

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S.314

MEMORANDUM

To SENATE

From H. M. Evans - Secretary
Senate Committee on Graduate Studies

Subject Procedures for Introduction of New
Graduate Programs and Reassessment of
Existing Graduate Programs - For
Information.

Date December 17, 1969.

For the information of Senate, it is to be noted
that the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies
approved Paper EGS-41, as attached, - at its
meeting on December 9, 1969.

Harry M. Evans

Enc:
HME:jb

cc. Dr. Kellogg

A PROPOSAL TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE STUDIES
ON PROCEDURES FOR INTRODUCTION OF NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND REASSESSMENT
OF EXISTING GRADUATE PROGRAMS

by

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December, 1969

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I. INTRODUCTION

Many of the Graduate Programs at S.F.U. have been in operation since 1965, others have come into existence in more recent years. It is proposed that henceforth all new graduate programs be appraised by an Appraisals Committee before being approved by Senate. It is also proposed that existing programs, including those that are approved subsequent to adoption of this paper, be subject to periodical review by an Appraisals Committee.

Details of the proposal follow:

II. APPRAISALS COMMITTEE

The Senate Committee on Graduate Studies shall establish a Standing Committee to be known as the Appraisals Committee.

1. Composition:

- a. i. Three members of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies, one representing each Faculty.
- ii. Three faculty members, one from each of the three Faculties.
- iii. Dean of Graduate Studies - Chairman.
- b. The Executive Committee of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies shall serve as the Nominating Committee for membership on the Appraisals Committee.
- c. The Senate Committee on Graduate Studies shall hold the main election for the Appraisals Committee at its January meeting.
- d. Except in the first instance when the term of office shall be three for one year, and three for two years, the term of office of members of the Appraisals Committee shall be two calendar years.
- e. A quorum shall consist of four faculty members.

Note: Where "Committee" appears hereafter, without further specification it shall be construed to mean "The Dean of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Appraisals Committee".

2. Functions:

- a. To evaluate and appraise new graduate programs.
- b. To evaluate and appraise each new program within five years from the date of its acceptance.

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- II. 2. c. To evaluate and appraise existing graduate programs at the request of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies as and when necessary but certainly once within a ten year period.
- d. To report on its appraisals to the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies.

III. PROCEDURE FOR APPRAISAL OF NEW PROGRAMS

1. General regulations

- a. A Department, acting through its Chairman, will submit the proposal for a new graduate program through the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee to the Appraisals Committee.
- b. After proper procedures have been followed (see subsection III.2-4) the Committee will report to the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies whether the program should be approved, rejected or amended in any way. The Committee may recommend that a program commence at a specific future date, the postponement to be not more than two full academic years. Reasons for the Committee's recommendation shall be included in the report.
- c. The Senate Committee on Graduate Studies will normally accept or reject the report of the Appraisals Committee with the option of referring the report back to the Committee.
- d. The decision of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies shall be communicated to the Department concerned.
- e. Members of the Committee shall not vote in the Committee when programs of their own department are being assessed.

2. Documentation for the Appraisals Committee:

When requesting approval of a new program, the Department will submit a report which will include:

- a. List of faculty members with their areas of specialization and proposed future hiring.
- b. Curriculum vitae and publication records of all staff members to be associated with the program, with an indication of each individual's relevant experience including thesis supervision, and amounts of research grants held by each individual.

- III. 2. c. experience of the department faculty in advanced work and, where available, information on the subsequent progress of students who have already been awarded the Master's degree;
- d. present and proposed undergraduate and other commitments of the department, showing individual teaching loads where possible;
- e. present library resources and intended commitments for at least five years, including a statement by the Chief Librarian of the University;
- f. laboratory facilities and research equipment;
- g. availability of research funds;
- h. an estimate of graduate student enrolment;
- i. adequacy of space for student and staff offices;
- j. proposed regulations for the program under the headings:
- i. admission standards
 - ii. courses required
 - iii. examinations required
 - iv. thesis and language requirements
 - v. residence regulations;
- (care should be taken to conform with the University regulations on these matters)
- k. courses available in the department and proposed new courses, showing which courses, if any, are also open to undergraduates;
- l. any innovation as to subject matter or treatment;
- m. strength of collateral and supporting departments in the university;
- n. proposal of action for development of the program.
3. a. The Committee shall review this report and, unless it considers further discussions with the department to be necessary, it shall appoint at least one and up to three consultants who are outstanding scholars in the field of study being proposed. Normally, at least two of the consultants shall not be from the universities within the Province of British Columbia. The consultants may visit the Department.

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- III. 3.
 - b. The department may suggest a list of names from which suitable consultants are selected by the Committee. If the Committee wants consultant(s) not on the list it will ascertain if the department has objections to the individual(s) proposed. The Committee's choice of consultant(s) shall be final.
 - c. The consultant(s) shall submit individual reports in writing to the Committee, giving their appraisals of the strengths and weaknesses of the department and their judgment on the advisability of the department undertaking to offer the new program. The consultants may indicate those parts of their reports which are to be held confidential. Non-confidential parts of the reports may be released at the discretion of the Appraisals Committee.
 - d. The Dean of Graduate Studies is empowered to authorize up to \$2,000 for the costs of an appraisal. Partial fees may be established by the Dean of Graduate Studies if the procedure is not completed or if a reappraisal is conducted soon after a full appraisal has been carried out.
- 4. On the basis of consultant(s) report(s) the Committee shall make its recommendation to the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies. Before doing so it may still seek such consultation inside and outside the department as it considers necessary.
- IV. 1. A new program shall be reviewed within five years after its inception. For such a review the department will submit a report which will include:
 - a. list of faculty members with their areas of specialization;
 - b. up-to-date curriculum vitae and publication records of the faculty members associated with the program, indicating each individual's relevant experience including thesis supervision and the amounts of his research grants;
 - c. current areas of specialization within the department;
 - d. current graduate student enrolment;
 - e. a report on laboratory facilities, and in consultation with the Librarian, library resources;
 - f. number of students graduated from the program;
 - g. the current regulations for the program;
 - h. courses available;
 - i. comment on how the plans forecast in the original submission have been followed or departed from.

- IV. 2. After review of the report, the Committee may appoint one or more consultants in the manner specified in Section III.3.a, who may be the original consultants. The consultant may visit the department, and will submit a report in writing to the Committee recommending the retention, discontinuance or modification of the program. The consultant's report shall be handled in the same manner as identified in Section III.3.c.
- V. Existing graduate programs will be reviewed at least once every ten years according to the procedure outlined in Section IV.
- VI. No clause in these procedures shall be suspended or amended unless notice of motion has been given at a previous meeting of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies or is placed on the agenda of the current meeting, unless said suspension or amendment is passed by at least two-thirds of the members present at the said meeting.
- VII. These Regulations shall take effect immediately after approval by the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies.

VIII. INTERPRETIVE CLAUSES

1. a. It is stressed that approval is not similar to the "accreditation" of certain professional bodies. There are no predetermined quantitative measurements, course requirements, etc.; the Appraisals Committee will be guided in its decision on the opinions of the consultants.
- b. It is each separate program that is appraised, not Faculties or Departments.
2. Department: "Department" shall be read to include any faculty group responsible for the operation of a "program", including institutes, centres, inter-disciplinary committees and similar organizations.
3. Program:
 - a. The word "program" of a "department" is used to signify all aspects of the graduate undertaking of the department, including the actual and planned staff, extent and limitations of areas of research specialization, research facilities, and curriculum. The appraisal shall embrace all factors which must be considered to establish that the program will be academically sound, and only those factors.
 - b. The area of work covered by a program is not necessarily coincident with the complete range of instructional and research fields for which a department (or other administrative organ) is responsible. Usually the area of a program is more restricted than the whole of the discipline associated with a department. If a department whose offerings has been approved in (or hitherto confined to) specific field wishes to undertake Ph.D. work in a further field of specialization, the department should seek the decision of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies as to whether an appraisal is necessary.

VIII. 4. Until such time as an Appraisal Committee is established the functions of that Committee will be served by the Executive Committee of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies, and until a Dean of Graduate Studies is appointed the Academic Vice-President shall serve as the Dean of Graduate Studies.

IX. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANTS

1. Consultants shall familiarize themselves with the appraisal regulations and procedures of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies. If difficulties or uncertainties in interpretation arise, they should consult with the Dean of Graduate Studies.
2. The consultants should study the university's submission before visiting the campus, so that they can decide which points they wish to explore during their visit.
3. The subsequent action of the Appraisals Committee will be based essentially on the consultants' reports. It is therefore of utmost importance to realize that what is needed from each consultant is a firm opinion, as a distinguished scholar in the field, as to whether or not the department can proceed with graduate work and offer an academically respectable program of sound training and research challenge to its prospective students. Many factors of course enter into the consultants' opinion of the ability of a department to undertake a graduate program. There are a few factors on which consultants, working for the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies have sought guidance so frequently that it may be desirable to comment on them here.
 - a. Is there an accepted philosophy of course work, general examinations, languages, etc. against which a program should be measured? The answer is no, since wise innovation is to be encouraged. Presumably, each consultant will have his own point of view on these matters and he should use as his criterion for approval the answer he would give to the question "Will the students working in this program achieve the attitudes, levels of competence and breadth of knowledge that are generally associated with the holders of this degree in this discipline?"
 - b. How important is it to assess the abilities of the individual faculty members in research and in graduate class work and supervision? This is probably the single most significant factor to be considered.
 - c. Can a number be stated which is the smallest permissible number of faculty members for a program? No, because this will vary from discipline to discipline and from proposal to proposal. But, in general, it would require careful justification to show that a Master's program could be undertaken with fewer than four staff members qualified (in the opinion of the consultant) to work at the graduate level.
 - d. What is the responsibility of the consultant in connection with enrollment estimates? First it must be repeated that the appraisal procedure is not a planning procedure, and that the questions asked of the consultant bear only on the academic standards of the proposal. If a consultant considers it important, for academic reasons, that a department contain a certain number of students and staff in order to do good graduate work, he will want to concern himself with the reliability of the enrollment estimates.

- e. What are the library standards for a graduate program? It is hard to provide a decisive answer, but a good guide line, for library-oriented disciplines, is that a student should have available in his university's library the great bulk of the material needed for graduate course work and for preparation of Ph.D. general examinations. It is recognized that when he begins dissertation research he will need to consult books and source material in other locations, and facilities for him to do so should be available.
 - f. How definite should the consultant's findings be? There are at least three possible findings which the Appraisals Committee is allowed to make: approval, approval with delay, disapproval. The delay cannot exceed two years; this finding suggests itself when there is no reasonable doubt that a department, not yet ready, will have achieved the necessary strength to begin the program at a foreseeable time. If this situation cannot be clearly foreseen, a negative finding would be desirable; in such a case a fresh appraisal can be made when the department feels it is ready. It is helpful if the consultant does specifically recommend one of these findings. It is most important that he make very clear any conditions or assumptions on which he bases his recommendation. For example, if the consultant feels that a program ought not to begin without an additional senior appointment, he should so state, even if the submission from the department includes such a planned appointment, for it might become evident that the appointment could not be made even though it appeared highly likely at the time the consultant reported. It is also most important that consultants make their reasoning clear, for it is not infrequent that two consultants recommend different findings and the Committee must then weight their reports and opinions carefully.
 - g. How "ready" should the department be? It is not necessary that there be in existence all the strength needed for the steady operation of the program. A program normally develops in staff and facilities during the first few years. It is necessary that, on the date recommended for approval, there be in the department the necessary minimum strength to provide an academically sound experience for students beginning at that time.
- 4. It is also important, both for the Committee and for the department to express full and frankly the reasons for the conclusion. The reports may be confidential (Section Iv.3) and their value is directly proportional to their frankness and completeness.
 - 5. The consultant is also asked to express any views he may hold on the proposed curriculum or academic regulations of the program; these will be of value in guiding the department.
 - 6. It would be most helpful if the consultants were to arrange their reports so as to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the department and its adequacy for graduate work under discrete headings. If a consultant's overall report is not favourable, he is requested to indicate for the guidance of the department what weaknesses or shortcomings he feels should first be dealt with to develop the program.

7. It is suggested that consultants arrange the details of their visits to the campus through the Dean of Graduate Studies, and that they consult with that official during their visit. It is expected that departments will make available to the consultant all necessary facilities to examine the department (its staff, its equipment, its plans) and also to interview other university officials, such as deans, the librarian, and chairmen of related departments, if the consultant feels it desirable.