a 1-2 FTE faculty position commitment to ensure leadership and stabilization of the program.

**Context for Costs**

When the Vice-President, Academic initiated the work of the first Task Force in the Fall of 2005, he did not do so in a context of financial crisis, crisis of reputation, or crisis of vision, that is often typical of restructuring exercises at other academic institutions. He did so in view of designing the best University for the future: a University that would be seen as a leader in the liberal arts and sciences, in areas of great societal concern such as environment, education, and health, and in areas of professional and applied fields. The Task Force has aimed to build on our strengths and move our research and graduate education substantively forward. We have sought to develop one of the most distinguished and exciting undergraduate student experiences, and we hope to attract the world’s leading scholars and educators to our institution. Simon Fraser University of the future will engage with our communities in unparalleled ways, revitalizing art and culture in society, opening our doors to diverse communities locally and internationally and
truly be an institution that, by its actions, demonstrates it is “thinking of the world” and contributing to it.

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

We do not wish in any way to minimalize the current budgetary context nor to downplay the fact that our recommendations indeed have cost implications for the University. We believe it essential to be open and transparent in our expectation of what the University may expect in terms of costs in relation to the recommendations that we make over the course of our report. These costs notably are estimates based on our understanding of the scope of our recommendation and current average costs in the University. The costs we identify should be understood to be the “costs of change” and do not represent long-term future development costs, just as our cost overview does not include the long-term future development costs of the already established academic Faculties and initiatives at the University.

We would also like to expressly note, that this cost summary is provided for information and disclosure purposes only. The Task Force does not have the power to recommend financial commitments of the University and thus this is not an element of our report for express consideration or approval by the University community or Senate. Budgetary decision making ultimately rests with the Board of Governors as part of the annual budget process. This will be independent of our report and the Task Force’s activities.

The Task Force also does not wish to leave an impression with the University community that it is only the Task Force recommendations that have a cost. The University is constantly investing in those areas of the University that are untouched by our recommendations, and in a variety of ways that seek to constantly retain and improve the overall quality of teaching, research and outreach at Simon Fraser University. Outside of the main budget provisioning to the Faculties, it is noteworthy that over the past few years, the Vice-President, Academic has invested nearly $1.4 million recurring dollars in the University Curriculum Initiative, nearly $400,000 base budget in the Student Learning Commons, almost $5 million in retention awards to outstanding faculty members, and significant other amounts in new faculty position creation, faculty start-up, and specific project support. These are clearly not insignificant amounts.

Outside of dedicated funds for retention awards, new faculty complement growth, conference support, and the annual enrolment based budget model of the University, the Vice-President, Academic has a dedicated Strategic Initiatives Fund (SIF) that is approximately $950,000 new base budget funding per year. This is his primary vehicle for supporting new academic initiatives at the University. In the past, it has been used to develop such initiatives as the Faculty of Health Sciences, the University Curriculum Initiative, and new program development. The Strategic Initiatives Fund is suggested by the Task Force as the primary vehicle for
financing the recommendations of our report to ensure that our initiatives do not represent a
direct call on the existing Faculty budget lines. A second source of funding that is critically
important to the Vice-President, Academic’s ability to support new initiatives, focused around
technology, has been the Double the Opportunity (DTO) fund. This fund has not been fully
expended in anticipation of potential developments from the Task Force and it could serve as the
financial source for the creation of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing as well as the very
nominal new positions expected in support of developing a new IT/ICT program.

In consideration of the work of the Task Force, the Vice-President, Academic has been
conservative in his deployment of the 2007/2008 SIF, and has some funds remaining for
dedication to the recommendations of the Task Force. This fund provides for both one-time non-
recurring funding, which will be important for the transitional administrative costs of
implementing our recommendations, as well as base recurring funding that would support the
creation of the positions and annual budget of the new Faculties, College, and Office for
Interdisciplinary Collaboration.

**Specific Costs**

The Task Force imagines that each new Faculty will cost an average of $750,000 new base
funding. Differences will exist between each of the three proposed Faculties based on the
number of constituent units, the amount of decentralized budgeting already in place to the
School/Department level, and the extent of administrative position start up cost requirements.
This provides an estimated total for the creation of three new Faculties of approximately $2.25
million base funding. In addition to these administrative structure set up costs for the new
Faculties, the Task Force report also calls for the dedication of 6-8 new FTE positions for new
integrative programming in the Environment Faculty, which we predict will require an additional
$750,000 base funding to the overall budget. The total budgetary costs of the three new
Faculties, therefore is estimated to be $3.0 million.

The dissolution of the Faculty of Applied Science will provide $1.0 million toward this total.
The unspent Double the Opportunity Fund will be able to cover the cost of the new Faculty of
Engineering and Computing. This leaves a net base budget requirement of $1.25 million. The
Vice-President, Academic has this base commitment available from outstanding funds from the
2007/08 Strategic Initiatives Fund, the dedication of the 2008/09 SIF fund and some portion of
the 2009/10 SIF fund for new position creation related to integrative programming in the
Environment Faculty.

The creation of the College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning has minimal establishment
costs, expected to be approximately $150,000 in total. It does, however, have more significant
longer term costs as the Experiential Learning Division, experiential credit initiative, and the
new Foreign Language Program and resource centre are each implemented. It is anticipated that
the total costs for the staged implementation of these over the next 3-5 years would be
approximately $500,000 to $750,000 in base funding.
The third substantive cost proposal of the Task Force is connected to the establishment of an Office for Interdisciplinary Collaboration (OIC), the activities it is mandated to undertake and support, and the Centres and Institutes Support Centre within the OIC. It is anticipated that the development of this shared infrastructure as well as staffing positions (Director, and support staff) and interdisciplinary initiatives operating budget will be in the neighborhood of $500,000 base funding.

Perhaps the most ambitious cost item of the Task Force’s proposals, is the creation of a Simon Fraser University Institute for Advanced Scholarship. Preliminary cost calculations for creating the program of distinction imagined, its state-of-the-art facilities, distinguished visitor housing and salary costs, institute personnel costs, international conference and proceedings activities, are significant. We imagine that an annual base operating cost of approximately $1.25 million is required, with a capital facility cost of between $10 and $15 million. The Task Force sees such potential of this initiative as advancing the University’s international research profile and graduate education aspirations, that we have not shied away from our recommendation to proceed despite the magnitude of our preliminary costs. However, we do not believe it possible for the University to bear these costs directly, and therefore we recommend that this entire initiative be the focus of a major fundraising initiative of the University.

A final cost component of our recommendations are the costs for the transitional implementation of the recommendations. In consideration of temporary staff requirements for implementation in our student, financial and personnel systems, as well as project coordination during the implementation phase, we predict non-recurring implementation costs of approximately $450,000 spread over the next two years. Further, we anticipate that the Vice-President, Academic may need to dedicate up to $500,000 in a bridge-to-the-future program for non-relocating faculty members and program stabilization. We understand from the Vice-President, Academic, that these amounts can be identified through outstanding non-recurring funds remaining from 2007/08 as well as modest amounts from 2008/09 and 2009/10 calls on recurring funds of the University.

**Implementation and Prioritization of Recommendations**

The following schedule provides a projected ideal timeline for the implementation of the activities that are embedded within the recommendations of the Task Force over the course of our report.

I. Cognitive Science Review

I. Committees, Policy Changes, Academic Leadership Processes Begin
iii. June 2008 – Establishment of Student Mobility/Course Access Committee (Report due August 2009)
v. June 2008 – Mandate given to VP Legal to negotiate with SFUFA revisions to joint appointments policy along the principles of change identified, creation of new internal secondments policy, team teaching policy, process for review of interdisciplinary work, and modifications to other academic policies affected by the changes in academic structure
vi. June 2008 – Mandate given to VP Research to make revisions to Policy R40.01
viii. June 2008 – Establishment of Mandate to Dean of Graduate Studies to review interdisciplinary graduate programming and graduate financial support
ix. June 2008 - Creation of Joint Planning Committee for IT/ICT Program
x. June 2008 – Vice-President, Academic initiates process to appoint Acting Deans for each new Faculty.
xii. September 2008 – Process for Reclassification of Existing Centres/Institutes under new policy begins

II. Faculty and Unit Alignment Changes Occur

xiii. April 2009 – School of Kinesiology moves to Faculty of Science
xiv. April 2009 – Establishment of Faculty of Engineering and Computing
xv. April 2009 – Establishment of Faculty of Contemporary Arts, Communication & Design (working name)
xvi. April 2009 – Master of Publishing Program and Contemporary Arts move from Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences to new Faculty
xvii. April 2009 – TechOne moves temporarily to new Faculty of Contemporary Arts, Communication & Design (working name)
xviii. April 2009 – Establishment of Environment Faculty
xix. April 2009 – Environmental Science Program becomes established as an Independent Program within Environment Faculty
xx. April 2009 – Centre for Sustainable Community Development moves from Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences to Environment Faculty
xxi. April 2009 – Establishment of College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning
xxii. April 2009 – Consolidation of Centre for Dialogue and Semester in Dialogue into Program in Dialogue within College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning
xxiii. January 2010 – Review of Location of TechOne
xxiv. April 2011 – TechOne established in permanent location
xxv. September 2011 – Dissolution of Faculty of Applied Sciences (date to be finalized)

IV. Assessment Reports are Due

xxvi. September 2008 – Report due from Joint Planning Committee for IT/ICT Program
xxviii. August 2009 – Report from Committee on Experiential Learning due to Senate
xxix. August 2009 – Report from Student Mobility and Course Access Committee due
xxx. September 2009 – Vice-President, Academic to have developed and begun
   execution of plan for English Language Learning

V. New Programming Commences

xxxi. September 2009 – New IT/ICT Program launched
xxxii. September 2009 – New Integrative Programming in Environment Faculty launched
xxxiii. September 2009 – Establishment of Program for Foreign Language Studies in the
       College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning

VI. Office for Interdisciplinary Collaboration Established

xxxiv. April 2010 – Search begins for Director of Centre for Interdisciplinary
       Collaboration
xxxv. September 2010 – Establishment of Office for Interdisciplinary Collaboration
xxxvi. September 2010 – Creation of SFU Health Network

VII. Development of Institute for Advanced Scholarship

xxxvii. September 2010 – Fundraising campaign begins for Simon Fraser University
        Institute for Advanced Scholarship
xxxviii. September 2012 – Establishment of Simon Fraser University Institute for
        Advanced Scholarship

Aside from the sheer pragmatic constraints on implementing the broad scope of
recommendations contained in our report, we recognize that the University’s current year
financial realities may require a more staggered implementation of the recommendations in this
report, than might be ideally desired. Should that be the case, we would recommend the
following priority implementation of our recommendations:

1\textsuperscript{st} Priority: - creation of new Faculties and policy changes
2\textsuperscript{nd} Priority: - creation of College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning
3\textsuperscript{rd} Priority: - establishment of Office for Interdisciplinary Collaboration
4\textsuperscript{th} Priority: - development of Simon Fraser University Institute for Advanced Scholarship

\textbf{External Fundraising}

We have noted the strong potential we believe the SFU Institute for Advanced Scholarship will
have for attracting external donations. Equally, or perhaps even more likely, we believe that the
new Environment Faculty that we have conceptualized will be highly attractive to external
fundraising activities as well, perhaps, to new dedicated programs by provincial and national
governments or organizations. We also feel that if the overall recommendations that we have
made, combined with the existing strengths at the University, were packaged together, there
could be a great opportunity for a campaign dedicated to the future of Simon Fraser University: a vision of social responsibility, community engagement, experiential learning, graduate education, research excellence, and leadership. We encourage the Vice-Presidents and Advancement office to explore such a potential.

**What’s Next? Consultation**

We thank you for the time and effort you have spent considering this report of the Task Force and contemplating our recommendations. It is time now, for us to listen to you.

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

Open Forums will be as follows:

**Friday, January 4 (9:00 - 11:00 am) SFU Surrey, Rm 5380**

**Monday, January 7 (1:00 - 3:00 pm) IRMACS Theatre**

**Tuesday, January 8 (1:00 - 3:00 pm) SFU Vancouver, HC Rm 1600**

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

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

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