List of Sample Student Comments by Topic

The following is a list of 500 randomly selected comments provided in answer to the following survey question on the 2007 SFU Undergraduate Student Survey:

“Please discuss any concerns that you may have with regard to your ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE at SFU.”

The comments are separated by topic. In cases where a student’s comment applies to more than one topic, the entire comment is included under all applicable topics. An analysis of these responses is available in Appendix C of the full report, available at:
http://www.sfu.ca/irp/surveys/ugss/index.html

Course Availability

- There is not enough of required classes at different times and the upper division classes do not repeat enough within a year. Most of the film departments equipment is outdated and needs to be brought up to speed with departments like Communication.
- The only problem is regarding course registration. The courses I need to take for my program are full before my registration date!
- I have not been able to get most of my classes and because I work full time, not enough classes are offered through distance education or evening.
- limited class, and class cancellations,
- the classes schedule. for example only one class for calculus 2 class.
- Not always having the courses I want offered in a particular semester.
- Some of the 100 level classes are too big and it’s very difficult to enroll in classes that are required for your degree.
- So far my experience at SFU was a positive one. The only reason for concern is not enough spaces in the classes by the time I am allowed to register in classes that are required for my major.
- The course registrations were a traumatic experience. I found the credit system unorganized and many of the courses I wanted to take filled up too quickly or I could not fit in my schedule because a course from the same faculty was in the way!!
- The Communications program, although it’s absolutely amazing, it’s not very focused, and if I want a more rounded knowledge (for example to take Business, Visual Arts, etc. type of classes I would have to get into those programs or take many prerequisite courses to get into them. Further, there should be some kind of list of which courses to take for a specific direction in Communications, or any subject area for that matter. There is still not enough spaces and too little of a chance to get into the courses that one needs and wants.
- Not getting in to classes hinders my experience because I don’t like/need some of the classes.
- my biggest concern is that I cannot get into classes, especially classes that I need to graduate and that I will delay graduating because of this.
- The selection of classes offered each semester is quite limiting as a required class will only be offered once a year or even once every few years.

1 Comments are reproduced exactly as written by students, except that profanities and references to individuals have been removed. Altered text is in [square brackets].
I am only able to take evening classes. My concern is I may not be able to complete my business degree only taking evening classes. So far I have found classes to take.

I am mostly satisfied with my experience at SFU. However, I have two major concerns: 1) Course programming. I am concerned that required courses are not being offered frequently enough. In addition, there have been cases in which pre-requisites for required courses were offered the semester AFTER the required course. For example: as an Urban Studies student, I must take Geog 441 [Fall rotation]. In order to take 441, however, I must take 362 [Spring rotation]. Because of this strange scheduling, I have had to wait an entire year in order to take 441---in Fall 2008. To make matters worse, I have just learned that 441 will not even be offered next year. This is exactly what I mean by poor course programming. Unless serious concessions are made by my department and substitutions can be made, I may be unable to graduate until 2010 while waiting for a single course to finally be offered. Another issue that is related here is communication with students regarding course programming. I would appreciate it if the department’s tentative course offerings could be made public well in advance. Geography currently posts tentative offerings two semesters ahead. This is not good enough for students who want to truly plan ahead due to co-op semesters, financial reasons, etc. The process of course programming should be more open and should, ideally, involve students constantly. I would like to be able to type a course code into goSFU and be told when it will be offered many semesters in advance—not just 1 or 2. This would be extremely helpful in planning, even if the offerings were ‘highly’ tentative. 2) Quality of TAs. While I have been largely impressed by the quality of professors and sessionals at SFU, the TAs are quite another story. They often have little knowledge of the subject area. I question whether or not those responsible for TAs are matching them up with the appropriate classes to teach. While I have found them generally willing to help, on too many occasions I have felt as if they cannot offer no more expertise than my fellow undergraduate students. Perhaps this is because SFU TA’s [in Arts, at least] are nearly all Master’s students, rather than PhD students. From my discussions with friends at other schools, it seems that other Canadian universities have a much higher percentage of PhD TAs. Thank you for reading.

My concerns are that this new trial run of not having a “waitlist” or allowing professors the discretion of adding a student into their english course is extremely frustrating and inconvenient. Prof’s in the past have been able to add a student to their class based on their graduation needs. Right now, I am waiting to get into 2 classes that are needed in order for my grad in August to be attainable.

Not enough upper division classes offered over a consistent period

Upper division classes offered in kines are sometimes scarce and there needs to be more options per semester

Some courses in the department [GEOG] I’m majoring in aren’t available very often such as Geog 414. It hasn’t been a problem making a full course schedule so far but I am concerned for my last year.

Some courses are not available every semester [Such as math155], some professors keep teaching every semester even though the majority of the students of that specific class agree that he/she is one of the worst profs SFU has[talking about a second year chemistry course]

third year courses are not offered every semester even though they are pre-requisites for higher courses. This ends up us taking less courses since we have to wait till next semester for a particular course and then we can take higher courses. Ultimately more time to graduate.

hard to get into classes
• not being able to enroll in a certain course which was required for transferring into a certain faculty. But that course was mostly reserved for students that were already in that faculty. So I wasn’t able to enroll in it.
• I find it difficult to get into the classes that I need because they are often full before my enrolment appointment.
• not enough lectures per class!! makes the semester tougher when you can’t get the classes you want.
• Certain classes are only available in the fall semester, but often times they can become filled up quickly. More of an effort to create more classes in the spring sem would be helpful, for example physics 120.
• courses are not offered in every semester, and courses that are offered have limited space - making me take courses that I don’t want just to remain a full-time status, inconvenient schedule
• Sometimes hard to get into classes. Classes too big (therefore too often TAs grading work and no rapport is built with professors]
• nothing much. This is my first semester at sfu, so...... But, I like the library in Surrey. My courses are in Burnaby, but I live in Surrey closed to SFU campus, so it is very convinient
• Can’t get in the course I want.
• classes are always full when i try to enroll! it’s very aggravating and annoying. also, there are always more than enough spaces in prerequisite classes, but never enough seats in the classes which YOU TOOK THE PREREQUISITE FOR. either open up more classes, or offer less sections of the prerequisites, so that you don’t keep getting a buildup of students trying to get into the same class!!!!!!!!!!
• Limited Course offerings make it hard to find time for coop. If I miss a course because of coop, i would have to wait a year.
• - Lack of course offerings in summer - Programs should be more stucure in their approach [i.e. sign up for two semesters at a time, advertise when courses are expected to be offered next so that students can plan ahead!]
• The availability of classes has been a huge concern for me, I can’t always get into the classes I need.
• I’ve heard stories regarding choosing classes in the future. I have heard that it gets more difficult to get the courses that you want.
• Hard to get into classes if you transfer from another college
• I think more courses should be offered at the Vancouver Campus.
• I find that there is a limited course selection at SFU, especially in the music department. I wish to major in Economics and Music (Piano) but the courses here focus on digital and contemporary music. I prefer to divert my concentration on baroque, classical, and romantic eras as well.
• Lack of courses to choose from each semester.
• There was definitely a lack of campus life. I struggled with getting into required courses due to lack of seatings and/or was not offered. Therefore, it has set me back in my progress.
• My academic experience at SFU has been very good so far, except for trying to find upper level courses at the downtown campus - the basics are covered well, but there is only a limited selection 300 and 400 lvl - usually no more than one / department.
• Not being able to get into the classes that are required because they are full
• It is IMPOSSIBLE to get all the classes you want.
• the only problems i’ve been having are getting into courses...there are so few biology courses offered each semester, and they fill up so quickly that i’m having trouble working towards my degree
• experience was great. there needs to be more course sections of certain more popular classes (i.e forensics, forensic specialty classes, corporate law/crime etc.)
• Not being able to get classes I want is a main concern.
• - hard to get classes I need/want - disengagement from profs [mostly deal with T.A.s] - prof evaluations don’t seem to produce any concrete results
• some classes are just full so quickly, if people have very late registration date, then they won’t be able to get in the class as they want.
• Course offerings are never great. It’s so hard to make sure you have all the classes you need. Go SFU is really easy to use though.
• Course availability
• I have found that my classes fill up quickly and I am unable to take them.
• It’ll be great if the course offering is more diverse
• Getting the classes that I need.
• Strictly in terms of academics I’ve been very happy with my SFU experience. It would be good if certain required courses were offered more regularly though.
• Some lack of availability with courses.
• scheduling is so difficult of courses, because there are not enough offered/time conflicts.
• Lack of classes for my major in summer semesters
• No real concerns to be mentioned – faculty is great, classes are interesting but I wish there were more sections available for some of the more popular classes.
• more courses need to be available. Hard to graduate on time if need to always wait for courses to be offered.
• Not enough classes available for students in Accounting. Difficult to enroll in those classes, as they are full very quickly.
• Classes tend to fill up far too quickly, especially required courses, but the courses aren’t offered frequently enough, delaying requirement fulfillment by up to a year at times.
• The difficulty of getting into classes that I want sometimes is too frustrating. However hard I study, and try to raise my GPA, I still can’t get into classes I wanted.
• Not enough class options and availability for upper division classes [3rd & 4th year]
• My biology degree is taking quite long to do, but now is taking even longer since MANY of the courses I need to move on are NOT being taught in the spring 07 semester! This sets me back and I am concerned.
• very challenging trying to register for certain courses because they are always full. ex: eng 101
• Not enough available courses
• My largest concern is course availability. I’ve been admitted to SFU, I’ve got a good GPA, but I can rarely take the classes I *want*, much less the ones I *need* to take. Course availability is becoming a huge problem for me - and it’s leading me to question why I chose SFU, and why I stay. Certain courses are only offered once every two or three years - what happens if I want to take them? I miss them one year because they’re full, and I wait two years... by then I should have graduated!
• some classes get full really fast, so I think we should have more spaces available for students, also to increase lab days available to meet each students needs
• There are classes in SIAT that are hard to get in because of the availability of the class. The classes are only available once a year and it is always full.
• Courses are only offered every once in a while and fill up so quickly that it’s impossible to stick to a timeline for graduating. Different advisers give different advice, and those 2 things combined have resulted in my 2 year degree completion taking me nearly 4.
• I and others I know have had terrible academic advising advice. - I have taken Some poorly organized and delivered courses and I have had teachers who have obvious
favourites. - I have often had trouble getting into courses that I wanted even though I have a high GPA and am in a program.

- That it is taking much longer to complete my degree due to not being able to register into the necessary required courses I needed at the beginning.
- Its hard to get into some required classes, sa 201 for example.
- I truly wish that the number of seats in some of the upper level courses could be increased in some way. My GPA is a little above 3.0, which I understand is not spectacular, but it certainly isn’t awful by any means either. I’ve paid many thousands of dollars into SFU and I cringe at that thought when I discover my peers at UBC have no problems getting the classes *they* need or desire for their program. I don’t want to view SFU as simply a means to an end -- I want to be proud of the university I’ve chosen to attend. It’s easy to say “buckle up and get spectacular grades,” but how am I to do that if I’m not passionate about all the courses I enroll in?
- There were not enough classes at the senior level through correspondance or in the evening.
- Many classrooms are full when trying to register for them. There should be increased capacity or increase in classes as there are more and more students attending SFU.
- The lack of upper divisional courses available for certain programs, in addition as this is my second bachelor’s the information regarding such a process is almost impossible to come by and horribly frustrating - if I had known the difficulties I have been dealing with and the lack of assistance I would not have returned
- Some required classes were not offered in certain semesters... information regarding this ahead of time would have been really helpful. Also, many of the changes being made at SFU Surrey were frustrating especially because it is not easy to find this information online in a straightforward manner.
- My main concern with my academic experience at SFU is a lack of classes to choose from in order to meet the needs for my degree. I am interested in taking a variety of classes, which my degree allows me to do, yet, the spots for required third and fourth year English classes are almost always full by the time I get to register.
- sometime, SFU don’t open the courses I want to choose or not have enough seat to choose.
- not enough spaces or classes offered for upper level required courses.
- If I do not get the courses I want, it prolongs the graduation process.
- Course availability- Courses that are required for the completion of my degree are offered infrequently or have extremely small class sizes and therefore renders me unable to enroll in these required classes. For degree requirements, it would be extremely helpful if these class sizes were increased or if these courses were offered in more than one section on campus.
- inability to get all wanted classes is frustrating
- during my first two years, it was difficult for me to register in the courses I needed as prerequisites - I had several professors that I Found to be poor teachers
- There has been a serious lack of courses offered in later years (ie I hear about an exciting 4th year class in first year and then it is not offered at all for the next 3 years)
- I am receiving fairly high grades in my first semester at SFU, and came in with very high grades from BCIT. However I have a later registration date for the next semester and am very concerned that I will not get the classes I want. I also hear a lot of stuff about the lack of availability of popular or need courses. This is of huge concern to me, as I wish to finish my degree in 4 years....not 6 years.
- might not graduate on time with enough credits -class I want to take is full, every other classes is in conflit with my required classes.
availability of classes during registration sometimes
• On occasion I have had TA’s who I have felt did not live up to their job requirements. Many times there can be trouble communicating due to language barriers. In addition the course offerings can be improved, as there are classes which are only offered once every couple of years, making it difficult to graduate on time.
• Too many students, not enough 400 level upper division [sections] courses offered. Hard to get into those classes.
• My main concern is rising tuition costs. I need to work 20+ hours a week to pay and save for school, which become a huge workload on top of my school work. Also, although I think the course registration process has bee drastically improved I still have trouble getting into all of the classes.
• I can’t get into the courses that i want the registration date is not that fair, some people with lower gpa and lower credits than me get to register first
• Courses Registration. It is ver hard to get certain 4th courses. Esp. in the BUS- Accounting area. There are just TOO much students in the faculty and not enough courses offered.
• Semester after semester, I am constantly dissatisfied with the course selection: not enough psyc courses, and when there are, they are at conflicting times.
• I wish I am able to get into the classes that I want, when I want. It’s difficult to do so. This semester I am in a class in which I would appreciate a tutorial section. We were informed by the prof that tutorial sections have been removed due to lack TAs (or funding for them?). That is really just unfortunate.
• Course scheduling - courses for your degree are scheduled at the same time or not offered so you have to put off taking courses and/or delay your graduation date. this is frustrating.
• Course offerings for Film and Video studies at [I wanted it as a minor] are making it so I couldn’t possible do it. Either the courses just aren’t offered or they are and then canceled at the last minute. Every Distance Education course I have taken at SFU [3] have been worse than any one I have taken at another university. The TMs aren’t very helpful, the set-up of the assignments can be unfair, and the fact that most of the final exams are worth 50% of the course is just setting it up for the majority of the students to fail or lower their GPA significantly.
• As a student close to graduation I have a concern with class availability in order to complete degree requirements. Sometimes due to scheduling or availability it’s not possible for students to graduate in the earliest semester.
• It is too hard to get into upper level courses. A bad enrollment date means you won’t get into any of the classes that you wanted to.
• As a Langara transfer student I have learned that I am required to re-take my first and second year Sociology Courses in order to study this field. I also had to take the FAL course...I had just missed by two marks the Literacy Equivalency Exam. I also learned that I was required to take the FAN course as part of my breadth courses. In the summer when I went to register at my appointed time there were no seats available nor did any free up over the registration period. I find myself frustrated and insulted meanwhile by computer generated automatic notices informing I have to take this course yet due to my situation makes absolutely no allowances for my position. In the ensuing period I have had several email communications but with little commitment to resolution. As Simon Fraser apparently wants to cater to a wide audience to garner more prestige I find this conundrum basically appalling. In the communications I have had they quickly relize I am not a gormless nineteen year old, but instead a life in the real world educated 50 year old who consistently wonder if this is the way you run a business?
The per student government funding is a problem that I have seen increase at SFU. The class sizes are getting larger for first and second year courses causing the professor to be more distanced from his or her students using more TAs as middle men. Furthermore, the availability of classes needed for pre-requisites for education were more difficult to acquire than I had hoped.

registration for classes, limited availability of classes (ie: multiple lectures, distance education, etc.), considerable overlap of classes from the same discipline (ie: psychology classes)

Availability of classes, at convenient times (or at all), lack of enrollment priority for open scholarship students

I can’t understand most of my TA’s. It seems like a lot of the professors don’t want to be there. Most of the time, it seems impossible to learn. Courses aren’t offered enough. Spring semester should properly be termed, Winter semester and should have more time off. Spring semester is the worst semester of the three and the most depressing.

There seems to be alot of talking ‘at’ students and not so much ‘with’ students. Some T.A.’s don’t care at all and seem to discourage thoughts that differ from their own. Getting into classes is sometimes difficult...they are full or there is overlap in the timetable (same department and same year courses at the same time)

One of my concerns is the grading scheme which is different from other colleges and universities around and it’s not really fair to students at SFU. The other is the course load. Most of UBC students can easily take 6-7 courses each semester, but here at sfu because of the huge course load most of the students can’t take more than 5-6 courses per semester which will result in graduating later than other students in the same level but other universities. The last one is the course offering which usually you don’t have a choice in taking courses and times, every semester I had problem with course conflicion and having the same time, even though they are all for a particular degree.

I feel that I receive less academic support and pay more in tuition than I did at the two BC colleges I attended. Open geography lab would be a big help. Academic advisors are often unhelpful. Very few African history classes available.

Professors and Instructors

Not enough classes with a hands-on approach. It would be great to have more workshops and such where we can actually use what we’ve learned (I’m in the Arts Program)

I understand that the major responsibility of study in university falls on the students. But as famous as it is, I do not think that SFU has enough professors who can be the “keys” to their students. Take me as an example, I am a fourth year student with more than 100 credits all taken at SFU. But I only found 4 or 5 professors really helpful to my study. Most of the professors certainly know a lot about their fields, the problem is that they do not know how to teach.

The Professors’ teaching styles vary dramatically, which makes it harder to adapt to every semester.

Not too pleased with the caliber of some of my professors.

it seems SFU do not have enough teachers. having one professor teaching four courses in a semester is a common case in business faculty. a lot of students cannot take the core courses because short of faculty and spaces.

Sometimes I feel that the teaching staff are ambivalent to the academic success of the students.

Some teachers still teach in the SIAT program that regularly have received overwhelmingly bad reviews from students - it’s a bit of a concern.
• Some of the instructors do not care about the students or teaching. They feel like they can give a bad lecture just because the purpose for them being at SFU is to do research, not to teach students.

• There’s a lack of choices when it comes to choosing professors. Some courses are taught by only one prof. I understand that they may have tenure but surely they can rotate to teach other courses once in a while.

• I do not appreciate the new and inexperienced instructors. They do not know how to teach in an understandable fashion and have unreasonable expectations on the exams.

• I feel not comfortable to speak up in class.

• The course instructors for 3rd and 4th year engineering courses are sometimes very unexperienced and young wich ends up in students not learing anything. That is a major issue.

• Some professors are very poor in organizing their notes and are lack of preparing for lectures materials. Not very responsible for their students.

• I find the som professors may be knowledgalbe but dont know how to convey that knowlege unto us as students. Especially in business we get many professors using premade powerpoints given to them buy publishing companies. this, i find, makes them for mor erelaxed in class but sometimes it seems like they haven’t even understood some of the material on the slides. This makes some courses frustrating and some lectures impertenent to attend because the lecture slides are available online and i might as well just read over them mysef on my own time.

• SFU should start hiring TA’s who actually speak ENGLISH!! I think that this is very important..it also seems that a lot of SFU professors don’t know how to teach! I find that I pay tuition for nothing and I always end up teaching myself everything! And please start reducing the prices of books, sometimes we don’t even use the books!! And the fact that the bookstore doesn’t buyback certain books is just ridiculous..i guess school has just become one big business..we dont’ learn anything but we spend a lot of money on that!

• The SFU [*****] program professor [*****] is disrespectful to his students and doesn’t model appropriate behaviour to students, and I feel it is a travesty that he is paid to educate us academically and that nothing has been done to make sure our educators are held accountable for being responsible.

• 1. When I took math [***] in fall 2006 at the burnaby campus, I felt that the instructor was not qualified to teach the class. Her explanations were not clear and students in the class were constantly pointing out mistakes in her examples. I felt that I had to hire a private tutor in order to pass the course. After the tutor spent only a few hours explaining the material to me, I understood all it much better. I was disappointed that an SFU professor was unable to explain the subject matter in a clear and understandable manner. 2. I sometimes find that it is hard to get help in quantitative courses when I don’t understand the material. Despite the fact that some quantitative courses have workshops, the workshops are often very crowded which makes it difficult to get help.

• Most teachers are selected because of their research and not their teaching capabilities, which makes classes very frustrating. Statistics T.A.s in the statistics lab are not able to answer questions. Every class should have it’s own T.A. Statistic labs where T.A.s help with every class is NOT efficient because they do not know enough to help with every class. The Environmental Science program should be expanded into its own department.

• too many poor teachers

• Some profs dont seem approachable
• Need to have professors that can explain the material in such a way that does not expect a previous background in the subject. In other words, don’t explain it as though we are also experts in the field.

• Some profs know their stuff, but they can’t teach it very well. For example, Professor [****] with MACM [***].

• Some professors are not so helpful when students have questions.

• Certain professors test us on questions that are very different from what was taught during class time, or require too much detailed in the answers for the test. Detailed answer is good but to the point where u have to remember statitics and calculate it is ridiculous unless it is for a statistic class. And it’s not like we only have one course to study for. As a result it discourage students because they felt that their studying came to a waste.

• My first year chemistry and precalculus professors are terrible. It’s almost as though they’re intentionally trying to weed students out. They are both rude, disrespectful to students, give murky and unhelpful explanations for when students are confused and the chem prof tends to be sarcastic when people ask questions in the lecture. I’m a mature student, I’ve been to university and I’ve also taught esl, and I can say, with out a doubt, these first year chemistry and precalculus profs are the worst teachers I have ever had to put up with. I learn more by staying at home and studying alone; going to their lectures only leads to more confusion rather than disambiguation.

• I hate go sfu. The help for it is ridiculous. Also some of the profs should be asked who they think they are teaching? We’re not grad students. Were undergrads.

• I am in the Cohort 11 of the LBS program and I am having great concern with some of the instructors that we get - I understand we why we have people who are experienced in their line of work, but unfortunately they are not experienced in teaching adults so I sometimes wonder just how much my degree will be worth.

• The style of teaching and the arrangement of the context.

• There are too many underqualified instructors teaching courses, especially lower level courses. Instructors should be mostly professors, and if they are not professors, they should have very strong academic resumes, and have strong teaching skills. Class sizes are also too large in the lower levels.

• Course expectations are not consistent. Many courses are taught by people without PhDs.

• Most of my instructors/professors are very good, but there have been a few questionable ones. I do provide feedback in the comment sheets.

• Some professors are somewhat incompetent at educating students.

• Everything is good. I am happy here.... Just some of teacher either dont know the subjets they teach or don;t know how to teach.

• There is room for improvement in the my field of studies (Finance in The Faculty of Business). Our reputation is summarized in the following paraphrase from an industry recruiter: “A Finance grad student at SFU does not even have the skills of a third year Finance student at UBC.” Although, I am a undergraduate, this message clearly conveys the reputation of the SFU Finance program. During my enrollment in the program, I have had two SFU PhD Students as Professors (something that I am not proud of). Both lacked industry experience and one was unable to convey the concepts of the course. My 400 level professors are much better, but nonetheless I still feel that they are unable to help students improve their ability to think.

• Some professors seem more focused on seeing how fast we can complete a midterm, or how many formulas we can memorize, than on whether or not we’ve actually learned or understood the material.
• I have found many prof’s to be extremely biased - especially towards religion. This has bothered me to a great degree as not only has it hurt myself and other classmates personally, but often it has made us feel less [as in our opinions aren’t as valued and we are not as valued as individuals] because something so important to us has been rolled through the dirt - so to say.

• Quality of instruction in my department [Economics] is uneven. It’s not that it is bad in general, it’s just that some of it is.

• This is my first semester at SFU, and to be honest I was really disappointed by one of my professors. I found him to be unorganized... for example he changed the course syllabus three times, he doesn’t communicate with the TA, he tells us we don’t have a tutorial but the TA thinks we do? The entire class is a joke the average mark on the midterm was 50% I studied for days and received 70%??? That was the worst written test I have ever taken, it was if he wasn’t even aware of what he had been teaching us? My other two classes are better, i just hope this isn’t a pattern! I just feel that if I am paying $2,000 a semester that I should have some way of dealing with a situation like this, I should be ensured at the very least a competent instructor! My only real concern is the lack of teacher accountability to the students.

• Well, nothing really. I am satisfied with my experience so far. I just wish the professors are more passionate about what they teach.

• I can’t understand most of my TA’s. It seems like a lot of the professors don’t want to be there. Most of the time, it seems impossible to learn. Courses aren’t offered enough. Spring semester should properly be termed, Winter semester and should have more time off. Spring semester is the worst semester of the three and the most depressing.

• There seems to be a lot of talking ‘at’ students and not so much ‘with’ students. Some T.A.’s don’t care at all and seem to discourage thoughts that differ from their own. Getting into classes is sometimes difficult...they are full or there is overlap in the timetable [same department and same year courses at the same time]

• Many professors are not capable communicators. The lectures are incomprehensible, and they do not know how to interact with students appropriately. Some TAs are incapable of teaching.

• Some courses are not available every semester[ Such as math155], some professors keep teaching every semester even though the majority of the students of that specific class agree that he/she is one of the worst pros SFU has[talking about a second year chemistry course]

• Overall I have had a good experience the one thing that threw me off is that as a business student I pay really high tuition fees and as such I expect excellent teaching. My [*****] prof, although she is very knowledgeable in the field, uses the same teaching plan, overheads, and examples that she has used I think since the early 1990’s. I believe that if I am expected to pay such high tuition fees and expected to achieve academic excellence I should be able to trust SFU to provide me with a recent, reliable, and relevant academic experience. With this one prof I feel that has not happened.

• I feel that it has been somehow trivialized by my experiences with life and almost regret coming here now. Not because I do not value a liberal education but because I find a liberal educator harder and harder to come across, and the rat race of grade chasing has left me exhausted and unsatisfied. Please seek an essential change in your institution. Even though I know this will be disregarded.

• my worst experience so far is through a few of the TA’s, they do not seem to be well trained, and some, as well as the pros, are very very difficult to understand due to language
I would like some knowledge as to how the registration dates are chosen as they don't often make a lot of sense. Also it would be nice to see some measure of control over who is allowed to teach as, while there are some very wonderful professors at SFU, there are some really awful ones too. Some recognition of this would be nice.

Trimester system results in convergence of assignments within about a week of each other. This is very difficult for upper level students focusing on graduate school. Some professors seem not to care about quality of lecture notes, just read from the textbook.

- hard to get classes I need/want - disengagement from profs [mostly deal with T.A.s] - prof evaluations don’t seem to produce any concrete results
- lack of interaction between students and professor. lack of ability to choose correct classes due to distant enrollment date.
- Bus [*****] is not a good course. Marking is too hard. Prof and TA are not helpful.

There are a few concerns with regards to the academic experience at SFU. First, many of the TAs seem to lack interest in their particular assigned class, or simply don’t seem qualified to teach. Second, professors often gloss over or only loosely touch on certain points, or even refuse to elaborate on certain subjects. Although the material may not be strictly significant to the topic at hand, and time restrictions also apply in lecture, there is often enough time to explain certain points, or else they should not encourage questions to be asked. Third, there is far too much emphasis put on the exams and “just passing” courses. I’m sure that many people know and agree that a grade does not so often accurately reflect intelligence or other characteristics of a person. A true student would be much more interested in gathering knowledge and experience than simply possessing a piece of paper, as a degree is so often reduced to being. There is no justification for saying “don’t worry” about something because such material will not appear on any exam; people come to university to learn as much as possible (especially considering that most of them pay a significant amount for it), and everyone should do their best to uphold that view.

First, classes are offered only sporadically and classes in political theory are seriously neglected by SFU; I suppose this is my fault - I never would have come to SFU had I checked it out a little more prodigiously before instead of just taking my college profs’ word for it that SFU was the most progressive institution and could offer me what I wanted. Second, most of my classes [300 and 400 level course] are being taught by sessional profs. I have a problem with this for three reasons. First, I plan to go to grad school, and as such, I will require letters of recommendation; it is well known that you letters from sessional profs are not as valued as letters from tenured profs. If most of my profs are sessional profs, that makes it pretty [*****] hard to build a rapport with a tenured prof and obtain the required letters of recommendation. Second, I have two sessional profs that I find are brilliant profs - yet they have been sessionals for quite a while. Because of their [*****] pay, they must teach about 2-3 times as much as a tenured prof just to get an (ALMOST) decent wage, and therefore these two profs have admitted to me, that their ability to teach a course is severely compromised. They both do excellent jobs, but I notice it regarding their office hours - I don’t blame them if they can’t justify it to themselves to bring themselves to have a lot of office hours for what they are getting paid. And third, despite this, student fees are going up and have gone up and funding for other things on campus has been cut back. So you can say, yes, I am very disappointed with SFU. And after I get a few articles into the student newspaper, hopefully a lot more students will be too - like [*****] I’m going to pay all this money for substandard education and then not say anything about it.

during my first two years, it was difficult for me to register in the courses I needed as prerequisites - I had several professors that I Found to be poor teachers
• 1. TA’s lack of ability to communicate course materials to students effectively, as well as, their ways of marking students’ assignments unfairly and not justified. For three semesters in a row, I get TA’s that can’t teach students at all. And yet, they are still able to teach. Why? How? It’s ridiculous. I also got TA’s giving students rude remarks about their assignments, the same assignments that they have spent days even weeks on. I feel that respect for students’ work never existed in the first place at SFU. I also feel that TA’s are expecting all students to write master-degree papers instead of ones that are suitable for the level of courses that they are taking. It’s absurd! Unbelievable.

2. Professors and lecturers that go way off topic and ramble on and on. Students spent their money to learn, but all we got (quite frequently) were disorganized lectures and horrible exams that didn’t tell us that: “Hey! You are actually learning these materials for yourself!” Right now, students at SFU are studying FOR the grades and FOR the MARKERS who are overly critical about the assignments. We, as students, do not learn for OURSELVES anymore. Why has SFU become this way? I have no idea. All I know is that TA’s are getting worse and worse. Perhaps SFU should maintain a better standard in terms of choosing the right students to become TA’s. Just because they have better grades that doesn’t mean they have good characters and justified perspective on course materials and assignments.

• I and others I know have had terrible academic advising advice. - I have taken Some poorly organized and delivered courses and I have had teachers who have obvious favourites. - I have often had trouble getting into courses that I wanted even though I have a high GPA and am in a program.

Course Scheduling
• Many Business Courses are offered during the same time slot, making it difficult for us to build a schedule
• scheduling classes can be difficult between different campus’s
• A lot of classes that I need to take have all these conflicting times, so it takes a lot longer to finish prerequisites.
• Registration in some business courses (namely Accounting and Finance) in terms of conflicts in class and exam schedules.
• The biggest issue I find is that the popular classes in communication tend to be scheduled at the same time as each other.
• I work during the day, and one of the classes I need is not offered evenings or by distance education.
• My major concern is that no upper division chemistry courses are offered in the summer semesters. This year, only Chem 360 and 380 are offered. I am approaching graduation, and will be slowed down because of this. The university offers the trimester system, but then offers no classes in one of the semesters.
• Final exam scheduling. Faculty courses conflicting in HSCI so you is impossible to take essential courses at the same time.
• I spent two years struggling to get all the courses I needed and wanted to take and now all of a sudden there are many that I would like to enroll in and I don’t have the time or the space remaining in my academic career to be able to take any of them. I also feel that some of the prerequisite requirements for upper division courses should be revisited because I am in my fourth year and for the first time I feel like I’ve been thrown off the deep end. The majority of upper division classes in cmns seem to be taught by sessional instructors and grad students, instead of pros, and it is making it really hard for me to apply to grad school.
- There are a lot of conflicting courses if you try and take classes in two or more faculties. The required GPA has drop by a huge amount since I got accepted 6 years ago and I am worried it will de-value my degree.
- Courses should have more than one lecture/ seminar time for students to pick from. All classes should be recorded and made available online, not just selected ones.
- I am a student of SFU’s Contemporary Art Department (in Visual Art) and the majority of my classes are downtown at either Harbour Centre or the largely unknown Alexander Centre. This semester I have two courses that I must take in order to continue with a major in the Visual Arts discipline, one of which is at the Alexander Centre and the other immediately afterwards at the Burnaby Campus. Getting back up to the Burnaby Mountain campus this semester has proved to be more difficult than it really needs to be, in my opinion. Also, with such difficulties in getting to the Burnaby Mountain Campus on time for an imperative class does hinder my academic experience since I occasionally do end up missing the first few minutes of class. So, I suggest that the 135 transit bus from downtown to SFU’s Burnaby campus has a stop at Princess Street and E. Hastings, which is en route for the bus and is also closest to another Simon Fraser University Campus.
- 4 out of 5 final exams have been scheduled in the early evening this term. 3 of these will require me to take time off work. It would be nice if the exam times could reflect the course times during the semester so that people who work to support themselves do not get punished for doing so.
- scheduling of exams especially for science courses isn't fair at all. It is always at the beginning of exams for example physics, pretty much all mbb classes etc and they all tend to be around the same week. Why? Whereas arts classes have way more time to study. Students who are writing english exams do not need 3 weeks to study for their exam. Just my opinion.
- Semester after semester, I am constantly dissatisfied with the course selection: not enough psyc courses, and when there are, they are at conflicting times.
- I have trouble selecting a class schedule that works due to the fact that courses are offered at harbour centre and in burnaby. for example, there is one class i want to take next semester at harbour centre from 930 to 1120 and another at burnaby that starts at 1130 the same day. of course i can’t get from one campus to the next in 10 minutes! i think all undergrad courses should be taught at burnaby. one campus, one university.
- Not enough classes are offered at night. For example, French classes are only offered during the day, preventing me from completing my degree in a timely manner.
- Course scheduling - courses for your degree are scheduled at the same time or not offered so you have to put off taking courses and/or delay your graduation date. this is frustrating.
- As a student close to graduation I have a concern with class availability in order to complete degree requirements. Sometimes due to scheduling or availability it’s not possible for students to graduate in the earliest semester.
- too many CRIM classes offered at the same time...would be nice to have classes other than just Mon - Wed.
- conflict of core courses offered in BIO
- It's not very helpful to someone like me who has to work full time right now while going to school. In CS most classes start between 11:30 and 2:30. I can’t find a full time job that would allow me to work and go to school when classes are at those times. The classes need to be shifted earlier or later in the day so that I could work the other half of the day. There aren't enough classes offered either by distance ed or in the evenings for me to get my degree in a resonable time
• Class times need to be changed periodically so that people who consistently have other obligations at that time can still take that course.
• Course selections are a hassle, especially since its right in the middle of midterm season.
• SFU is horrible. It is extremely unorganized and core classes are offered at the same time on the same days. Whoever decides this obviously doesn’t care about students and they should because students are what keeps SFU running. I have enjoyed my classes but always dread registration.
• First, classes are offered only sporadically and classes in political theory are seriously neglected by SFU; I suppose this is my fault - I never would have come to SFU had I checked it out a little more prodigiously before instead of just taking my college profs’ word for it that SFU was the most progressive institution and could offer me what I wanted. Second, most of my classes (300 and 400 level course) are being taught by sessional profs. I have a problem with this for three reasons. First, I plan to go to grad school, and as such, I will require letters of recommendation; it is well known that you letters from sessional profs are not as valued as letters from tenured profs. If most of my profs are sessional profs, that makes it pretty hard to build a rapport with a tenured prof and obtain the required letters of recommendation. Second, I have two sessional profs that I find are brilliant profs - yet they have been sessionals for quite a while. Because of their pay, they must teach about 2-3 times as much as a tenured prof just to get an (almost) decent wage, and therefore these two profs have admitted to me, that their ability to teach a course is severely compromised. They both do excellent jobs, but I notice it regarding their office hours - I don’t blame them if they can’t justify it to themselves to bring themselves to have a lot of office hours for what they are getting paid. And third, despite this, student fees are going up and have gone up and funding for other things on campus has been cut back. So you can say, yes, I am very disappointed with SFU. And after I get a few articles into the student newspaper, hopefully a lot more students will be too - like I’m going to pay all this money for substandard education and then not say anything about it.
• I am going to have to go to school here for five years - not because that’s how long it will take for me to get credits, but that’s how long it will take for me to get all the classes in my major done because of scheduling. I WAS going to do a double major with archaeology and anthropology, but two of the classes I need for both - an introductory arch class, ARCH 131 and Intro to Sociology - are scheduled at the exact same time on the same day. I ended up not registering for any Anthropology/Sociology classes in the Spring 2008 semester because of scheduling conflicts (multiple - there were three other courses I wanted to take that all conflicted with one another). I understand that scheduling conflicts are a reality of life, but I am not the only Arch/Anthro student who had this problem.
• class schedule
• For a lot of the required courses as listed in the calendar, many had exams on the same day which increased stress.
• I major in Psychology and course availability is a big issue - I always major trouble registering for courses that I am interested in. I don’t think it’s fair to tell students to just register for any course either. We pay for our education and we should be able to choose what we want to take.
• class overlap
• The required classes for your degree should be offered every semester, not just in one particular semester. Due to this I have to wait another semester to graduate.
• Certain classes, are only available in the fall semester, but often times they can become filled up quickly. More of an effort to create more classes in the spring sem would be helpful, for example physics 120.

• doesn’t seem that teacher assistants are chosen on the basis of their knowledge: ex: a philosophy TA that’s really a polisci major??? tutorial marks are SUFFERING because of his false beliefs and teachings!!! also: courses that are now offered in surrey aren’t offered in burnaby!!! how am i supposed to complete my degree if i can’t take required courses at burnaby?? - i have more than one course at bby and ONE at surrey that are 10 minutes apart??!!!

• classes are always full when i try to enroll! it’s very aggravating and annoying. also, there are always more than enough spaces in prerequisite classes, but never enough seats in the classes which YOU TOOK THE PREREQUISITE FOR. either open up more classes, or offer less sections of the prerequisites, so that you don’t keep getting a build up of students trying to get into the same class!!!!!!!!!!!!

• - Lack of course offerings in summer - Programs should be more structure in their approach [i.e. sign up for two semesters at a time, advertise when courses are expected to be offered next so that students can plan ahead!]

• scheduling is so difficult of courses, because there are not enough offered/time conflicts.

• Classrooms in new ASSC building have horrible acoustics. Upper division classes for archaeology should be more spread out. ie. lots of classes conflict with each so that you can only take one Why is archaeology and anthropology two separate faculties? in 99% of other universities they are together.

• might not graduate on time with enough credits -class I want to take is full, every other classes is in conflict with my required classes.

• There is not enough of required classes at different times and the upper division classes do not repeat enough within a year. Most of the film departments equipment is outdated and needs to be brought up to speed with departments like Communication.

• The course registrations were a traumatic experience. I found the credit system unorganized and many of the courses I wanted to take filled up too quickly or I could not fit in my schedule because a course from the same faculty was in the way!!

• registration for classes, limited availability of classes [i.e: multiple lectures, distance education, etc.], considerable overlap of classes from the same discipline [i.e: psychology classes]

• Availability of classes, at convenient times [or at all], lack of enrollment priority for open scholarship students

• There seems to be alot of talking ‘at’ students and not so much ‘with’ students. Some T.A.’s don’t care at all and seem to discourage thoughts that differ from their own. Getting into classes is sometimes difficult...they are full or there is overlap in the timetable [same department and same year courses at the same time]

Registration Process/goSFU

• Twice I have had bad experiences with SFU and their Academic Resource Office. The first time was when my LPI score was not correctly posted and credited towards my English marks. Which caused me to not be able to enroll into any English classes. When the problem was finally fixed, it was already too late, as all the 100 level English classes were full causing me to wait one whole semester before I could take an English course. The second time when I went to pay my $100 deposit fee at the counter at the SFU Burnaby campus [one week in advance before my enrollment date], the person at the counter at the time typed in the wrong student number and credited the wrong account. I
did not realize the problem until my enrollment appointment and wondered why I could not enroll. Causing all me to not be able to enroll in many of my mandatory courses in the process and pushing back my expected year of graduation further away.

- Sometimes I find the course lists are not very detailed. For example I find myself planning a program of study, then when I attempt to register for a course, it says that I have to complete other courses that I am already registered for or had planned to take in the future. There was no clear indication.

- So far my experiences have been pretty good. The only thing I thoroughly dislike is the registration system since I couldn’t get into courses that I do have the prerequisites for. When an advisor tried to help and bypass the system since I had the prerequisites, we found that the bypasses don’t work anymore! Very frustrating and I wish someone would do something about it.

- I am quite happy with my experience thus far, and have no complaints yet, except for those concerning enrollment appointments. I would like to know the exact reasons/hierarchy in which students are given dates and times. I’ve had enough of the myths!

- Concerns include the cost of tuition, which seems to be increasing every semester. Furthermore, it seems registration dates have no structured system when assigned; letting students know how course enrollment dates are assigned would be helpful.

- There is often a lack of information on WebCT in regards to the courses I am taking.

- Registering for classes is a terrible experience. On a good semester I have received about 50% of the classes I wanted.

- I keep getting a crappy enrollment date.

- Being waitlisted for courses - not enough prof to Student contact.

- Withdrawal date needs to be extended.

- Great variability in faculty teaching quality in the BBA program - the registration system is inefficient and flawed - great variability in level of English (written and spoken) proficiency amongst students in all my classes, especially 4XX-level Business.

- Last year my registration date was near the end of the registration period and as a result I was not able to take the courses that I wanted and have been delayed in my program. This is despite the fact that my GPA was very high.

- The entire course registration system. Some of the prerequisites for my degree (SIAT/Business) don’t seem valuable.

- The only problem I’ve ever really had is registration dates, and since this is my last semester it’s not really true anymore. That and I got a good one - that I don’t need - for next semester!

- I would like some knowledge as to how the registration dates are chosen as they don’t often make a lot of sense. Also it would be nice to see some measure of control over who is allowed to teach as, while there are some very wonderful professors at SFU, there are some really awful ones too. Some recognition of this would be nice.

- In second and third year, my late registration date made getting into classes impossible.

- My only concern is regarding wait lists for certain classes. I think there should be an assigned number of seats for students in a given program and for students applying from an interdisciplinary standpoint. If classes are required for a student’s graduation from a program, that student should have first pick on those classes.

- I really don’t understand the registration time schedule system. I have three terms in a row gotten placed at the end of the registration and have each time had difficulty getting the classes I wanted.

- Bad schedule dates. It's so late that I can’t get any classes.
• I can’t get into the courses that I want the registration date is not that fair, some people with lower GPA and lower credits than me get to register first.

• Courses Registration. It is very hard to get certain 4th courses. Esp. in the BUS-Accounting area. There are just TOO much students in the faculty and not enough courses offered.

• I hate how my wait-listed course was removed from my class list without me even knowing, resulting in me attending a class that I wasn’t even enrolled in.

• Lack of interaction between students and professor. Lack of ability to choose correct classes due to distant enrollment date.

• When applying for classes, SFU has gotten my old transcript and not my new one at least 3 times, causing me to have trouble enrolling in classes.

• It is too hard to get into upper level courses. A bad enrollment date means you won’t get into any of the classes that you wanted to.

• Registration dates have been bad for all four of my years at SFU. I would recommend sending out a reminder to people to pay their $100 enrollment fee, as a number of people forget. Expensive, bad-quality food provided by Chartwell’s.

• Prerequisites are NOT recognized on gosfu causing large headaches in registration.

• Registration for classes, limited availability of classes (ie: multiple lectures, distance education, etc.), considerable overlap of classes from the same discipline (ie: psychology classes).

• Availability of classes, at convenient times (or at all), lack of enrollment priority for open scholarship students.

• I had an 4-Credits F in one of my Computer Science course in my 1st year. I retook the course afterward and passed it with C, but it takes a time period of almost 3 semester to have the transcript to replace the F with the C. Due to the F credits, my GPA was dragged down a bit and delay for me to get my major declared.

• When registering for courses, it is unfair that I have to register so late, I fear that the classes I need to take will be full.

• I’m not a scholarship student. I missed the percentage required by half a percentage. My registration date is more than two weeks after those who are on scholarship and I don’t think it’s fair that my academic experience is being put in jeopardy because the school isn’t paying for my education. I am paying for it myself and I feel I should have equal chance at getting into the classes I need.

• Placement of transfer students at the end of registration, following their first term, regardless of their GPA.

• There is enrollment concern. For instance, my enrollment appointment date is very late and the courses I want are likely to be full.

• The enrollment process, since the change to only making class times and descriptions available on weblink, it has made it increasingly difficult to choose. Teaching assistants have also been poorly regulated.

• The system for enrollment in courses is confusing, unclear, and frustrating at best. Perhaps an “idiot proof” system is needed to make this task easier.

• Registration dates are too hectic, a lot of people can’t get the courses that they want to.

• The only problem is regarding course registration. The courses I need to take for my program are full before my registration date!

• The course registrations were a traumatic experience. I found the credit system unorganized and many of the courses I wanted to take filled up too quickly or I could not fit in my schedule because a course from the same faculty was in the way!!

• There is a lack of scholarships available to high achieving students. I have a 4.3 GPA and am not eligible for any scholarships. That is very discouraging. I also take issue with
enrolment dates and waitlists for classes and programs. I know that there have to be limits, and that there has to be some way of determining who gets to enrol first, but it really leaves those of us with late enrolment dates hanging. I also find the criteria and number of seats available for PDP to be too strict. They are turning a lot of good potential teachers away because of this. The fact that one has to have so many volunteer hours, but other time spent with kids in another kind of teaching environment (workshops, working with kids overseas, tutoring etc) is not counted tells me that this is just a scam for schools to get free labour from potential teaching students. The application is also misleading, as it says any experience with kids is counted. I later found out that this is not the case at all. I’m very disappointed and may not apply again.

- Concerns that have existed during my undergraduate experience include infrastructure safety issues (building maintenance and replacement), poor service and processing efficiency in the enrollment and admissions department of student services, the lack of dedicated research servers and mainframes for tenured lecturers and research centres along with the disappointment that the CSD doesn’t provide learning assistance for those with psychological (not learning) disorders.

**Course Content/Workload**

- Distance Ed is BRUTAL.
- Need a higher academic standard-- the demand for excellence doesn’t seem to be here.
- I think all courses/units should implement the use of WebCT. I have 2 courses that do not use WebCT at all. One does, but the class communicates via yahoo email. I find it difficult having to check messages here and there, if it was compulsory for all units to use WebCT as a form of communication FOR ALL COURSES it would make it so much easier. I am taking one fundamentals course and i think the course material is WAY too hard and advanced for an electives course. Some classmates and even the tutor agrees. I think the unit needs to be revised and simplified.
- I feel that the prominence of multiple choice exams on tests at SFU merely test how much information an individual can remember... Multiple choice exams do not allow for critical thinking amongst a wide array of topics, issues etc. I realize these tests make it easier for the professor and TAs to mark, but they are getting paid to provide an education, and I am paying to have them teach me.
- Some courses taken at SFU are a waste of money and time ... to complete undergrad degree.
- I find there are a lot of classes that seem to be a genuine waste of time to attend. I’d rather have a more condensed class then have to come all the way up the mountain for a class where nothing is accomplished.
- Not being able to cope with a large course load and work at the same time.
- How my academic instruction compares to other institutions.
- The workload, especially in first year is overwhelming. Additionally course content is packed into lectures, not enough time to fully absorb and comprehend. Tests do not always represent what was taught in class. For example in mathematics, statistics, economics, etc. concepts maybe be discussed in class but then the use of all the concepts in one problem is asked on tests and its not comparable to anything done in review sessions or packages.
- Some courses have too much workloads (readings, assignments, etc). Bell-cuvred for business courses make class more competitive
- I think there should be more consistency in the way different professors teach a specific course. Sometimes it feels like a course is a whole different beast depending on
who is teaching it that semester. I think this is particularly obvious with CMPT courses,
CMPT-371 comes to mind. 2 - Sometimes there is too much overlapping of material in
some courses, the professor ends up dedicating 1-2-3 lectures teaching or reviewing
some material that all students should have learned in one of the pre-requisite courses,
but did not for some reason. I think adding pre-requisite for some courses might help,
just so the professor can be sure of what students know. Consistency in teaching the pre-
requisite courses would also help [see point 1].

• The only main concern I’ve had is being teamed up with individuals who don’t contribute
their fair share. More peer evaluations. It sucks when I do the majority of the work and
my team gets the same mark no matter how little they contribute.

• I think it would be great if distance education courses provided audio or video of the
weekly lectures. This could be available online. Lectures allow you to get a better feel for
what the instructor is focusing on. I really feel we are missing out on this.

• Some professors teaches unnecessary materials which are not examinable.

• Trimester system results in convergence of assignments within about a week of each
other. This is very difficult for upper level students focusing on graduate school. Some
professors seem not to care about quality of lecture notes, just read from the textbook.

• i am first nations and failing at sfu. we do not learn like europeans through reading
textbooks, the films are better and i take lots of notes.

• I feel some some of the programs are too theory-oriented instead of practical. For
example, in the business marketing program, I feel we should learn more about how to
use programs like InDesign and how to launch an ad campaign in class.

• IAT 233 seems to have far too much information crammed into the one course. It has
given more work than my four other courses combined thus far.

• There is a lot of material covered in three months and sometimes it’s hard to digest it all
before getting tested. Something else that I must mention here is that I go to school to
learn, but my health is harmed every time I go to school. There is not ONE day that I can
go to school without getting second hand smoke. What’s the point of all those no
smoking signs (even specifying a fine) when there’s nobody to enforce it. Those smokers
are slowly MURDERING people a bit each day.

• The only problem that I have encountered so far which has really upset me has been the
experience i have had with my Kinesiology [*****] Distance Education course. I am not
enjoying the way that the page numbers have not been updated on the study notes or the
different parts of the assignments. We are using the third edition and all the page
references that have been given are for the second edition. I think this is something very
important to doing well in the course and I believe that this should have been something
that was properly corrected before the start of the course in August rather than having
students continuously asking our T.A. to update page numbers.

• SFU doesn’t recognize that many students are working many hours a week and the school
workload of some courses are far too much.

• Some classes seem to try to pack in too much material, so that you don’t have a chance
to really learn the most important concepts.

• Some of the courses aiming first year student and which should be introductory, real
beginners are somehow treated like outsiders

• I’m feeling some of the courses offered in the third/fourth year don’t promise me a good
look in my portfolio. Sometimes I feel what I’m learning is useless, but what I learned in
my spare time is useful.

• I am a 2nd year science student at SFU, and I find that the material covered in our first
year science courses contains too much review from high school. As a result, we lag
behind other institutions such as UBC in terms of the topics we cover.
• academic classes such as biology pass too fast in a short period of time with little understanding of materials and hard questions in the test. not enough help with understanding the materials.
• It seems teacher don’t have strict enough guidelines. You can take a class with one teacher and do double the work as of you had taken same class with another teacher. Need more rules to keep education fair for all.
• In the PDP Education program, I’m concerned that students are sent to their first practicum without practical skills such as lesson planning and unit planning, and assessment and evaluation skills. Teachers in the schools are very surprised we have not been taught these before we arrive for practicums.
• It was a lot different then highschool, there is a lot more things you have to learn in a shorter period of time.
• courses
• I think more hands on experiences are needed. Essential computer and software skill would make SFU students more marketable compare to college graduates. Overall, the experience at SFU have been great so far.
• large inconsistency in degree of difficulty within courses of the same yr. (example 300 level)
• Life at SFU is so hard. Too much stress, extremely heavy workload.
• I am an exchange student, and I had some problems with Enlgish, keeping up with the class.
• I have not had a satisfying experience at SFU so far. I feel that I am not getting my money’s worth. I pay $1500 for four months and the institution still expects me to do most of the work and still funnels money from me through textbooks, student materials and parking. On top of this, I don’t even feel I’m getting quality education. The course content feels too watered down and chopped up into as many courses as possible for me to pay for, and I’ve had much better teachers in high school.
• One of my concerns is the grading scheme which is different from other colleges and universities around and it’s not really fair to students at SFU. The other is the course load. Most of UBC students can easily take 6-7 courses each semester, but here at sfu because of the huge course load most of the students can’t take more than 5-6 courses per semester which will result in graduating later than other students in the same level but other universities. The last one is the course offering which usually you don’t have a choice in taking courses and times, every semester I had problem with course confliction and having the same time, eventhough they are all for a particular degree.
• - some TA’s don’t speak English fluently [they should do more marking and less teaching in tutorials] - most science lectures are filled with way too much information; studies have shown that most students forget most of what is taught in a science lectu
• I don’t like the fact that admission requirements seem to keep dropping for my faculty [Engineering]. It seems every year since I started we are admitting lower quality applicants by virtue of decreasing the required grade point average. Ultimately this devalues my degree by lowering the reputation of our school with employers who hire these people through co-op and full time. My other major concern is with the way a lot of material has been presented to us throughout the years, particularly in the case of Mathematics and Computing Science. In the case of Mathematics, the faculty approaches the subject matter by methods which are quite dry and do not emphasize the beauty, importance, and applicability of much of the material. This is particularly true with the Linear Algebra and Differential Equations courses we had to take. It’s not until I’ve enrolled in a graduate level Engineering course this semester that I’ve been able to appreciate the usefulness of everything I learned 3 years ago, which could easily have
been taught to us at that time! I know that some of my professors have approached the mathematics department in this regard numerous times and even suggested books they could be using, but have always been rejected. As for Computing Science, the problem is of a different nature. Many of the 100 and 200 level courses such as the [***************], [******************, and [***************]] courses are taught by lecturers or professors who seem to have, to put it bluntly, no attachment to reality. As someone who has extensively studied these subjects in their own time and worked extensively in industry, I know that what these people are teaching is often just plain wrong. Sometimes the methods they teach students are outdated, often times they’re not best practices, and other times the facts are just incorrect. While to me this often served as merely a source of amusement, I’m sure the majority of students who are not as involved in the discipline and are being exposed to the material for the first time take it as gospel. This has to be stopped. It’s producing a crop of students who upon reaching higher levels of their degree, or perhaps even beyond, have no idea about the right way to do things. Any serious researcher or computing professional would surely laugh at them. Please change this!

- My main concern is rising tuition costs. I need to work 20+ hours a week to pay and save for school, which become a huge workload on top of my school work. Also, although I think the course registration process has bee drastically improved I still have trouble getting into all of the classes.

**TAs**

- The teaching ability of some TA’s has thus far been questionable with there being a lack of viable communication. Some of the TA’s have had such little ability to communicate the material that they it resulted in having to sit on another tutorial all semester long simply to understand the basic concepts that they could not communicate to the students, nor could they answer questions which deviated from their instructor provided notes.
- I can’t understand most of my TA’s. It seems like a lot of the professors don’t want to be there. Most of the time, it seems impossible to learn. Courses aren’t offered enough.
  - Spring semester should properly be termed, Winter semester and should have more time off. Spring semester is the worst semester of the three and the most depressing.
- There seems to be a lot of talking ‘at’ students and not so much ‘with’ students. Some T.A.’s don’t care at all and seem to discourage thoughts that differ from their own.
  - Getting into classes is sometimes difficult...they are full or there is overlap in the timetable [same department and same year courses at the same time]
- Many professors are not capable communicators. The lectures are incomprehensible, and they do not know how to interact with students appropriately. Some TAs are incapable of teaching.
- So far my academic experience at SFU has been satisfactory. I sometimes find that I do not benefit from having the tutorial times each week, and wish there was a way to have better leadership from teaching assistants
- So far it has been of good quality, it might be more of a problem for the TAs, it might not be a good idea to have them overloaded with marking all the papers, etc.
- Some TA’s are very well prepared and are very helpful, while others do not seem to know what is going on or do not seem like they want to help. The majority of them are great, but some of them seem like they don’t want to be there at all.
- doesn’t seem that teacher assistants are chosen on the basis of their knowledge : ex: a philosophy TA that’s really a polisci major?? tutorial marks are SUFFERING because of
his false beliefs and teachings!!!  also: courses that are now offered in surrey aren’t
offered in burnaby!!! how am i supposed to complete my degree if i can’t take required
courses at burnaby??!! - i have more than one course at bby and ONE at surrey that are
10 minutes apart??!!

• On occasion I have had TA’s who I have felt did not live up to their job requirements.
  Many times there can be trouble communicating due to language barriers. In addition
  the course offerings can be improved, as there are classes which are only offered once
  every couple of years, making it difficult to graduate on time.
• my worst experience so far is through a few of the TA’s, they do not seem to be well
  trained, and some, as well as the profs, are very very difficult to understand due to
  language
• It concerns me that some of my TAs do not speak proper english, which makes it
  extremely difficult to learn properly.
• Sometimes I feel as though the TA’s are not on the ‘same page’ at the professor, or for
  that matter, each other, with regards to marking and course content, especially in
  preparing for exams.
• The TAs can be bad most of the time.
• Some TA’s are not well trained and convey wrong information.
• 1. TA’s lack of ability to communicate course materials to students effectively, as well as,
  their ways of marking students’ assignments unfairly and not justified. For three
  semesters in a row, I get TA’s that can’t teach students at all. And yet, they are still able
  to teach. Why? How? It’s ridiculous. I also got TA’s giving students rude remarks about
  their assignments, the same assignments that they have spent days even weeks on. I feel
  that respect for students’ work never existed in the first place at SFU. I also feel that TA’s
  are expecting all students to write master-degree papers instead of ones that are
  suitable for the level of courses that they are taking. It’s absurd! Unbelievable.  2.
  Professors and lecturers that go way off topic and ramble on and on. Students spent their
  money to learn, but all we got [quite frequently] were disorganized lectures and horrible
  exams that didn’t tell us that: “Hey! You are actually learning these materials for
  yourself!” Right now, students at SFU are studying FOR the grades and FOR the
  MARKERS who are overly critical about the assignments. We, as students, do not learn
  for OURSELVES anymore. Why has SFU become this way? I have no idea. All I know is
  that TA’s are getting worse and worse. Perhaps SFU should maintain a better standard in
  terms of choosing the right students to become TA’s. Just because they have better
  grades that doesn’t mean they have good characters and justified perspective on course
  materials and assignments.
• While for the most part I find the lectures alright, it’s the tutorials that I take issue with.
  The general interest to teach, capability of tutoring, and even the language proficiency is
  like a sinusodial wave. There is no reason why these TA’s should be as mal-equipped as
  they are. There needs to be regulation on them. Soon.
• There is a wide variation in skill level among T.A.’s. I have had some of the most amazing
  tutorial leaders, however at the same time, I have had a few that barely knew the course
  material let alone answer questions based on it. Perhaps stricter guidelines need to be in
  place.
• T.A.s sometimes seem underqualified to teach and to grade assignments. Some TAs are
  wonderful and knowledgeable, but there does not seem to be a consistent standard in
  place to judge their teaching abilities.
• My main concern thus far [being in my 1st semester] would be the lack of TA’s
  participation in actual lectures. I have one TA in particular who does not attend lectures
  and therefore our tutorials have almost nothing to do with an assignment or our lectures.
• It would be very, very helpful if students know the name of the TA before they register in a course. Sometimes the TA is more important than the professor in certain courses. Knowing the TA will be very helpful when students plan their courses.

• I find that some of the TA’s in the economics department, although able to go over tutorial material, are unable to answer questions about the material that are outside of the tutorial “answer key”. I also find some of their styles of teaching rather useless as they just copy solutions onto an overhead without explaining. This type of tutorial is essentially useless as an answer key posted online would provide the same amount of information.

• There are a few concerns with regards to the academic experience at SFU. First, many of the TAs seem to lack interest in their particular assigned class, or simply don’t seem qualified to teach. Second, professors often gloss over or only loosely touch on certain points, or even refuse to elaborate on certain subjects. Although the material may not be strictly significant to the topic at hand, and time restrictions also apply in lecture, there is often enough time to explain certain points, or else they should not encourage questions to be asked. Third, there is far too much emphasis put on the exams and “just passing” courses. I’m sure that many people know and agree that a grade does not so often accurately reflect intelligence or other characteristics of a person. A true student would be much more interested in gathering knowledge and experience than simply possessing a piece of paper, as a degree is so often reduced to being. There is no justification for saying “don’t worry” about something because such material will not appear on any exam; people come to university to learn as much as possible (especially considering that most of them pay a significant amount for it), and everyone should do their best to uphold that view.

• A couple of my TA’s aren’t the greatest.

• the tutorials dont seem to be optimally used, & it can at times be frustrating to have a teaching assistant who is uncomfortable with the material. Its not uncommon for certain ta’s to be uncomfortable answering conceptual questions (not calculation based) without an answer key present. It would be beneficial if there were more rigorous requirements for t/as’ language skills.

• MACM 101 requires full time TAs. it is too difficult to track down a new TA each week.

• Quality of teaching assistants in Kinesiology distance education courses. I’ve had several courses that had TAs who seemed completely unfamiliar with both the course content and the technology used in the distance education courses. They also show no initiative with respect to resolving problems brought forward by the students. I could go on...

• I am mostly satisfied with my experience at SFU. However, I have two major concerns: 1) Course programming. I am concerned that required courses are not being offered frequently enough. In addition, there have been cases in which pre-requisites for required courses were offered the semester AFTER the required course. For example: as an Urban Studies student, I must take Geog 441 [Fall rotation]. In order to take 441, however, I must take 362 [Spring rotation]. Because of this strange scheduling, I have had to wait an entire year in order to take 441---in Fall 2008. To make matters worse, I have just learned that 441 will not even be offered next year. This is exactly what I mean by poor course programming. Unless serious concessions are made by my department and substitutions can be made, I may be unable to graduate until 2010 while waiting for a single course to finally be offered. Another issue that is related here is communication with students regarding course programming. I would appreciate it if the department’s tentative course offerings could be made public well in advance. Geography currently posts tentative offerings two semesters ahead. This is not good enough for students who want to truly plan ahead due to co-op semesters, financial reasons, etc. The process of
course programming should be more open and should, ideally, involve students constantly. I would like to be able to type a course code into goSFU and be told when it will be offered many semesters in advance—not just 1 or 2. This would be extremely helpful in planning, even if the offerings were *highly* tentative.  

2) Quality of TAs. While I have been largely impressed by the quality of professors and sessionals at SFU, the TAs are quite another story. They often have little knowledge of the subject area. I question whether or not those responsible for TAs are matching them up with the appropriate classes to teach. While I have found them generally willing to help, on too many occasions I have felt as if they can offer no more expertise than my fellow undergraduate students. Perhaps this is because SFU TA’s (in Arts, at least) are nearly all Master’s students, rather than PhD students. From my discussions with friends at other schools, it seems that other Canadian universities have a much higher percentage of PhD TAs. 

Thank you for reading.

- Every lecture is pretty large and students seems don’t have much interaction with each other. And my previous physics TA was so bad. She always late for tutorial and refuses to answer our questions after class. She left suddenly, it was a quite strange experience. But other TAs are quite good. And I love my Buec232 Lecture!
- Some of the TA’s and Seasonals are not appropriate to each courses due to lack of preparation, also due to not being able to speak english.
- Most teachers are selected because of their research and not their teaching capabilities, which makes classes very frustrating. Statistics T.A.s in the statistics lab are not able to answer questions. Every class should have it’s own T.A. Statistic labs where T.A.s help with every class is NOT efficient because they do not know enough to help with every class. The Environmental Science program should be expanded into its own department.
- i have a tough time understanding certain teachers’ speach patterns. Some TA’s in my current classes don’t seem like they know what they are talking about, and arent of much help.
- 1. Large class size -> little interaction between the professor and students, students and students. 2. TA Quality -> Some TAs are unable to understand the students’ questions and/or unable to express themselves in a coherent manner.
- The enrollment process, since the change to only making class times and discriptions available on wechtct, it has made it increasingly difficult to choose. Teaching assistant have also been poorly regulated.
- Bus [*****] is not a good course. Marking is too hard. Prof and TA are not helpful.
- Course offerings for Film and Video studies at (I wanted it as a minor) are making it so I couldn’t possible do it. Either the courses just aren’t offered or they are and then canceled at the last minute. Every Distance Education course I have taken at SFU [3] have been worse than any one I have taken at another university. The TMs aren’t very helpful, the set-up of the assignments can be unfair, and the fact that most of the final exams are worth 50% of the course is just setting it up for the majority of the students to fail or lower their GPA significantly.

Academic Advising

- With the exception of the [*****] advisor, I have found most undergraduate advisors not willing to work with me, or give me informed advice as to courses and decisions. In speaking with students at UVic, I feel that SFU does not actively aid and inform its students of their choices and options in the school.
• I am about to graduate just when i realized that i should have done a different major. I feel as though im graduating and am still very ill-equipped to face the real world.

• The only concern that I have is in regards to the advising center- and that concern is only about the number of advisors available for private meetings; there needs to be more.

• I have a concern about the [*****] undergrad advisor, [*****]. I have heard countless complaints about her from many students and everyone hates going to her b/c she is mean, makes you feel stupid, wont explain to you why you can or cannot graduate or answer your questions. I did not understand my transcript, and she would not explain it to me and told me it was wrong and i couldn't graduate and that was final. She is impatient and rude. If she didnt want to be answering questions from students than she should not be an undergrad advisor. Im not sure where else to complain, but im certain i do not stand alone on this issue.

• Very difficult to get help from faculty, [ie. academic advising, financial advising exc.] I find that when I did contact someone I would keep getting referred to other people, and a task that could have taken one hour on one day, took up to a week looking for the right person.

• Accessing help within student services at SFU is if not horrendous, difficult at best. For example, during a time in the semester when you think student services would have extra financial aid advising hours, aka bursary submission/receiving times. Instead I waited for over three hours (in person) to see the financial advisor. Another example: I couldn’t remember some of the information I had put down for my fall 2007 bursary application, and when it came time to apply for the spring 2008 bursary I needed the information in order to ensure that my application was TRUTHFUL. I spent half and hour waiting for approval JUST TO LOOK at my previous bursary application. I didn’t ask to take it home, I didn’t ask for any copies, I didn’t need to see the advisor, I JUST NEEDED TO LOOK AT MY OWN PERSONAL APPLICATION (which I should have the right to see). I could go on, however the list would be extensive.

• Academic Advising is very beneficial for us as students but it is also very hard to get hold of the advisors. Making appointment for advising is time restricted which is why we should have drop-in hours for academic advising, like in other universities and colleges. Students should have as much interaction and connection with advisors as they are crucial in helping us to create the right path for our future.

• Navigating the academic requirements for graduation is sometimes confusing and needlessly complex.

• The working hours of the administrative office should be longer because sometime we are not able to use the services.

• My academic counsellor is not approachable or friendly. I often leave her office feeling that I did not learn anything.

• There seems to be very little orientation information on the courses we should take with respect to the degree we intend to pursue. More details on the criteria for course selection, along with explanations for the courses we can take as first, second, third etc. year students would be nice.

• The [*****] advisor is not available to speak with very often, and does not respond promptly to emails.

• The advisor for [*****] dept has not been helpful (actually downright mean at points) and I have felt I amy be making wrong choices in my academic classes.

• I have had some bad experiences with my academic adviser, my questions are never addressed fully if answered at all. Nor when she cannot answer a question does she help find who can answer my questions.

• Not many. Not certain about major/minor requirements, declaration, and if you want to switch programs (from General Studies to Arts or Science)
• Everything has been great so far, however I find it quite confusing to how the system works. For example, how many courses am I missing until I graduate, how do I declare my major or minor etc. It is also impossible to follow the originally designed business program since the workload would be too heavy for one semester.
• I’m worried I go into the wrong major. I’m not very sure yet what is my true passion and therefore still confused about my future career.
• It’s challenging to find out which courses to take for a particular major.
• The academic advisors seem incompetent
• The advisors need to reach out to the students, I think that many of the students don’t realize how important it is to talk to them so it may help if the advisors made themselves more available.
• highly difficult to arrange an academic advising time in the BBY campus.
• I feel that I receive less academic support and pay more in tuition than I did at the two BC colleges I attended. Open geography lab would be a big help. Academic advisors are often unhelpful. Very few African history classes available.
• I and others I know have had terrible academic advising advice. - I have taken Some poorly organized and delivered courses and I have had teachers who have obvious favourites. - I have often had trouble getting into courses that I wanted even though I have a high GPA and am in a program.

Grading
• With assignments being marked by markers for TA’s its hard to get papers re-evaluated when you know that the answer is right! You get a right ‘runaround’ trying to get some answers. I don’t think this is fair as the answer is right, but there is no marks to say what is wrong enough to mark it wrong!!!! This damages my grades. Seeing I am paying a LOT of money and investing a big chunk of my life to this, I feel I should have fair representation in this!
• marking schemes differ greatly for the same course but with different professors
• I don’t understand why the grading system is out of 4.33 when no one ever gets 4.33.
• Bus [*****] is not a good course. Marking is too hard. Prof and TA are not helpful.
• unfairness with marking [TAs marking their students’ tests]
• Course offerings for Film and Video studies at (I wanted it as a minor) are making it so I couldn’t possible do it. Either the courses just aren’t offered or they are and then canceled at the last minute. Every Distance Education course I have taken at SFU [3] have been worse than any one I have taken at another university. The TMs aren’t very helpful, the set-up of the assignments can be unfair, and the fact that most of the final exams are worth 50% of the course is just setting it up for the majority of the students to fail or lower their GPA significantly.
• It’s way too easy to be put on academic probation and be required to withdraw from the university.
• I don’t appreciate having the maths and sciences design exams that no one’s meant to finish if the mark isn’t going to be curved at the end. what does that accomplish??
• scaling compared to how other students fair.
• The bell curved business causes prevents a lot of social interaction between students.
• In regarding to my academic experience at SFU, I find that it is very different than high school. For example, so far it does not seem to matter if I write a thesis statement for an essay in this format “In this essay, I am going to talk about...” in university. For this, I have to say high school thesis statements seem to be more sophisticated. Also, although
I can see the reason for the bell curve system, I find it an opposing force on the student creativity— in another word, the incentive is not that great.

- Scale system at second year business courses is a bit too hard that pulls students’ GPA a lot.
- I really don’t find it a fair system when the prof’s can introduce any system of grading half way through the semester. Two of my instructors have decided to scale the class because the average is too low [how about making the exams more fair?] and another just decided that he wants to bell curve it because the average it too high. I think these grading adjustments should be announced before the semester and kept that way.
- Some courses have too much workloads [readings, assignments, etc]. Bell-curved for business courses make class more competitive
- Acceptance into the Business Faculty has been an ongoing battle, however, I have worked in team assignments with various students already in the faculty with inferior writing skills and work ethics. This has resulted in my decision to transfer to another post-secondary institution. I have contacted various advisors regarding my experiences and have attempted multiple times to appeal my application for admission, however, have been denied due to my poor decisions as a first and second year student. My experiences and personal growth after a two year global circumnavigation on a 48’ long sailboat was not enough evidence to support my newly realized commitment to my education. I will miss many aspects of SFU as I persue my educational goals at another university.

- 1. TA’s lack of ability to communicate course materials to students effectively, as well as, their ways of marking students’ assignments unfairly and not justified. For three semesters in a row, I get TA’s that can’t teach students at all. And yet, they are still able to teach. Why? How? It’s ridiculous. I also got TA’s giving students rude remarks about their assignments, the same assignments that they have spent days even weeks on. I feel that respect for students’ work never existed in the first place at SFU. I also feel that TA’s are expecting all students to write master-degree papers instead of ones that are suitable for the level of courses that they are taking. It’s absurd! Unbelievable. 2. Professors and lecturers that go way off topic and ramble on and on. Students spent their money to learn, but all we got [quite frequently] were disorganized lectures and horrible exams that didn’t tell us that: “Hey! You are actually learning these materials for yourself!” Right now, students at SFU are studying FOR the grades and FOR the MARKERS who are overly critical about the assignments. We, as students, do not learn for OURSELVES anymore. Why has SFU become this way? I have no idea. All I know is that TA’s are getting worse and worse. Perhaps SFU should maintain a better standard in terms of choosing the right students to become TA’s. Just because they have better grades that doesn’t mean they have good characters and justified perspective on course materials and assignments.
- According to my knowledge the registars office is very slow in processing things. I’m in my 4th year and there’s still more transfer credits to be evaluated and this just one current example. 2. Almost all the courses curve our results which is not quite appropriate for many courses. 3. Almost all the staff were very polite during my 3 years at SFU.
- Large classes and differences in grading are often a concern when comparing classes. Often professors will not have as clear a grading scheme as I would like.

**Class Size**

- The quality of the courses decrease as the more students enroll in SFU.
• Too many students, not enough 400 level upper division (sections) courses offered. Hard to get into those classes.
• Increase the number of seats in the more popular classes.
• Every lecture is pretty large and students seems don’t have much interaction with each other. And my previous physics TA was so bad. She always late for tutorial and refuses to answer our questions after class. She left suddenly, it was a quite strange experience. But other TAs are quite good. And I love my Buec232 Lecture!
• SFU is great, although some classes have rooms appropriated for them that are too small... the physical space I mean. This can make learning, especially in language oriented tutorials, very uncomfortable and counterproductive.
• small class sizes in classes related to Asia-Canada Studies minor make it difficult to enroll in required classes and complete requirements
• 1. Large class size -> little interaction between the professor and students, students and students.  2. TA Quality -> Some TAs are unable to understand the students’ questions and/or unable to express themselves in a coherent manner.
• The per student government funding is a problem that I have seen increase at SFU. The class sizes are getting larger for first and second year courses causing the professor to be more distanced from his or her students using more TAs as middle men. Furthermore, the availability of classes needed for pre-requisites for education were more difficult to acquire than I had hoped.
• The Stat 201 workshop needs to be bigger.
• class size sometimes can be too big
• Large classes and differences in grading are ofthe a concern when comparing classes. Often professors will not have as clear a grading scheme as I would like.
• Some of the 100 level classes are too big and it’s very difficult to enroll in classes that are required for your degree.
• Sometimes hard to get into classes. Classes too big [therefore too often TAs grading work and no rapport is built with professors]
• Being waitlisted for courses -not enough prof to Student contact
• There are too many underqualified instructors teaching courses, especially lower level courses. Instructors should be mostly professors, and if they are not professors, they should have very strong academic resumes, and have strong teaching skills. Class sizes are also too large in the lower levels.

Degree Completion Time
• my biggest concern is that i cannot get into classes, especially classes that i need to graduate and that i will delay graduating because of this.
• My concerns are that this new trial run of not having a “waitlist” or allowing professors the discretion of adding a student into their english course is extremely frustrating and inconvenient. Profs in the past have been able to add a student to their class based on their graduation needs. Right now, I am waiting to get into 2 classes that are needed in order for my grad in august to be attainable.
• third year courses are not offered every semester even though they are pre-requisites for higher courses. This ends up us taking less courses since we have to wait till next semester for a particular course and only then we can take higher courses. Ultimately more time to graduate.
• My major concern is that no upper division chemistry courses are offered in the summer semesters. This year, only Chem 360 and 380 are offered. I am approaching graduation,
and will be slowed down because of this. The university offers the trimester system, but then offers no classes in one of the semesters.

- more courses need to be available. Hard to graduate on time if need to always wait for courses to be offered.
- My largest concern is course availability. I’ve been admitted to SFU, I’ve got a good GPA, but I can rarely take the classes I *want*, much less the ones I *need* to take. Course availability is becoming a huge problem for me - and it’s leading me to question why I chose SFU, and why I stay. Certain courses are only offered once every two or three years - what happens if I want to take them? I miss them one year because they’re full, and I wait two years... by then I should have graduated!
- Courses are only offered every once in a while and fill up so quickly that it’s impossible to stick to a timeline for graduating. Different advisers give different advice, and those 2 things combined have resulted in my 2 year degree completion taking me nearly 4.
- If I do not get the courses I want, it prolongs the graduation process.
- The required classes for your degree should be offered every semester, not just in one particular semester. Due to this I have to wait another semester to graduate.
- Twice I have had bad experiences with SFU and their Academic Resource Office. The first time was when my LPI score was not correctly posted and credited towards my English marks. Which caused me to not be able to enroll into any English classes. When the problem was finally fixed, it was already too late, as all the 100 level English classes were full causing me to wait one whole semester before I could take an English course. The second time when I went to pay my $100 deposit fee at the counter at the SFU Burnaby campus (one week in advance before my enrollment date), the person at the counter at the time typed in the wrong student number and credited the wrong account. I did not realize the problem until my enrollment appointment and wondered why I could not enroll. Causing all me to not be able to enroll in many of my mandatory courses in the process and pushing back my expected year of graduation further away.
- I am mostly satisfied with my experience at SFU. However, I have two major concerns: 1) Course programming. I am concerned that required courses are not being offered frequently enough. In addition, there have been cases in which pre-requisites for required courses were offered the semester AFTER the required course. For example: as an Urban Studies student, I must take Geog 441 (Fall rotation). In order to take 441, however, I must take 362 (Spring rotation). Because of this strange scheduling, I have had to wait an entire year in order to take 441--in Fall 2008. To make matters worse, I have just learned that 441 will not even be offered next year. This is exactly what I mean by poor course programming. Unless serious concessions are made by my department and substitutions can be made, I may be unable to graduate until 2010 while waiting for a single course to finally be offered. Another issue that is related here is communication with students regarding course programming. I would appreciate it if the department’s tentative course offerings could be made public well in advance. Geography currently posts tentative offerings two semesters ahead. This is not good enough for students who want to truly plan ahead due to co-op semesters, financial reasons, etc. The process of course programming should be more open and should, ideally, involve students constantly. I would like to be able to type a course code into goSFU and be told when it will be offered many semesters in advance--not just 1 or 2. This would be extremely helpful in planning, even if the offerings were *highly* tentative. 2) Quality of TAs. While I have been largely impressed by the quality of professors and sessionals at SFU, the TAs are quite another story. They often have little knowledge of the subject area. I question whether or not those responsible for TAs are matching them up with the appropriate classes to teach. While I have found them [generally] willing to help, on too many
occasions I have felt as if they can offer no more expertise than my fellow undergraduate students. Perhaps this is because SFU TA's (in Arts, at least) are nearly all Master’s students, rather than phD students. From my discussions with friends at other schools, it seems that other Canadian universities have a much higher percentage of phD TAs.

Thank you for reading.

- On occasion I have had TA’s who I have felt did not live up to their job requirements. Many times there can be trouble communicating due to language barriers. In addition the course offerings can be improved, as there are classes which are only offered once every couple of years, making it difficult to graduate on time.
- Course scheduling - courses for your degree are scheduled at the same time or not offered so you have to put off taking courses and/or delay your graduation date. This is frustrating.
- As a student close to graduation I have a concern with class availability in order to complete degree requirements. Sometimes due to scheduling or availability it’s not possible for students to graduate in the earliest semester.
- Might not graduate on time with enough credits -class I want to take is full, every other classes is in conflict with my required classes.

**ESL Faculty/TAs**

- A first year teacher that speaks poorly English. Speaking English should be a requirement.
- Some TA’s don’t speak English very well, so it’s rather hard to communicate with them.
- Some teachers can not speak English, which makes me feel like the courses is a waste of my time and money.
- A lot of profs, and even more TAs, speak very poor English... now how are we supposed to learn if we can’t understand what they are saying?
- Some TA’s should go and learn English, and possibly some professors.
- Some of the TA’s and Seasonals are not appropriate to each course due to lack of preparation, also due to not being able to speak English.
- Sometimes I have trouble with different TA’s and Professors, and their grasp of the English language. I have heard this complaint from others, and it is something that is really hit and miss. Lots of Professors and TA use English, which is their second language, and do an amazing job, no problems, but some do not have the same abilities and causes stress for some students.
- I have a tough time understanding certain teachers’ speech patterns. Some TA’s in my current classes don’t seem like they know what they are talking about, and aren’t of much help.
- Not being able to understand my Economics professor because he has a heavy accent, he has no clarity and it affects how I understand. Also his writing is terrible. So I can’t read or listen to what he says.
- Some TA’s don’t speak English fluently [they should do more marking and less teaching in tutorials] - most science lectures are filled with way too much information; studies have shown that most students forget most of what is taught in a science lecture.
- First, if I cannot understand, I won’t learn. There are some accented profs, TA’s and it requires great deal of effort to understand. (like full hour of concentration exhausts my brain, learning should be easier) It’s easy to fall asleep and many fall asleep during the lecture. Fix theater chairs, there are many broken and not pleasing to look. Also, I think buildings should be renovated, they smell, dirty, broken things all around. This is for SFU’s good image. Also, it feels just bad to be at school.
• I’ve dropped a class because I couldn’t understand the professor. His grasp of the English language wasn’t clear enough.
• Some professors and TA’s cannot speak English well enough for me to understand. That’s a continuing problem for me.
• One concern and complaint I have had with my academic experience at SFU is the poor and often incomprehensible English spoken by many TA’s. I am a huge supporter of multiculturalism but students attempting to learn a subject can not do so if they can not understand their TA.
• SFU should start hiring TA’s who actually speak ENGLISH!! I think that this is very important…it also seems that a lot of SFU professors don’t know how to teach! I find that I pay tuition for nothing and I always end up teaching myself everything! And please start reducing the prices of books, sometimes we don’t even use the books!! And the fact that the bookstore doesn’t buyback certain books is just ridiculous..i guess school has just become one big business..we don’t learn anything but we spend a lot of money on that!

Admission Requirements
• The requirements to get into Business is a bit too high it seems. Teachings are great!
• Acceptance into the Business Faculty has been an ongoing battle, however, I have worked in team assignments with various students already in the faculty with inferior writing skills and work ethics. This has resulted in my decision to transfer to another post-secondary institution. I have contacted various advisors regarding my experiences and have attempted multiple times to appeal my application for admission, however, have been denied due to my poor decisions as a first and second year student. My experiences and personal growth after a two year global circumnavigation on a 48’ long sailboat was not enough evidence to support my newly realized commitment to my education. I will miss many aspects of SFU as I pursue my educational goals at another university.
• Difficulties transferring from college to SFU
• An issue regarding transfer credits; when I first applied to and was accepted at SFU I was advised I would be receiving credit for particular courses completed elsewhere. Later, someone changed their mind and told me I would not be receiving the credit.
• Transferring to SFU was a complete nightmare, not only did my transcript got lost but my grades were transfered as D’s when my average was an A-, it was very disgraceful.
• SFU does not transfer individual credits.
• I got required to withdraw about 2 years ago. When I came back, I realized that it’s so hard to boost up the GPA, because I have to start from 1.85 (the GPA I had when I withdrew). When other college students transferred to SFU, they can start from 0.00. So their CGPA will be their first semester GPA. Why can’t return students start from 0.00, just like other college students?
• about transfer credits
• According to my knowledge the registars office is very slow in processing things. I’m in my 4th year and there’s still more transfer credits to be evaluated and this just one current example. 2.Almost all the coureses curve our results which is not quite appropriate for many coureses. 3.Almost all the staff were very polite during my 3 years at SFU.
• My greatest concern is the ability of a student to transfer into the faculty of business. I believe that subtracting 0.3 from the college GPA for competitive reasons sets up an unfair system and takes average students longer to complete their degree as they spend a semester or more taking electives to boost up their GPA. Also, the withdrawal policy
does not seem sound. If a student has paid for all courses, it should be in their power to withdraw from them, even late in the semester.

- As a Langara transfer student I have learned that I am required to re-take my first and second year Sociology Courses in order to study this field. I also had to take the FAL course...I had just missed by two marks the Literacy Equivalency Exam. I also learned that I was required to take the FAN course as part of my breadth courses. In the summer when I went to register at my appointed time there were no seats available nor did any free up over the registration period. I find myself frustrated and insulted meanwhile by computer generated automatic notices informing I have to take this course yet due to my situation makes absolutely no allowances for my position. In the ensuing period I have had several email communications but with little commitment to resolution. As Simon Fraser apparently wants to cater to a wide audience to garner more prestige I find this conundrum basically appalling. In the communications I have had they quickly realize I am not a gormless nineteen year old, but instead a life in the real world educated 50 year old who consistently wonder if this is the way you run a business?

- I don’t like the fact that admission requirements seem to keep dropping for my faculty [Engineering]. It seems every year since I started we are admitting lower quality applicants by virtue of decreasing the required grade point average. Ultimately this devalues my degree by lowering the reputation of our school with employers who hire these people through co-op and full time. My other major concern is with the way a lot of material has been presented to us throughout the years, particularly in the case of Mathematics and Computing Science. In the case of Mathematics, the faculty approaches the subject matter by methods which are quite dry and do not emphasize the beauty, importance, and applicability of much of the material. This is particularly true with the Linear Algebra and Differential Equations courses we had to take. It’s not until I’ve enrolled in a graduate level Engineering course this semester that I’ve been able to appreciate the usefulness of everything I learned 3 years ago, which could easily have been taught to us at that time! I know that some of my professors have approached the mathematics department in this regard numerous times and even suggested books they could be using, but have always been rejected. As for Computing Science, the problem is of a different nature. Many of the 100 and 200 level courses such as the [**********], [*****************************************], and [**********] courses are taught by lecturers or professors who seem to have, to put it bluntly, no attachment to reality. As someone who has extensively studied these subjects in their own time and worked extensively in industry, I know that what these people are teaching is often just plain wrong. Sometimes the methods they teach students are outdated, often times they’re not best practices, and other times the facts are just incorrect. While to me this often served as merely a source of amusement, I’m sure the majority of students who are not as involved in the discipline and are being exposed to the material for the first time take it as gospel. This has to be stopped. It’s producing a crop of students who upon reaching higher levels of their degree, or perhaps even beyond, have no idea about the right way to do things. Any serious researcher or computing professional would surely laugh at them. Please change this!

- I’m afraid I might not get in to Business. All of the courses I’ve taken in the past for business, plus all the effort I put in would be a waste if I don’t get into the program. These courses were the main reasons that lowered my GPA. I think the GPA requirement for business should be more lenient, since students pay tuition and work hard to get into a program they want and learn the material they want. They should not have to be told that they can’t take courses because they are not in the program.
There are a lot of conflicting courses if you try and take classes in two or more faculties. The required GPA has drop by a huge amount since I got accepted 6 years ago and I am worried it will de-value my degree.

There is a lack of scholarships available to high achieving students. I have a 4.3 GPA and am not eligible for any scholarships. That is very discouraging. I also take issue with enrolment dates and waitlists for classes and programs. I know that there have to be limits, and that there has to be some way of determining who gets to enrol first, but it really leaves those of us with late enrolment dates hanging. I also find the criteria and number of seats available for PDP to be too strict. They are turning a lot of good potential teachers away because of this. The fact that one has to have so many volunteer hours, but other time spent with kids in another kind of teaching environment (workshops, working with kids overseas, tutoring etc) is not counted tells me that this is just a scam for schools to get free labour from potential teaching students. The application is also misleading, as it says any experience with kids is counted. I later found out that this is not the case at all. I'm very disappointed and may not apply again.

Cost/Tuition/Fees

I have not had a satisfying experience at SFU so far. I feel that I am not getting my money's worth. I pay $1500 for four months and the institution still expects me to do most of the work and still funnels money from me through textbooks, student materials and parking. On top of this, I don’t even feel I'm getting quality education. The course content feels too watered down and chopped up into as many courses as possible for me to pay for, and I’ve had much better teachers in high school.

The tuition fees increasing every year!

Overall I have had a good experience the one thing that threw me off is that as a business student I pay really high tuition fees and as such I expect excellent teaching. My [*****] prof, although she is very knowledgeable in the field, uses the same teaching plan, overheads, and examples that she has used I think since the early 1990’s. I believe that if I am expected to pay such high tuition fees and expected to achieve academic excellence I should be able to trust SFU to provide me with a recent, reliable, and relevant academic experience. With this one prof I feel that has not happened.

My main concern is rising tuition costs. I need to work 20+ hours a week to pay and save for school, which become a huge workload on top of my school work. Also, although I think the course registration process has bee drastically improved I still have trouble getting into all of the classes.

The tuition is too expensive. There is not enough restaurants or places to eat. It seems like we are forced to eat at white spot or mr sub everyday.

The increased cost of tuition with nothing to show for it

I feel that I receive less academic support and pay more in tuition than I did at the two BC colleges I attended. Open geography lab would be a big help. Academic advisors are often unhelpful. Very few African history classes available.

Tuition fees are too high, university bus passes shouldnt be a mandatory pay

Expensive textbooks, but I guess that’s the same for every university. So I don’t know if there’s anything to be done in that area. The library collection could be improved, if cost- permissible.

it’s too expensive, and the finals and midterms are too difficult

Sometimes the text books are very expensive and they are not always used to any degree during the semester.
Concerns include the cost of tuition, which seems to be increasing every semester. Furthermore, it seems registration dates have no structured system when assigned; letting students know how course enrollment dates are assigned would be helpful.

Some courses taken at SFU are a waste of money and time ... to complete undergrad degree.

SFU should start hiring TA’s who actually speak ENGLISH!! I think that this is very important...it also seems that a lot of SFU professors don’t know how to teach! I find that I pay tuition for nothing and I always end up teaching myself everything! And please start reducing the prices of books, sometimes we don’t even use the books!! And the fact that the bookstore doesn’t buyback certain books is just ridiculous..i guess school has just become one big business..we don’ learn anything but we spend a lot of money on that!

First, classes are offered only sporadically and classes in political theory are seriously neglected by SFU; I suppose this is my fault - I never would have come to SFU had I checked it out a little more prodigiously before instead of just taking my college pros’ word for it that SFU was the most progressive institution and could offer me what I wanted. Second, most of my classes (300 and 400 level course) are being taught by sessional profs. I have a problem with this for three reasons. First, I plan to go to grad school, and as such, I will require letters of recommendation; it is well known that you letters from sessional profs are not as valued as letters from tenured profs. If most of my profs are sessional profs, that makes it pretty hard to build a rapport with a tenured prof and obtain the required letters of recommendation. Second, I have two sessional profs that I find are brilliant profs - yet they have been sessionals for quite a while. Because of their [*****] pay, they must teach about 2-3 times as much as a tenured prof just to get an (ALMOST) decent wage, and therefore these two profs have admitted to me, that their ability to teach a course is severely compromised. They both do excellent jobs, but I notice it regarding their office hours - I don’t blame them if they can’t justify it to themselves to bring themselves to have a lot of office hours for what they are getting paid. And third, despite this, student fees are going up and have gone up and funding for other things on campus has been cut back. So you can say, yes, I am very disappointed with SFU. And after I get a few articles into the student newspaper, hopefully a lot more students will be too - like [*****] I’m going to pay all this money for substandard education and then not say anything about it.

Grades

I really enjoy my courses and find them interesting, but “keeping my grades up” is always in my mind.

concerned about my gpa

Non-scaled classes. Passive/Lenient marking by TAs.

Not many concerns, personally trying to maintain a B average. Having trouble handling calculus, besides that most of the courses seem pretty straight forward and not too strenuous if you put in the time.

I feel that it has been somehow trivialized by my experiences with life and almost regret coming here now. Not because I do not value a liberal education but because I find a liberal educator harder and harder to come across, and the rat race of grade chasing has left me exhausted and unsatisfied. Please seek an essential change in your institution. Even though i know this will be disregarded.

When I completed my first semester at SFU (transfer student), I asked for my exam mark in an EASC class through email because my final mark did not reflect my confidence and easiness of the final exam...Firstly, I did not recieve an email back from the prof, and a
week later when I was checking my final grades again my final mark for the course went up one letter grade...The concern that I have is WHY didn’t the prof answer the email regarding my mark and how come they make it soo difficult to review an exam, why be soo sneaky about it...I do not think that is fair or professional when we are paying such expensive tuition for out education and we cannot have transparency in reviewing final exams or receiving answers regarding our marks, especially when the semester is already over. (the email thing has happened in both EASC courses with different profs). I think that Crim 320 should be a 4 credit course and or they should add an extra hour to the tutorial so students can further strengthen their skills using SPSS...

- I find myself in classes with students who speak little to no English. Working with them in groups has taught me that they are unable to write in the English language above elementary-school level. Often their grasp of the material is tenuous at best. However, they somehow manage to be progressing, alongside me, through 1st yr courses, 2nd yr courses and now 3rd yr courses. I know for a fact that some of these students purchase their papers online through an SFU ESL student network. I also know that a network exists for students to pay an Asian student who’s previously taken a course and done well in it [often a Cdn student] to write exams for them [the assumption is that a prof can’t tell the difference between 2 Asian students in a class of 300]. When my work is being graded on a curve, this means that my work is being compared to papers written in elementary-level English, with no ability to communicate sophisticated thoughts and ideas; or my work is being compared to papers written by grad students [and sold to my classmates]. When I go to an employer with a degree from SFU what will it mean if the 10 SFU graduates before couldn’t express a complex idea in memo form, or by verbal communication? A degree from SFU will come to be meaningless, if employers know that that it doesn’t carry any association with communication skills. Also, if students are cheating, what does that say about our ethics? What do employers think about this?

- One of my concerns is the grading scheme which is different from other colleges and universities around and it’s not really fair to students at SFU. The other is the course load. Most of UBC students can easily take 6-7 courses each semester, but here at sfu because of the huge course load most of the students can’t take more than 5-6 courses per semester which will result in graduating later than other students in the same level but other universities. The last one is the course offering which usually you don’t have a choice in taking courses and times, every semester I had problem with course confliction and having the same time, eventhough they are all for a particular degree.

- Some TA’s mark a lot harder than others, teachers aren’t open about wether the course will be curved or not.

- GPA is very important for me since it is one of the significant determinant of Grad school enterance.

- Scared my GPA will not be enough to get into my desired faculty

- My grade point average has dropped drastically. I don’t find the tutorials useful for many of my classes.

Program Issues

- I feel somewhat annoyed with the fact that there are alterations made each semester/year for my degree requirements and i have to keep taking more courses to fulfill the new requirements and cannot use the old ones towards my degree...

- I have found that my academic program does not prepare me well for my career goals. In the psychology department there are limited offerings of upper division classes and due to degree requirements I am currently taking classes that have no relevance to my
research or career interests. Furthermore, course requirements make it difficult to take other classes that you may be interested in.

- My interest in sociology is growing, and I don’t feel like SFU has a good enough sociology program for me to pursue it.
- I have curriculum issues with the Computing program (lack of applied skills and systems courses).
- Felt like it was a bad choice for me to enter techOne since it wasn’t as good as it sounded when I was talked into applying.
- The Business Faculty is unfortunately known for having Graduates that have a very limited English ability - this worries me, being an English-speaking student, that many companies aren’t even looking at SFU graduates.
- There should be a joint major program between MBB and Business, with the option of doing a concentration in accounting or finance, and not just marketing and entrepreneurship.
- There is a fair amount of division between sociology and anthropology from a students perspective. There are so many similarities in the disciplines and it would be nice to have some courses that more specifically incorporate aspects of both disciplines, ie: a mixed methods class.
- The Communications program, although it’s absolutely amazing, it’s not very focused, and if I want a more rounded knowledge (for example to take Business, Visual Arts, etc. type of classes) I would have to get into those programs or take many prerequisite courses to get into them. Further, there should be some kind of list of which courses to take for a specific direction in Communications, or any subject area for that matter. There is still not enough spaces and too little of a chance to get into the courses that one needs and wants.
- Classrooms in new ASSC building have horrible acoustics. Upper division classes for archaeology should be more spread out. ie. lots of classes conflict with each so that you can only take one. Why is archaeology and anthropology two separate faculties? in 99% of other universities they are together.
- Concerns that have existed during my undergraduate experience include infrastructure safety issues (building maintenance and replacement), poor service and processing efficiency in the enrollment and admissions department of student services, the lack of dedicated research servers and mainframes for tenured lecturers and research centres along with the disappointment that the CSD doesn’t provide learning assistance for those with psychological (not learning) disorders.

WQB Requirement

- The WQB graduation requirements waste valuable academic time and money for students who have a specific academic focus and can hinder transfer students, like myself, from completing necessary requirements for graduate studies.
- WQP system flawed. Course registration disorganized.
- The WQB requirements are kind of confusing.
- very vague. It’s hard to understand the Upper level courses and lower level courses and WQ requirements. I have yet to learn what they really mean?
- I wish there was more info about WQBs, especially on the Q test. I didn’t know such thing existed till I went to see my academic advisor. When I asked about it to several other first year students, no one really knew about it either.
- With regards to the new WQB requirements, no one knows what they are doing. I transferred here and there was no mention of this requirement until after I had seen an
academic advisor. Even then, the advisors all gave conflicting advice and I really had to figure it out on my own. Either fully adopt the new system or get rid of it.

- Although the new QWB did not apply to me, I feel that this requirement for new SFU students is somewhat unfair. I agree that students should take a variety of courses from multiple disciplines to round out their degree, however I feel that requiring students to have the highschool Math 11 or FAN grade to take Q courses is not justified. Each course should have its own requirements, and there should be no global requirement for Q courses. The mathematics taught in FAN or Math 11 are far more advanced than necessary for a Philosophy Q course, for example.

- I'm not sure if I agree with the necessity of a Fanx99 course for those who are majoring in topics such as English and History.

- I am not happy with the Q and W course requirements.

- There needs to be less WQB requirements and more options left open for students.

**Academic Support**

- It has been stressful. Feel that not much help is given around the campus.

- I find that resources which would aid a student in proper methods of how to study, or take notes, or understand exactly what the professor wants from you, are either lacking in representation, or lacking all together.

- I feel that I need more help for English writings. I know there’s service in library and I booked the appointment once, I don’t feel it’s very helpful.

- Finding the sources of help that I may need. Networking with people in the same fields. Meeting new people to collaborate with.

- I experienced depression while at UBC. By the time I realized that was what I was dealing with and got medical help, my GPA was completely destroyed - 5 years out the window. I was able to get a number of courses expunged, but not all of them. I came to SFU to get a brand new start. It has been a challenge having to do 5 years all over again, but I’ve grown tremendously as a result. I’m telling you this because I think it is really important for universities - SFU - to address the issue of student depression because it actually is a common experience and is steadily increasing. I believe that SFU should become vocal about this issue and educate students about the red flags they should watch for in themselves and in their peers. Also what measures they can take to prevent depression. I believe also that SFU could create student body activities in such a way to prevent depression and promote the health of their students. Please investigate this. It is a very real, very damaging, and on the rise, student issue. Thank you for your consideration.

- 1. When I took Math 100 in Fall 2006 at the Burnaby campus, I felt that the instructor was not qualified to teach the class. Her explanations were not clear and students in the class were constantly pointing out mistakes in her examples. I felt that I had to hire a private tutor in order to pass the course. After the tutor spent only a few hours explaining the material to me, I understood all of it much better. I was disappointed that an SFU professor was unable to explain the subject matter in a clear and understandable manner. 2. I sometimes find that it is hard to get help in quantitative courses when I don’t understand the material. Despite the fact that some quantitative courses have workshops, the workshops are often very crowded which makes it difficult to get help.

- The lack of financial support for students. The existing scholarships for students with a 3.7 GPA do not cover half of the semester tuition. The bursary program is intended to put students into further debt by forcing them to take a loan before they qualify. SFU is doing a great job supporting banks at the expense of its students. The logic behind the
financial/scholarship/bursary support that SFU offers is intentionally intended to increase debt for students and lower their grades by forcing them to take on three jobs on top of their school work. The staff working in Finances, Registrar and Academic Advising are also poorly trained in their knowledge about the services at SFU and have very poor cultural sensitivity (make ethnocentric assumptions about student’s situations)

- i hate go sfu. The help for it is ridiculous. Also some of the profs should be asked who they think they are teaching? We’re not grad students. Were undergrads.

Prerequisites
- I have found some of the pre-requisites for classes to have no practical application in the real world, rather just enhancing my overall knowledge of the subject. I think this should be the other way around, the practical stuff should be mandatory and the fluff that I take to more broadly understand a subject should be elective.
- Some required courses seem to be completely unrelated to our degree programs. Sometimes, all they do is hurt your GPA.
- I am an engineering student. We are required to take electives outside of engineering. I would prefer not to waste my time doing so.
- Some people mentioned the chronological order of offering courses are totally wrong. We take courses that require knowledge which will only be learned in future courses. I feel the same. The courses that I take have tremendous amount of workload for my age and knowledge level. This is because, I strongly think, the wrong order of course offering in my program. We must spend excess amount of time to acquire knowledge that is normally obtained only in future courses, in order to work on current courses.
- I spent two years struggling to get all the courses I needed and wanted to take and now all of a sudden there are many that I would like to enroll in and I don’t have the time or the space remaining in my academic career to be able to take any of them. I also feel that some of the prerequisite requirements for upper division courses should be revisited because I am in my fourth year and for the first time I feel like I’ve been thrown off the deep end. The majority of upper division classes in cmns seem to be taught by sessional instructors and grad students, instead of profs, and it is making it really hard for me to apply to grad school.
- 1 - I think there should be more consistency in the way different professors teach a specific course. Sometimes it feels like a course is a whole different beast depending on who is teaching it that semester. I think this is particularly obvious with CMPT courses, CMPT-371 comes to mind. 2 - Sometimes there is too much overlapping of material in some courses, the professor ends up dedicating 1-2-3 lectures teaching or reviewing some material that all students should have learned in one of the pre-requisite courses, but did not for some reason. I think adding pre-requisite for some courses might help, just so the professor can be sure of what students know. Consistency in teaching the pre-requisite courses would also help [see point 1].
- The entire course registration system. Some of the prerequisites for my degree (SIAT/Business) don’t seem valuable.

Other
- I feel like I still don’t know what I am supposed to do in order to make my time here efficient and enjoyable
- could be better
University in general tends to be pretty unforgiving if you get sick. There’s no such thing as taking a day off to get better, even if your deadlines get pushed back, because the work still needs to get done by the end of semester.

- Stressful, hard to manage and at times unfair
- Getting through a degree in 4 years... 15 credits a semester seems hard
- I work full time. I have a family. I own a home. It is challenging to make time to be a student.
- Concerns about probation
- Still confused about courses.
- I have no idea how anything I learn here has much relevance when I start working
- Lots of work I guess, and how if you aren’t on the computer for one day to check your school mail you can miss a assignment due the next day.
- Some classes need to be offered by a tenured professor at school. It is a shame to study in a department that doesn’t have sufficient staff to fill its lecturing roles
- I don’t know which classes are fun to take, I only know what boring ones I need.
- The tutorials are great, because we have the chance to ask the TAs what we don’t understand. I think all the tutorials should be made mandatory, because students have to attend them.
- Everything is going well so far. The only thing is that I am having trouble finding my teachers office’s. However, overall everything seems to be fine.
- The major I want to study
- Not enough places for students to congregate in social atmosphere.
- I think student clubs could have more events and get more interactions with all students.
- It is advertised that SFU exceeded its new student target but now the school seems more crowded than ever. At peak times I cannot get through the AQ or get a coffee on my 10-15 break in class. How does SFU plan to deal with the volume of students?
- SFU Burnaby should have better wireless capabilities. The wireless internet network should be accessible anywhere in the schools, especially in lecture halls when you need to download the notes the professor puts up.
- I am a distance education student. I work full time and trying to finish my degree. I think its very unreasonable to have exams during the day for distance education students. There is a reason as to why we are not attending day classes. My employer is not to keen with me having to leave work to write an exam. Without my job, I cannot attend school and keep my household running.
- A squeeze uncomfortable chair in the classroom[esp in Business department]. The computer lab is very noisy. Please change them
- Classrooms in new ASSC building have horrible acoustics. Upper division classes for archaeology should be more spread out. ie. lots of classes conflict with each so that you can only take one Why is archaeology and anthropology two separate faculties? In 99% of other universities they are together.
- None really, I find the English lecture halls really loud which I think is rude, but as to academic experience I don’t have any concerns regarding course content etc.
- Concerns that have existed during my undergraduate experience include infrastructure safety issues (building maintenance and replacement), poor service and processing efficiency in the enrollment and admissions department of student services, the lack of dedicated research servers and mainframes for tenured lecturers and research centres along with the disappointment that the CSD doesn’t provide learning assistance for those with psychological (not learning) disorders.
- I am highly concerned about the Faculty restructuring of SFU, and view it as a BAD change.
meal options, transportation
The campus is dark and depressing during the winter. The food options suck. There's no school spirit.
lack of good/affordable food on campus
What jobs will I be able to do after graduating?
difficult to get into graduate school
My academic experience at SFU has been a cold one! Can't we get some heat in the rooms of the AQ and the ASSC?
Difficult to navigate library and resources when you are a new student
unintended plagiarism
It would be nice to have a "reading break" or spring break during the spring term, especially since that time is often pretty stressful. It would be nice to have a break to catch up on things.
I am very frustrated with the bureaucracy. It is hard to get any real help due to this.
There is a lack of scholarships available to high achieving students. I have a 4.3 GPA and am not eligible for any scholarships. That is very discouraging. I also take issue with enrolment dates and waitlists for classes and programs. I know that there have to be limits, and that there has to be some way of determining who gets to enrol first, but it really leaves those of us with late enrolment dates hanging. I also find the criteria and number of seats available for PDP to be too strict. They are turning a lot of good potential teachers away because of this. The fact that one has to have so many volunteer hours, but other time spent with kids in another kind of teaching environment (workshops, working with kids overseas, tutoring etc) is not counted tells me that this is just a scam for schools to get free labour from potential teaching students. The application is also misleading, as it says any experience with kids is counted. I later found out that this is not the case at all. I'm very disappointed and may not apply again.
The lack of financial support for students. The existing scholarships for students with a 3.7 GPA do not cover half of the semester tuition. The bursary program is intended to put students into further debt by forcing them to take a loan before they qualify. SFU is doing a great job supporting banks at the expense of its students. The logic behind the financial/scholarship/bursary support that SFU offers is intentionally intended to increase debt for students and lower their grades by forcing them to take on three jobs on top of their school work. The staff working in Finances, Registrar and Academic Advising are also poorly trained in their knowledge about the services at SFU and have very poor cultural sensitivity (make ethnocentric assumptions about student’s situations)
I am currently out of the country on an exchange program with SFU and a Chinese University. As such I have not had much time to enjoy the academic experience at SFU. Of the one year I spent before leaving, I found it somewhat hard to find a nice quiet study area that wasn’t the Library.
I find it hard to read my textbooks and notes when there is too little lighting in study carols around the burnaby campus. The library has adequate lighting; however, sometimes study areas in the library are occupied during peak hours. I would rather study in the surrey campus than the burnaby campus, but that is not always inconvenient. My suggestion is installing better lighting in study areas around burnaby campus.
That was very rude, I was on my last question of this survey and the web page tells me the session is out. I wasted a long time and my best effort for nothing. I will only answer to questions that doesn’t involving typing this time.
My one main concern is the MANDATORY use of internet based software systems as part of the curriculum. The two examples of this are the LONCAPA website for math151 and the WebCT site for ensc100/101. WebCT is of lesser concern as homework is not
usually assigned on this system, but it is usually used for providing information. This aspect is fine and sometimes useful. The problem has become that our participation marks come from regularly checking the website. Even if we have no need. I’m not sure if this is an attempt to show that the system is succeeding, whatever the reason I find this annoying and fruitless waste of time. As for LONCAPA(math151) I find this the worst. This program is designed to reduce marking loads on TA’s and instructors and to provide instant marking for students. There are 2 main problems with LONCAPA. Due to the format of the site, the answers must be inputted in a special format [not reflecting mathematical forms]. This format frequently conflicts with students input and yields wrong answers where the answer is in fact correct, but the format is simply off. This is possibly the most frustrating situation I have encountered in my life. I think I know the answer to a question, but the website won’t accept my answer, so, seeing as I want to do well, I waste 30min-1hr searching my text book or other sources trying to figure out what I did wrong. It produces stress, wasted time and is completely counter productive. The second problem with LONCAPA is that when answers are wrong they designated as wrong. HOWEVER, no correct answer is given and worst of all, a week later when the correct answers are posted, you have no feedback on your work personally. There are no suggestions or comments to help you do better next time. This seems to defeat the whole purpose of this system as explained to me [by my math professor]. I would far prefer doing paper assignments like I currently do in my physics class. I have personally seen examples of this kind of technology in the workplace [with new and improved computerized billing systems or hours logs] and the fact is that more often than not these technologies harry productivity and increase complications rather than simplify. And they usually demand someone to become a fulltime technician and trouble shooter for the program. Just because a technology is available does not mean we should use it. This is an example of prescriptive technology being use in a system who’s model should be that of growth, not production. I paid a huge tuition to attend this university, I do not appreciate getting an inferior education experience simply because my instructors want to mark less homework. I have spoken to the majority of students in my class and they are in agreement. If there were any indication that it would make a difference, I would like to start a petition to have LONCAPA decomissioned and WEBCT made voluntary. Thank you, Jonathan Kehler

- not enough computer labs
- I would like all the posted notes for any given class to be put up at least 24 hours before the associated lecture so it is more easily accessible. One of my classes does not post them until less than an hour before the lecture and it makes it harder and more expensive for me to print them before my class starts.
- not enough time to do homework...or failure to manage time well. line ups are often very long when waiting for reception area and computers
- The only concern at the moment for me would be the fact that individuals that do not take transit up to sfu have no say in the upass, as we HAVE to pay to for it, futhermore, reading the sfu newspaper last week i noticed that they will once again be increasing parking rates by 8%, thats just ridiculous, we’re already paying outstanding tuition fees along with parking, and now they want more money from us?! I might as well just goto ubc where the average amount of money would still be cheaper than SFU.
- - need faster tranportations [buses] - better system on buying books[ie. online buy] - more selections on foods - have better wireless[ie. some place can’t recieve]
- too small availability of parking lot and need more space to study in quiet atmosphere
- I haven’t really had any concerns except with the bus service
transportation problems in the winter are worrisome. Last year I experienced being trapped on the mountain due to road conditions. As well, the stairs are very icy. More salt should be put on walkways.

not enough b lot parking not enough outlets for laptops in cafeteria and other places

The recent cutbacks in tutorials for certain classes. Namely, within the psychology department. Having a smaller group to flush out some of the deeper more complex issues that are noted in lecture should be a necessary experience for every class.

My only concern would be how tutorials are no longer being offered for many courses as of this semester (fall 2007). This definitely hurts us students!!

I wish I am able to get into the classes that I want, when I want. It’s difficult to do so. This semester I am in a class in which I would appreciate a tutorial section. We were informed by the prof that tutorial sections have been removed due to lack TAs (or funding for them?). That is really just unfortunate.

The cut back in tutorials. These are important learning environments

reducing tutorial class which i most like about SFU

Lack of tutorials, I feel like they helped with studying, but now most of my classes don’t have them.

The amount of tutorials is decreasing dramatically in the psyc department which limits my access to help a great deal.

I havent had any major concerns regarding my academic experience at SFU, other than the fact that the sfu website is very hard to find information in. I have tried to find out what required classes i need to take for my degree, and it shouldnt be a mystery for where i can find them on the site.

There is a lot of material covered in three months and sometimes it’s hard to digest it all before getting tested. Something else that I must mention here is that I go to school to learn, but my health is harmed every time I go to school. There is not ONE day that I can go to school without getting second hand smoke. What’s the point of all those no smoking signs (even specifying a fine) when there’s nobody to enforce it. Those smokers are slowly MURDERING people a bit each day.

Finding the sources of help that I may need. Networking with people in the same fields. Meeting new people to collaborate with.

There was definitely a lack of campus life. I struggled with getting into required courses due to lack of seatings and/or was not offered. Therefore, it has set me back in my progress.

There is not enough of required classes at different times and the upper division classes do not repeat enough within a year. Most of the film departments equipment is outdated and needs to be brought up to speed with departments like Communication.

it’s too expensive, and the finals and midterms are too difficult

First, if i cannot understand, i won’t learn. There are some accented profs, TA’s and it requires great deal of effort to understand. (like full hour of concentration exhausts my brain, learning should be easier) It’s easy to fall asleep and many fall asleep during the lecture. fix theater chairs, there are many broken and not pleasing to look. Also, i think buildings should be renovated, they smell, dirty, broken things all around. This is for SFU’s good image. Also, it feels just bad to be at school.

The tuition is too expensive. There is not enough restaurants or places to eat. It seems like we are forced to eat at white spot or mr sub everyday.

Registration dates have been bad for all four of my years at SFU. I would recommend sending out a reminder to people to pay their $100 enrollment fee, as a number of people forget. Expensive, bad-quality food provided by Chartwell’s.
- Expensive textbooks, but I guess that’s the same for every university. So I don’t know if there’s anything to be done in that area. The library collection could be improved, if cost-permissible.

- I find myself in classes with students who speak little to no English. Working with them in groups has taught me that they are unable to write in the English language above elementary-school level. Often their grasp of the material is tenuous at best. However, they somehow manage to be progressing, alongside me, through 1st yr courses, 2nd yr courses and now 3rd yr courses. I know for a fact that some of these students purchase their papers online through an SFU ESL student network. I also know that a network exists for students to pay an Asian student who’s previously taken a course and done well in it [often a Cdn student] to write exams for them [the assumption is that a prof can’t tell the difference between 2 Asian students in a class of 300]. When my work is being graded on a curve, this means that my work is being compared to papers written in elementary-level English, with no ability to communicate sophisticated thoughts and ideas; or my work is being compared to papers written by grad students [and sold to my classmates]. When I go to an employer with a degree from SFU what will it mean if the 10 SFU graduates before couldn’t express a complex idea in memo form, or by verbal communication? A degree from SFU will come to be meaningless, if employers know that that it doesn’t carry any association with communication skills. Also, if students are cheating, what does that say about our ethics? What do employers think about this?

- Courses should have more than one lecture/ seminar time for students to pick from. All classes should be recorded and made available online, not just selected ones.

- I am a student of SFU’s Contemporary Art Department [in Visual Art] and the majority of my classes are downtown at either Harbour Centre or the largely unknown Alexander Centre. This semester I have two courses that I must take in order to continue with a major in the Visual Arts discipline, one of which is at the Alexander Centre and the other immediately afterwards at the Burnaby Campus. Getting back up to the Burnaby Mountain campus this semester has proved to be more difficult than it really needs to be, in my opinion. Also, with such difficulties in getting to the Burnaby Mountain Campus on time for an imperative class does hinder my academic experience since I occasionally do end up missing the first few minutes of class. So, I suggest that the 135 transit bus from downtown to SFU’s Burnaby campus has a stop at Princess Street and E. Hastings, which is en route for the bus and is also closest to another Simon Fraser University Campus.

- My grade point average has dropped drastically. I don’t find the tutorials useful for many of my classes.

- Some required classes were not offered in certain semesters... information regarding this ahead of time would have been really helpful. Also, many of the changes being made at SFU Surrey were frustrating especially because it is not easy to find this information online in a straightforward manner.