

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S. 454

MEMORANDUM

To..... SENATE

From..... R. McANINCH

STUDENT SENATOR

Subject..... AMENDMENTS TO COURSE CHANGE AND
WITHDRAWAL REGULATIONS

Date..... NOVEMBER 23, 1970

The current regulations in relation to course change and withdrawals are as follows. A student may enter a new course up until the end of the first week of classes. It is permissible to drop courses up until the end of the ninth week. The amendments to these regulations which this paper proposes are as follows:

- 1) That the date of entry into a new course be extended until the end of the 3rd week of the semester, and further, that entry be allowed up until the end of the 5th week if permission of the professor teaching the course is obtained.
- 2) That the date for dropping courses be extended until the end of the last week of classes.

The reasons for presenting these suggested changes are as follows. The present date for entry into a new course does not take into account the fact that a student has very little exposure to the courses in which he is enrolled during the first week of classes. The first week of classes is usually devoted to a general outline of course requirements and brief remarks about the theme of the course. It is not generally until the 2nd week that a student will have gotten into the course reading and attended lectures and tutorials. It would seem reasonable to provide students with at least a period of two weeks of involvement in a course, at the end of which it would still be possible to gain entry into another course if this was desired. This period of time would give an individual a better opportunity to assess whether the particular courses he is enrolled in are appropriate to his educational aims.

It is the belief of the movers of these amendments that entry into a course during the first three weeks of the semester should not present any great difficulties to students. We believe, however, that entry after this period, while it should be allowed, up until the end of the 5th week, is a more questionable proposition and should only be allowed if in the judgment of the professor teaching the course the student is able to satisfactorily complete the course program.

Members of the Senate Appeals Board will testify to the fact that there are a number of requests for what would be termed "late course entry" requests under the current regulations. It appears that many students find it difficult to operate within these regulations, in all likelihood for the reasons outlined in this paper. The amendments proposed here will hopefully bring these particular bureaucratic rules of the University more in line with the reality of the educational process which takes place here.

In regard to course withdrawals, the extension of the deadline is proposed because the current regulations would seem to present an unnecessary restriction on the actions of students. It is certainly not difficult to imagine circumstances in which a student may wish to drop a course later in the semester than is currently allowed. For example, an individual may believe at a certain point in the semester that it will be possible for him to complete in a satisfactory manner all that is required in the courses in which he is enrolled. He may find, however, at a later date, perhaps even in the last week of classes, that it is in fact not possible for him to do so, making it against his academic interest to continue with all his courses. These are clearly circumstances when a desire on the part of the student to drop courses, however late it may be in the semester, is certainly understandable and legitimate. It is an option which should be open to him. This is the sort of decision which should be left up to the student and the present regulation is an unnecessary infringement on what should be a student's legitimate academic prerogative.