

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

S.79-12

To: Senate

From: Senate Committee on Continuing
Studies

Subject:

Date: January 16, 1979

Motion: That the Terms of Reference of the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies be amended by deleting term C.(3) in Senate Document S-74-170.

Background

Appended are two items:

- (1) Senate document S-74-170, with comments, outlining the membership, structure and terms of reference of the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies. (The structure of this committee was changed on September 8, 1975 - Senate document S-75-120).
- (2) A statement of "Criteria & Procedures for Approving Credit-Free Instruction". This statement was approved by the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies on January 15, 1979. (A similarly worded statement was approved by the same Committee on December 5, 1974.)

For four years the procedures employed in approving non-credit instruction are those described by the attached statement on criteria and procedures. It has been pointed out, however, that these procedures, while consistent with item C.(4) in the Committee's Terms of Reference (S-74-170), are inconsistent with item C.(3). Since item C.(4) allows various approval arrangements, including those suggested by item C.(3), it is being recommended that C.(3) be deleted from the Committee's Terms of Reference.

(NOTE: The statement of criteria and procedures is provided herewith for information only)

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S-74-170

MEMORANDUM

MEMBERS OF SENATE

From SENATE COMMITTEE ON
NON-CREDIT INSTRUCTION

Subject SENATE COMMITTEE ON
CONTINUING EDUCATION

Date NOVEMBER 12, 1974

MOTION 1. "That Senate approve, as set forth in S-74-170, the structure, composition and terms of reference of a Senate Committee on Continuing Education, to succeed the Senate Committee on Non-Credit Instruction, as follows:

A. Membership

Six Senators, elected by Senate
The Dean of Continuing Education - Chairman

B. Terms of Appointment

The six senators elected by Senate are to be appointed for periods of two years, except that in the first instance three members will be appointed for two years and three for one year.

C. Terms of Reference

(1) To advise Senate on policy with respect to the overall development of the University's continuing education credit and credit-free program.

(2) In respect of credit-free programs, to review at regular intervals existing and proposed programs in terms of their need, objectives, clientele served, and other relevant factors.

(3) To review and approve credit-free courses each semester.

(4) To develop procedures for the approval of various categories of credit-free instruction.

(5) To report to Senate at least once annually with respect to its above-noted responsibilities.

(6) To report to Senate as requested by Senate."

MOTION 2. "That until Senate can conduct the required election, those who served as members of the Committee on Non-Credit Instruction serve as members of the Committee on Continuing Education.

Comments Regarding the Above Motion

The Senate Committee on Non-Credit Instruction initially was established to bring some order into the offering of non-credit courses and to act as Senate's agent for controlling the quality of these courses. Both purposes have been achieved. However, with anticipated growth in the development of the University's continuing education activities, the Committee on Non-Credit Instruction is of the opinion that procedures for approving non-credit courses should become more flexible than those previously adopted (S73-44) and that the Committee (or its successor) should concern itself not only with this function but also with broader policy questions concerning the overall development of the University's continuing education activities.

In essence, the present Committee suggests that the proposed Committee on Continuing Education undertake the following kinds of tasks:

- (1) The development of criteria that should govern the kinds of credit-free programs provided by the University.
- (2) The formulation and supervision of procedures for approving credit-free instruction that would ensure Senate control over quality but which, at the same time, would encourage initiatives in program development and meaningfully involve those individuals best able to make judgements about program content and administrative feasibility.
- (3) The identification and assessment of goals and priorities for the University's continuing education activities with the view to formulating recommendations for Senate's consideration. Excluded from the committee's tasks would be any scrutiny of credit courses and curricula; rather, its concern would be for broader issues such as accessibility to current and proposed programs.
- (4) The consideration of policy and other questions submitted to it by Senate.

Criteria and Procedures for Approving Credit-Free Instruction*

A. Rationale

In purpose and organization credit-free instruction differs sufficiently from credit courses to justify different approval procedures. The primary focus of curriculum development for credit-free instruction are the interests, needs and circumstances of persons and organizations in the community. Typically these courses are organized over short periods of time and involve prospective learners in their planning. Most credit-free instruction offered by academic departments is not repeated, at least in a form similar to a previous offering. Also, in most cases, direct instructional costs of credit-free instruction must be met by student fees. For these and other reasons, initiators of credit-free instruction require reasonable assurance that their course - even at the preliminary idea stage - will go forward and be approved prior to their spending any considerable amounts of time on planning the course and/or preparing detailed outlines and budgets.

B.C.'s other public universities, whose credit-free programs have been established for a longer period than Simon Fraser's, have adopted course-approval procedures which are less formal and more flexible than their procedures for credit courses. The procedures proposed below for approval of credit-free instruction are more formal than those for UBC, and similar to those for U Vic.

B. Criteria for Approving Credit-Free Instruction

(1) Instruction should be appropriate to the offerings of this university. "Appropriate" may be generally defined as a course or other event(s) with one or both of the following characteristics:

- deals with complex subject matter or relates to the resources (largely teaching faculty) and expertise found within this university.
- designed as an experimental pilot project employing research and development methodology.

(2) There should be some indication that the instruction will meet an important community need.

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The term "instruction" is used here to refer to any educational event or set of events; "course" to refer to any single instructional event (evening class, conference, symposium etc.); and "program" to refer to any coherent set of courses.

(3) Instructional content should reflect the current state of knowledge within the field(s) under consideration. This criterion largely relates to the demonstrated competence of instructors.

(4) Instructional design and methodology should be consistent with accepted principles of effective instruction and university adult education.

(5) A course or program should be economically and administratively feasible.

C. Procedures for Approving Credit-Free Courses

(1) All credit-free instruction shall be approved by the appropriate department chairman and the Dean of Continuing Studies. Instruction of an interdisciplinary nature shall be approved by the most appropriate department(s), or the Dean of the Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies, and the Dean of Continuing Studies. Courses or programs so approved should be forwarded, once a semester to the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies or any succeeding body for review, and once a year to Senate.

(2) Specific credit-free courses or programs shall be submitted to the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies when:

- a. there is disagreement between a department chairman and the Dean of Continuing Studies about whether a course or program should be approved;
- b. the Committee requests such action.

(3) Notwithstanding the above approval procedures, all proposed credit-free programs and component courses that would result in the award of a diploma or certificate, or a program of a sustained nature that likely will be repeated, shall be submitted to the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies for approval. All proposed diploma and certificate programs will be forwarded, by the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies, together with its recommendations, to SCUS and SCAP, with ultimate approval resting with Senate.