

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S.84-49

MEMORANDUM

To..... SENATE

From..... SENATE COMMITTEE ON
UNIVERSITY BUDGET

Subject..... REPORT FROM SCUB.

Date..... 24 AUGUST 1984.

The following motion arises from the report to Senate
from SCUB:

MOTION:

"The Senate of Simon Fraser University urges the Senate Committee on the University Budget to continue vigorously in its efforts to obtain from the administration the means to fulfill an effective, informed, and timely advisory function in the formulation of the budgetary proposals of the administration, including proposals for allocations to major units and for policies with major budgetary implications"

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

**To: H.Evans, Secretary,
SENATE**

**From: K.E.Rieckhoff, Chair,
SCUB**

Subject: Agenda Items

Date: August 17th, 1984

In its meeting on August 15th, 1984, the Senate Committee on the University Budget (SCUB) approved the enclosed "Report to the Senate". On behalf of the Committee I hereby request that the report be put on the agenda for the September meeting of the Senate as an item for information under "Reports from Committees".

In the same meeting on August 15th, SCUB also approved that passage of the following motion be recommended to Senate at the September meeting:

MOTION: The Senate of Simon Fraser University urges the Senate Committee on the University Budget to continue vigorously in its efforts to obtain from the administration the means to fulfill an effective, informed, and timely advisory function in the formulation of the budgetary proposals of the administration, including proposals for allocations to major units and for policies with major budgetary implications.

On behalf of SCUB I request that this motion be included in the agenda for the September meeting of the Senate as an item for action under "Reports from Committees". The rationale for the motion is provided by the contents of the report and need, no doubt, not be stated separately.


K.E.Rieckhoff, Chair, SCUB

cc: W.Wattamaniuk, Secretary, SCUB

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE UNIVERSITY BUDGET (SCUB)

REPORT TO THE SENATE

AUGUST 1984

1) The Committee.

The Senate Committee on the University Budget (SCUB) is a Standing Committee of the Senate of Simon Fraser University whose Terms of Reference are determined by provincial law, i.e. The University Act, Section 36(e), as follows: "To meet with the President and assist him in the preparation of the University Budget." These terms of reference were approved by Senate at its meeting of October 6, 1975.

The membership as laid down by Senate in its meeting of December 1st, 1980, consists of those Members of Senate elected by and from Senate to the Senate Committee on Academic Planning and the Director of Analytical Studies as (non-voting) Secretary. The Chair of the Committee is elected by and from the voting members of the Committee. The present Chair is K.E.Rieckhoff (Faculty Member of Senate), elected on July 11th, 1984. The other members are (as of August 1st 1984): Faculty Senators K.Okuda, J.Dickinson, M.Fellman, J.M.D'Auria, Lay Members of Senate B.Holweg, V.Nielsen, Student Senators R.Stewart, M.Noonan, B.Archer, and Secretary W.Wattamaniuk.

The proceedings of the Committee, information received by it from the administration, and specifics of the advice given by the Committee are confidential. Only the activity reports that the Committee makes to the Senate are not subject to this confidentiality rule. There has never been any complaint that the Committee has acted improperly with respect to confidential information to which it has been given access.

The Committee is supposed to report to Senate annually in December. However, the record indicates that in fact it has reported at less frequent intervals. The last "annual" report of SCUB was prepared in December 1980 and sent to the Secretary of Senate on May 14th 1981. This particular report covered the period from July 1979 to December 1980. The one before covered the period from July 1977 to July 1979. There were two earlier reports covering the periods October 1975 to June 1976 and July 1976 to July 1977 respectively. The report now before you covers the period from January 1981 to August 1984.

2) History to end of 1983.

The History of SCUB up to the end of 1983 can be summed up very simply when considering its role and function "to assist the President in the preparation of the University Budget": It has been ineffective in providing meaningful assistance to any President in the preparation of the budget. The main reason for this ineffectiveness has been the historical fact that no President up to that time has given the Committee any significant role in the budget preparation. This has led to considerable soul-searching on the part of the Committee which is reflected in the record as a perennial appearance of discussions both within the Committee and between the Committee and various Presidents regarding its role and suitable activities that it could fulfill in serving its functions.

In its attempts to fill some useful function, SCUB has throughout the years of its existence been content to receive and react to information on the budgetary details (operating and capital) provided to it by succeeding administrations and to provide advice on such general and specific subjects with budgetary implications that were referred to it by the various Presidents. Thus SCUB has been able to react and comment on the line item budget and has done so on a number of occasions. It has viewed and commented on Capital and Operating Budget Requests of the University before they went to the UCBC, and at times, before they were approved by the Board of Governors. It has prepared reports and recommendations on specific areas of concern, such as the Library. In all of these activities it has had, by and large, cooperation from the administrations it has served. However, SCUB has never had the opportunity to comment on and influence through its advice the preparation of the budget during its period of gestation. To be specific, SCUB has usually been given the budgetary allocations after the decision process had been completed within the administrative circles, and it has never been a party to the discussions among administrators that ultimately produced the policy and allocation decisions reflected in the line item budget (though it did often receive after the fact briefings).

In fairness to past members of SCUB it must be said that, while prevented from fulfilling the role intended for it by the provincial legislation, it has within the above limitations done its best to be useful. It was always ready and willing to respond to any call from the President, even if it came so late in the game that members often felt that they were actually wasting their time, since any assistance at such late stages of the budgetary process was more imaginary (for the sake of appearances) than real (being of substance).

Specifically besides numerous meetings, including several with the then President, Dr. Pedersen, in which the Committee received information regarding the successive financial crises resulting from cutbacks etc., the Committee made a detailed report on course scheduling entitled "Enrolment Growth: The Effect on Instructional Facilities" in 1981. This report was called by the then V.P. Academic, Dr. Munro, "... the best analysis carried out of our instructional space..." and "...confirms the usefulness of assigning specific projects to SCUB rather than encouraging them to range widely over various issues...". In 1982 the Committee commented in detail on a set of criteria prepared by Dr. Munro for budgetary adjustments and also sent a lengthy letter to Dr. Gibson, Chairman of UCBC, informing him of the difficulties faced by SFU as a result of unsatisfactory budgetary allocations.

3) Activities in 1984.

With a new President, Dr. W.G. Saywell, at the helm of SFU and a new Chairman for SCUB, Dr. W. Leiss, the Committee reconsidered its function and working relationship with the administration. There was a general consensus that while regular detailed examination of specific areas and a continuing review of overall expenditures, as in the past, could be of some use, a closer and more timely involvement of SCUB in the budgetary process was imperative if the Committee's advice to the President was to be informed and was to be made at a stage when it could in fact be acted upon should the President choose to do so.

The Committee then engaged in a dialogue with the President to create a timetable with respect to the budgetary process that would provide for appropriate Committee input at early stages. The President has responded positively to this initiative of the Committee and has agreed to provide SCUB with the opportunity to respond to administrative proposals effecting the budget at an early stage. Thus the Committee has had the opportunity to interact with PACUP and has been assured that it would receive PACUP recommendations and administrative responses in a timely fashion.

The Committee has in this dialogue also requested that it have a presence, in the form of one of its members, in discussions held by senior administrators on budgetary matters, so that it would be informed continuously of not only decisions arrived at but also of the nature of the considerations and arguments entering the budgetary process at that level. While this request was at first denied as not necessary or helpful to the process, it is at present being reconsidered by the President after a new and carefully reasoned request by the Committee, submitted after the latest changes in its chair and membership in July of this year.

Generally speaking, the present membership of the Committee is of the opinion that, unless it can provide its advice and assistance to the President in a way that ensures that it can be acted on effectively and in a timely manner, it would be a waste of time to spend all its efforts merely communicating with the administration after the fact about policy decisions and budgetary allocations made already in a separate forum. The Committee sees at this time no reason why it could not be given the role envisaged by the legislation under which it was established. The Committee realizes, however, that to fulfill that role requires that the administration will allow it to do so. This in turn is not likely to occur unless the parent body of SCUB, i.e. the Senate, fully supports the Committee's endeavour to play a more active role in the formulation of budgetary proposals of the administration than has been the case in the past.

The preparation of the next budget will be effectively under way by the time this report reaches the Senate. The Committee seeks the guidance and support of Senate. Essentially we are asking Senate which of the

following three options Senate urges the Committee to pursue.

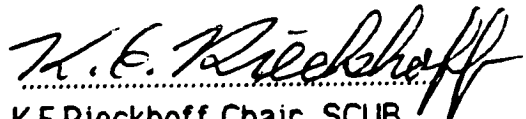
1) To continue as in past years to be reactive only to budgetary proposals of the administration, and to restrict its own initiatives to occasional reviews of specific areas or policies.

2) To meet only at the request of the President and restrict its activities to such matters as are referred to it by the President.

3) To continue vigorously in its efforts to obtain from the administration the means to fulfill an effective, informed, and timely advisory function in the formulation of the budgetary proposals of the administration, including proposals for allocations to major units and for policies with major budgetary implications.

The Committee recommends the third option and asks the Senate to pass a motion to that effect. Only the third option -with the appropriate cooperation on the part of the administration - will enable the Committee to fulfill its legislated function and its terms of reference.

The other two options, 1) and 2), are perceived by the membership of SCUB as perpetually frustrating the purpose of SCUB: A Senate voice in the formulation of the budget. It cannot be expected that many Senators will continue to be willing to serve diligently on SCUB under those conditions.


K.E. Rieckhoff, Chair, SCUB