

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Senate Graduate Studies Committee

Report to Senate

The Dean of Graduate Studies is responsible for the general supervision of graduate work at the University and Chairs the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. This report outlines the position of graduate studies at Simon Fraser University, describes some changes made in the 1988/89 year and makes recommendations for future directions.

I. Enrolments and Degrees

Table I shows the recent history of graduate enrolments and degrees granted. It is taken from the 1988 S.F.U. Fact Book which will contain more detailed breakdowns by department and Faculty.

The FTE enrolment figures must be treated with caution. The process for determining them is subject to considerable variation among departments and is often based on incomplete information on a student's activities. A more consistent and logical scheme for determining FTE enrolments is presently under consideration by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee.

II. Degree Completion

Table II is a survey of the times required by S.F.U. students to earn their graduate degrees. The data are from the Graduate Studies Database system. I am very pleased to note a small but significant decrease in average completion times compared with last year's data. It should be noted that these data do not take into account the possibility that a student may have been enrolled part-time for all or part of the program and thus may overstate completion times, especially for programs with large numbers of part-time students. Data on enrolment status may be found in the S.F.U. Fact Book. I remain concerned by what appear in many cases to be excessive times for degree completion. When resources are limited, it is especially important that they be used effectively.

I am actively encouraging departments to ensure both that their degree requirements are realistic and that their students make satisfactory progress, as required by Senate regulations, toward meeting those requirements. I am also considering more rigorous enforcement of the regulations requiring annual progress reports.

I am also pressing for timely appointments of supervisory committees. In establishing the Graduate Studies Database, I encountered many students who had been here for several years, yet apparently had no supervisory committees. This situation has largely been remedied; each semester, reminders about 'delinquent' students are sent to departments by my office; a minor flood of committee recommendations follows.

III. Grades

Table III gives information on the S.F.U. graduate grades of all students enrolled in the Fall 88 semester; it includes courses taken in that semester up to the end of 88-2 and excludes students who had not yet taken an S.F.U. graduate course. In Tables IV and V will be found corresponding data from 1986 and 1987, for comparison. Data were taken from the Registrar's data files and incorporated into and processed within the Graduate Studies Database system.

For each department, a number of measures of the grade distribution are presented. The weighted CGPA ("Wted") weights each student's CGPA by the number of semester hours completed. The average CGPA ("Aver.") does no weighting, but counts all students equivalently. The median ("Med.") CGPA and the N% CGPA give the CGPA at the median of the distribution and at the Nth percentile. For example, in the third entry of Table III - Business, the top 10% of the students have a CGPA of 3.67 or higher, the top 20% have a CGPA of 3.63 or higher and so on. It is interesting to note, in comparing Tables III - V, that there is little evidence for the "grade inflation" that was predicted by some upon the introduction of A-, B+, and B- grades in 86-3.

The tremendous range in the nature of the grade distributions among departments may stem from two causes: (1) differences in grading practices and (2) differences in the abilities of students. I believe that, most likely, it is a mixture of these with the former a larger contributor than the latter. This range is one of the reasons that I have moved away from interdepartmental comparisons of CGPA in the ranking of applicants for S.F.U. graduate scholarships.

IV. Special Arrangements

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee serves as the Graduate Program Committee of students enrolled under Special Arrangements. I have given special attention to these students. With the goal of ensuring their satisfactory progress, I have brought all their supervisory committees into compliance with Senate's regulations and, as of 86-3, require up-to-date progress reports as a condition of registration. To date, the response of students and supervisors has been excellent.

I am pleased to report that the defences of theses completed under Special Arrangements, which I chair, have all been quite successful. Table VI provides some data on degree completion. These data are subject to the same caveat about part-time study as the data in Table II.

Historically, Special Arrangements have been a high risk area; students either succeed or fail spectacularly. The number of students enrolled have remained roughly constant around 25. Degree completion has been highly variable: 4 in 1988, 7 in 1987, 6 in 1986, 2 in 1985, 6 in 1984, 1 in 1983, 2 in 1982, and 4 in 1981. Other students have dropped out. By the steps outlined above and by rigorous enforcement of the criteria for entrance into Special Arrangements, I hope to improve the success rate.

V. S.G.S.C. Motions

A summary, prepared by the Office of the Registrar, of the motions passed by the S.G.S.C. is presented in Appendix A.

VI. The Future

I remain optimistic about the future of graduate studies at S.F.U. Exciting new program initiatives in the Arts and in the Sciences are presently under consideration by the S.G.S.C. and its Assessment Committee. These will likely be before Senate in the next few months.

The quality of most of the thesis defences which I have attended has been high. With rare exception, applicants recommended by departments for entry into Ph.D. programs have been very strong. Through more aggressive recruiting of excellent applicants with the aid of entrance scholarships, rigorous enforcement of the present requirements for satisfactory progress, and more careful monitoring of student supervision, it should be possible to improve the quality of graduate programs and decrease times for degree completion, thus making more effective use of our limited resources.



B.P. Clayman
Dean of Graduate Studies

BPC:pm

Attachments

SENATE89

TABLE I

SUMMARY DATA

Annualized Graduate Enrolments

	<u>81/82</u>	<u>82/83</u>	<u>83/84</u>	<u>84/85</u>	<u>85/86</u>	<u>86/87</u>	<u>87/88</u>
Head Count	1243	1355	1414	1419	1377	1366	1426
FTE	937	1054	1137	1153	1125	1084	1147

Degrees Awarded

Master's	121	191	208	218	279	214	213
Doctoral	25	22	30	37	39	42	50
TOTAL	146	213	238	255	318	256	

TABLE II

Times for Degree Completion for Graduands Completing Degree Requirements
in 85-3 through 88-3 as of January 31, 1989

Department		Number of Program Graduands	Ave. Semesters in Program	Median Semesters in Program
Archaeology	MA	10	14.20	15
Archaeology	PHD	8	21.00	22
Biological Sciences	MPM	44	10.25	10
Biological Sciences	MSC	34	10.91	10
Biological Sciences	PHD	32	16.28	16
Business Administration	MBA	23	8.78	6
Business Administration	MBE	101	10.62	10
Chemistry	MSC	17	9.35	9
Chemistry	PHD	14	16.36	16
Communications	MCM	21	12.05	10
Communications	PHD	3	12.00	12
Computing Science	MSC	56	8.96	8
Computing Science	PHD	5	13.80	15
Criminology	MCR	26	12.23	12
Criminology	PHD	0	-	-
Lang., Lit. & Linguistics	MA	4	10.00	9
Lang., Lit. & Linguistics	MAT	7	16.43	15
Lang., Lit. & Linguistics	PHD	0	-	-
Economics	MA	44	7.34	6
Economics	PHD	19	17.68	18
Education	MAE	73	11.90	11
Education	MED	112	11.10	11
Education	MSE	4	12.50	13
Education	PHD	3	10.00	9
English	MA	28	13.46	13
English	PHD	4	18.75	15
Engineering Science	MAP	0	-	-
Engineering Science	MEN	0	-	-
Geography	MA	9	12.11	12
Geography	MSC	11	8.82	9
Geography	PHD	8	22.75	19
History	MA	16	11.69	10
History	PHD	3	18.33	15

...continued...

TABLE II

Times for Degree Completion for Graduands Completing Degree Requirements
in 85-3 through 88-3 as of January 31, 1989

Department	Program	Number of Graduands	Ave. Semesters in Program	Median Semesters in Program
Kinesiology	MSK	22	9.41	8
Kinesiology	PHD	5	18.40	16
Mathematics & Statistics	MSC	29	8.21	7
Mathematics & Statistics	PHD	9	14.00	13
Nat'l Resource Management	MRM	42	11.14	9
Philosophy	MA	0	-	-
Physics	MSC	21	9.43	9
Physics	PHD	11	13.36	11
Political Science	MA	7	11.14	15
Psychology	MA	28	7.46	7
Psychology	PHD	24	17.67	19
Sociology & Anthropology	MA	8	11.75	10
Sociology & Anthropology	PHD	1	23.00	23
Special Arrangements	MAS	6	10.83	8
Special Arrangements	MSS	3	15.00	16
Special Arrangements	PHS	10	17.20	17
Women's Studies	MA	1	7.00	7

Totals: 807 Master's Graduands and 159 Ph.D. Graduands

10.52 = Average Semesters in the Master's Program Overall
10 = Median Semesters in the Master's Program Overall

16.89 = Average Semesters in the PhD Program Overall
17 = Median Semesters in the PhD Program Overall

Note: These data are based on the total elapsed time in program and do not
take into account part-time or on-leave status.

TABLE III

SUMMARY DATA ON SFU GRADUATE GRADE POINT AVERAGES OF MASTER'S & PHD STUDENTS
WHO HAVE TAKEN SFU GRADUATE COURSES AS OF THE END OF SEMESTER 88-2

January 31, 1989

Dept	# of Stu.	CGPA 25%	CGPA 20%	CGPA 10%	CGPA Aver.	CGPA Med.	CGPA Wted.
ARCH	26	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.73	3.83	3.72
BISC	116	3.90	3.93	4.00	3.72	3.77	3.73
BUS	76	3.57	3.63	3.67	3.43	3.46	3.42
CHEM	48	3.67	3.72	3.83	3.51	3.57	3.53
CMNS	39	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.73	3.86	3.76
CMPT	42	3.94	4.00	4.00	3.65	3.61	3.64
CRIM	50	3.91	3.93	4.00	3.68	3.74	3.68
DLLL	9	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.78	3.91	3.88
ECON	59	3.61	3.67	3.78	3.31	3.43	3.41
EDUC	306	3.89	3.93	4.00	3.65	3.67	3.66
ENGL	43	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.68	3.83	3.73
ENSC	7	3.78	4.00	4.00	3.65	3.67	3.65
GEOG	23	3.86	3.89	4.00	3.61	3.70	3.62
HIST	23	3.92	3.95	4.00	3.59	3.75	3.63
KIN	37	3.82	3.83	3.93	3.52	3.67	3.59
MAST	47	3.93	4.00	4.00	3.66	3.78	3.68
MRM	33	3.78	3.83	3.94	3.62	3.67	3.61
PHIL	3	2.50	2.50	3.58	2.67	2.50	2.67
PHYS	35	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.72	3.68	3.71
POL	14	3.83	3.83	3.89	3.56	3.56	3.51
PSYC	67	3.91	3.94	4.00	3.74	3.75	3.72
SA	24	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.88	3.92	3.89
SAR	25	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.67	3.79	3.66
WS	9	3.75	3.75	3.80	3.64	3.67	3.66

TABLE IV

Summary Data on SFU Graduate Grade Point Averages of Master's and Ph.D. Students Who Have Taken SFU Graduate Courses as of Semester 87-2

Dept	# of Stu.	CGPA 25%	CGPA 20%	CGPA 10%	CGPA Aver.	CGPA Med.	CGPA Wted.
ARCH	29	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.67	3.67	3.65
BISC	111	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.71	3.75	3.69
BUS	74	3.62	3.67	3.79	3.44	3.38	3.42
CHEM	38	3.71	3.75	4.00	3.46	3.50	3.51
CMNS	35	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.74	3.78	3.79
CMPT	53	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.61	3.67	3.64
CRIM	46	3.82	3.93	4.00	3.63	3.71	3.64
DLLL	12	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.88	4.00	3.88
ECON	52	3.53	3.68	3.82	3.37	3.40	3.38
EDUC	277	3.93	4.00	4.00	3.66	3.67	3.67
ENGL	51	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.77	3.83	3.79
ENSC	14	3.78	3.78	3.89	3.48	3.67	3.48
GEOG	28	3.93	4.00	4.00	3.64	3.71	3.67
HIST	24	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.70	3.75	3.73
KIN	31	3.80	3.86	4.00	3.62	3.67	3.61
MAST	42	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.53	3.64	3.60
MRM	29	3.69	3.77	3.83	3.53	3.48	3.54
PHIL	4	3.33	3.33	3.67	3.00	3.00	2.79
PHYS	37	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.63	3.61	3.61
POL	14	3.67	3.67	4.00	3.51	3.67	3.52
PSYC	68	3.93	3.94	4.00	3.73	3.79	3.72
SA	25	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.89	4.00	3.91
SAR	22	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.69	3.77	3.66
WS	8	3.78	3.78	3.89	3.57	3.42	3.60

TABLE V

Summary Data on SFU Graduate Grade Point Averages of Master's and Ph.D. Students Who Have Taken SFU Graduate Courses as of Semester 86-2

Dept	# of Stu.	CGPA 25%	CGPA 20%	CGPA 10%	CGPA Aver.	CGPA Med.	CGPA Wted.
ARCH	32	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.73	3.75	3.72
BISC	124	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.66	3.71	3.65
BUS	135	3.50	3.60	3.86	3.37	3.33	3.37
CHEM	47	3.85	4.00	4.00	3.54	3.50	3.56
CMNS	36	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.61	3.67	3.66
CMPT	69	3.83	4.00	4.00	3.53	3.66	3.59
CRIM	50	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.55	3.62	3.53
DLLL	18	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.78	3.89	3.78
ECON	77	3.62	3.67	3.83	3.43	3.43	3.46
EDUC	287	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.67	3.80	3.69
ENGL	60	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.82	4.00	3.82
GEOG	35	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.67	3.71	3.69
HIST	29	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.53	3.74	3.59
KINES	34	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.63	3.80	3.65
MASTA	46	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.53	3.67	3.63
MRM	52	3.78	3.86	4.00	3.53	3.64	3.50
PHIL	3	3.50	3.50	3.60	3.26	3.50	3.33
PHYS	42	3.88	4.00	4.00	3.40	3.50	3.56
POL	11	3.83	4.00	4.00	3.71	3.67	3.71
PSYC	76	3.87	3.91	4.00	3.67	3.71	3.69
SA	25	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.78	4.00	3.83
SAR	26	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.77	3.88	3.77
WS	3	2.50	2.50	4.00	2.83	2.50	2.71

TABLE VI

Times for Degree Completion for Graduands Completing Degree Requirements
in 85-3 through 88-3 as of January 31, 1989

Dept	Pgm	Name	Semester Completed	Semester Started	Semesters in Program
SAR	MAS		86-1	83-3	8
SAR	MAS		85-3	82-3	10
SAR	MAS		88-1	85-3	8
SAR	MAS		86-3	84-3	7
SAR	MAS		88-3	83-3	16
SAR	MAS		88-3	83-3	16
SAR	6 Graduands; 10.83 = Average Semesters in the MAS Program 8 = Median Semesters in the MAS Program				
SAR	MSS		85-3	78-3	22
SAR	MSS		85-3	80-3	16
SAR	MSS		87-3	85-3	7
SAR	3 Graduands; 15.00 = Average Semesters in the MSS Program 16 = Median Semesters in the MSS Program				
SAR	PHS		88-1	83-1	16
SAR	PHS		88-1	85-3	8
SAR	PHS		86-2	80-1	20
SAR	PHS		87-1	81-2	18
SAR	PHS		86-2	81-1	17
SAR	PHS		86-3	82-3	13
SAR	PHS		86-3	79-3	22
SAR	PHS		86-2	78-2	25
SAR	PHS		88-3	82-3	19
SAR	PHS		87-1	82-3	14
SAR	10 Graduands; 17.20 = Average Semesters in the PHS Program 17 = Median Semesters in the PHS Program				

Note: These data are based on the total elapsed time in program and do not take into account part-time or on-leave status.

REPORT TO SENATE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SENATE GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE FROM JANUARY 1988 TO DECEMBER 1988.

Number of Meetings - Four (4)

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee with delegated power from Senate to:-

1. Recommendations for Admission under Special Arrangements. Five recommendations were considered. Four recommendations were considered once and one recommendation was considered at two meetings. All five recommendations were approved.
2. Approved the following changes in the General Regulations - Graduate Studies:

a) Thesis Defence Outcomes

The following added to the last paragraph of 1.10.2:

A decision to pass the thesis or to defer making judgement may not be reached on a tie vote of the Examining Committee. If a majority vote to pass the thesis or defer judgement cannot be reached, the thesis will be failed.

The wording under 1.10.2 be replaced with the following:

The thesis may be passed on the condition that minor revisions, which are essentially editorial in nature and/or affect the form of presentation (but not the substance) of the thesis, be completed to the satisfaction of the Senior Supervisor.

b) 'On Leave' Status

General Regulation 1.8.4 amended as follows:

a) When a situation arises which make it necessary or desirable to interrupt the work, and

b) When no substantial use will be made of university facilities.

c) English Language Competence - Section 1.3.11

English is the language of instruction and communication in the University. Accordingly, an applicant whose primary language is not English or whose previous education has been conducted in another language must demonstrate command of English sufficient to pursue graduate studies in the chosen field. Applicants normally will be required to achieve a satisfactory score on a standardized English test acceptable to the University. This test must include a writing component. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) combined with the Test of Written English (TWE) are acceptable for this purpose. The Minimum University requirements for scores on these tests is TOEFL = 570 and TWE = 5; some graduate programs have higher requirements, as described elsewhere in the Calendar.

3. Graduate curriculum changes in the Departments of Sociology/Anthropology, History, the School of Criminology, the MBA program and the French Graduate program.

4. Approval of new graduate courses in the School of Kinesiology, the Faculty of Education and the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. The following courses were deleted: Educ 872, Chem 881, Math 601 and 602. Revised course description for MRM 602.

5. The Dean of Graduate Studies was asked to investigate the possibility of setting up a service available to graduating Ph.D. students which would assist them in the preparation and distribution of dossiers for employment purposes.

6. Enrolment in Graduate Courses

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee approved a motion that Special graduate students, Qualifying students and undergraduate students (including Post-Baccalaureat Diploma students) normally may enrol in graduate courses only if their cumulative grade point averages are at least 3.00. In addition, permission of the instructor is required in each case.

7. The establishment of Graduate Appeal Procedures.

8. The approval of a Master's program in Earth Sciences.