

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY SENATE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SENATE OF SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY HELD
ON MONDAY, APRIL 8, 1991 KLAUS RIECKHOFF HALL, 7:00 P.M.

OPEN SESSION

Present: Saywell, W.G., Chair

Blackman, R.
Bowman, M.
Brown, R.
Bukovac, S.
Clayman, B.
Covell, M.
D'Auria, J.
Delgrande, J.
Dill, L.
Dobb, T.
Duguid, S.
George, D.
Giffen, K.
Heinrich, K.
Hoechsmann, M.
Leiss, W.
Menzies, R.
Munro, J.
Myers, T.
Palmer, E.
Palmer, L.
Percival, P.
Reilly, N.
Rieckhoff, K.
Saunders, R.
Shannon, D.
Stewart, M.L.
Tjosvold, D.
Verdun-Jones, S.
Wade, S.
Warsh, M.
Winne, P.
Wotherspoon, A.

Heath, R., Secretary
Grant, B., Recording Secretary

Absent: Barrow, R.
Bedford, B.
Carlson, R.
Cerccone, N.
Di Fonzo, A.
Djwa, S.
Evenden, L.
Gibbons, N.
Gray, P.
Hendrickson, T.
Hoegg, J.L.
Jones, C.
Luk, W.S.
Maaske, R.
Mauser, G.
Munro, D.
Nielsen, V.
Pinfield, L.
Rae, B.
Shapiro, S.
Strate, G.
Swartz, N.
Tuinman, J.
Walker, R.

In attendance: Beale, A.
Heath, N.
Mezei, K.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The Agenda was approved as distributed.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION OF MARCH 4, 1991

The Minutes were approved as distributed.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the Minutes.

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

The Chair extended congratulations to all those receiving NSERC or SSHRC grants and made special reference to Student Senator Michael Hoechsmann who has received a SSHRC doctoral award.

Senate was informed that Professor R. Komorous, Director of the School for Contemporary Arts recently had a major symphony which he composed performed by the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. The Chair wished to recognize this accomplishment and extended congratulations on behalf of the University.

Senate was informed that the Board of Governors at its last meeting had endorsed Challenge 2001 - The President's Strategic Plan.

Senate was informed that D. George, Dean of Applied Sciences, had accepted the position of Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs at The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. On behalf of Senate, the Chair offered congratulations and best wishes.

The Chair reported on the success of the special President's Lecture Series and hoped it would become a regular tradition at SFU.

The Chair also wished to report on the successful reception and meeting with new faculty members and was pleased to report that almost half of the new appointments were women.

5. REPORT OF COMMITTEES

i) Senate Committee on Academic Planning/Senate Graduate Studies Committee

a) Paper S.91-19 - Change to Graduate Regulation 1.7.2 - Course Requirements for a Master's Degree

Moved by J. Munro, seconded by B. Clayman

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.91-19, the change to Graduate Studies Regulation 1.7.2"

B. Clayman introduced the paper by explaining that the proposal resulted from an initiative taken by the Department of English to introduce a Master's degree based on course work and examination rather than a thesis or extended essay.

K. Rieckhoff noted that Master's degrees at SFU, and at Canadian universities in general,

traditionally have had a research component and expressed concern at what he felt was a significant departure from this tradition. Although this might be a viable option for some disciplines, he felt the documentation lacked clarification and rationale in this regard. He also felt that degree designations should provide a clear idea as to the nature of the degree and he expressed concern that the same label would be used for what he felt were two qualitatively different degrees.

K. Mezei, Chair of the Graduate Program in the Department of English, was requested to join the meeting to speak to this issue. She pointed out that even if this motion passes, the thesis option will still exist as an option in all graduate programs. However, it will also permit departments, such as the Department of English, to choose a viable alternative in order to meet student needs. She explained that students in the English Department rarely choose the extended essay option and pointed out that many universities across North America and in Canada suggest students intending to continue into a doctorate program, do a course work MA in order to obtain more breadth at the Master's level. She also emphasized that there is a substantial research component inherent in the course work and expectations are that papers from these courses will be potentially publishable.

Speaking as a member of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, P. Percival informed Senate that the Committee felt this was a very viable option for the English program and they did not consider it differently from the thesis MA option. The Committee felt stringent course work and examination requirements were equivalent to the requirements for the current extended essay option.

Referring to disciplinary differences in the way scholarship is viewed and accredited, R. Brown noted that the proposed legislation respects the integrity of individual disciplines and allows each department to make its own assessment and choose the criteria and option most appropriate to their program.

Although he had no argument with the high standards of the English Department, K. Rieckhoff expressed concern that due to competitive pressure to attract graduate students, a general regulation such as the one proposed could potentially be used by departments to lower their standards in order to get more students. However, it was pointed out that any department wishing to make use of this option needs to obtain approval through all the various levels of committees up to and including Senate.

Clarification was requested with regard to the first sentence of the last paragraph with respect to the choice among the alternatives offered. It was clearly understood that the intent of the proposal as to whether or not a student could or could not take a certain option depended on the individual departmental regulations. There were no objections to a suggestion that the Registrar clarify the wording for the Calendar entry in this regard.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

b) Paper S.91-20 - Department of English - Change to M.A. Option

Moved by J. Munro, seconded by B. Clayman

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.91-20, the replacement of the extended essay option for a M.A. degree in the Department of English"

K. Mezei, Chair of the Graduate Program in the Department of English was in attendance as a resource person.

Question was called and a vote taken

MOTION CARRIED

c) Paper S.91-21 - Department of Communication - Change to Ph.D. Requirements

Moved by J. Munro, seconded by B. Clayman

"that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.91-21, the language requirement in the Ph.D. program in the Department of Communication"

A. Beale, Chair of the Graduate Program in the Department of Communication was in attendance as a resource person. She introduced the paper by providing brief background information as to the rationale for the proposed change.

In response to an inquiry as to whether or not students will be prohibited from taking the language examination in their native language, A. Beale emphasized that the language must be related to the student's research area and if that language happened to be a language the student is fluent in they will enter the program at an advantage. With regard to an inquiry concerning administration of examinations, A. Beale advised Senate that faculty will select a short text in the appropriate language and the student will be required to write a translation of the text in a controlled environment. The results will be evaluated and verified by faculty within the Department. If no one in the Department is competent in the language being tested faculty colleagues in other departments will be asked for assistance.

In response to a concern about making students aware of this new requirement, A. Beale advised that current students in the program will not be affected by this regulation and, if passed, the information will be included in the literature about the Department which is distributed to applicants. She stressed that since a language requirement is the norm in other programs most students already anticipate this requirement and will not be surprised at this regulation.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

d) Paper S.91-22 - Department of Linguistics - Title change - LING 804 and LING 807

Moved by J. Munro, seconded by B. Clayman

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.91-22, the curriculum revisions in the Department of Linguistics"

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

e) Paper S.91-23 - Revision to Master's Degree Designations

Moved by J. Munro, seconded by B. Clayman

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.91-23, that the parenthetical Master's degree designations be removed from the following:

Master of Arts (Communication)
Master of Science (Kinesiology)
Master of Arts (Criminology)
Master of Arts (Education)
Master of Science (Education)"

Speaking against the motion, and using the Master of Science as an example, L. Dill pointed out that, if approved, a Master of Science will refer to three very different degrees from three different departments in three different faculties. He felt that without the parenthetical descriptions the designation will carry no information as to the nature of the degree. He also expressed criticism that the supporting documentation and rationale for the proposed change were inadequate.

B. Clayman viewed the proposal essentially as a housekeeping move towards more efficiency in the University's administrative processing and made special reference to the variations in the graduation ceremony because of the different degree categories. Senate was also informed that there are several degrees offered without parenthetical information such as the Master of Science and the Master of Arts awarded by the Faculty of Applied Sciences. He pointed out that none of the relevant departments opposed this change and could offer no valid reasons for retaining the parenthetical information.

Concerns were reiterated that Senate does not always receive background information and rationale for various proposals coming forward for decision. The Chair reminded Senate that it was the responsibility of the Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules to review papers prior to Senate meetings to assure adequate documentation is provided and he ensured Senate that the Committee would try to be more diligent in this responsibility.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board

a) Paper S.91-24 - Annual Report (For Information)

The Annual Report of the Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board was received by Senate for information.

iii) Senate Appeals Board

a) Paper S.91-25 - Annual Report (For Information)

N. Heath, Director of Admissions, was in attendance as a resource person.

In response to an inquiry as to why there appeared to be a such a high sustaining rate in appeals relating to withdrawals, it was pointed out that the committee viewed favourably appeals that were well supported by documentation and placed great value on the recommendations of the department, professor and chair in its considerations.

Inquiry was made as to why there were no Student Senators on the Senate Appeals Board and it was noted that when the committee was established in 1970 there were few students on Senate. Since the number of student senators had increased over time, K. Giffen suggested that the membership be changed to allow one of the student positions to be filled by a Student Senator. J. Munro expressed opinion that the whole committee structure of SUAB and SAB should possibly be reviewed at some point. The Chair indicated that the matter will be referred to the Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules for consideration and report back to Senate at a future meeting.

As a point of clarification, N. Heath explained that selective withdrawals refer to withdrawals from one or more courses but not the entire semester and retroactive withdrawals refer to withdrawals for the entire semester.

Following discussion, the Annual Report of the Senate Appeals Board was received by Senate for information.

b) Paper S.91-26 - Revision to the Terms of Reference - Senate Appeals Board

Moved by J. Munro, seconded by R. Saunders

"that Senate approve that the terms of reference of the Senate Appeals Board be amended as follows:

Procedure:

In cases where a student's request with respect to admission, re-admission, standing or credit transfer is denied by the Registrar, the student will be informed, in writing, of the right to appeal the application of a particular policy in her/his case. If the student wishes to appeal, she/he will be informed in writing of the date of the next meeting of the Senate Appeals Board.

In cases of admission and re-admission, only written appeals will be considered. In cases other than admission and re-admission, a student who submits a written appeal may choose to appear before the Board in person, and/or to delegate a representative to appear before the Board. In all cases, the decision of the Board is final."

N. Heath, Director of Admissions, was in attendance as a resource person.

A. Wotherspoon expressed concern about having an absolute restriction against the right of appearance and felt that there should perhaps be a provision allowing an appellant the right to appear before the Board in person by asking leave of the committee to do so.

It was pointed out that the considerable increase in the volume of appeals for admission and re-admission has resulted in an excessive workload for the Committee and it has become almost impossible to consider all appeals in a timely fashion to permit students to be re-admitted in the semester of application.

It was pointed out that many administrative agencies that are required by law to provide opportunity for personal interaction, have one or two committee members meet with an appellant on an individual basis and then report back to the committee as a whole. This would reduce the committee's workload while at the same time retaining a provision for the right of appearance.

In response to an inquiry as to how the appeal procedure is carried out, N. Heath explained that if a student is denied admission/re-admission, she/he is asked to contact either the Director of Admission or the Academic Advice Centre for advice so that subsequent appeals will have a better chance of success. There is no limit on the number of times a student may appeal but students are restricted to one appeal per semester.

Amendment moved by A. Wotherspoon, seconded by K. Rieckhoff

"that the second paragraph be changed to read as follows:

In cases of admission and re-admission, *normally* only written appeals will be considered. *If a student wishes to appear before the Board in person, the student may do so with the permission of the Board.* In cases other than admission and re-admission, a student who submits a written appeal may choose to appear before the Board in person, and/or to delegate a representative to appear before the Board. In all cases, the decision of the Board is final"

Opinion was expressed that justice is not served by simply curbing the right of a student to appear and if the workload of the Committee has become so difficult and excessive, it was suggested that perhaps a second committee be created to take on some of the responsibility.

In response to an inquiry as to the implications of this amendment, N. Heath was unclear as to how this would be administratively handled. He explained that since it was not desirable to have two appeals of the same issue in the same semester it might be possible, together with the Chair of the Committee, to evaluate requests for personal appearances in order to determine if one should be heard at an appeal meeting but in order to provide a decision in time for the registration process to take place and to permit a student with a reasonable chance of success, the permission of the Board might result in there having to be a quasi-administrative decision by the Board Chair and the Director of Admissions.

Given the uncertain implications of this amendment and the content of the debate on the issue, a motion of referral was moved by R. Brown as follows:

"that the issue be referred back to the Senate Appeals Board for further consideration"

Question was called on the motion to refer, and a vote taken.

MOTION TO REFER CARRIED

Secretary's Note: Since this matter was initially recommended to Senate by the Senate Committee on Agenda and Rules it will be referred to SCAR for consideration.

6. Other Business
There was no other business.

7. Notices of Motion
There were no notices of motion.

8. Information
The date of the next regularly scheduled meeting of Senate is Monday, May 13, 1991.

The Assembly moved directly into Closed Session at 8:25 p.m.

W. R. Heath
Secretary of Senate