

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

S.91-48

As amended by
Senate Oct 7/91

To: Senate

From: Nick Heath, Secretary
Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board

Date: 1991 09 19

Subject: Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference and Re-admission procedures for students who were formerly Required to Withdraw

As a result of action taken at today's meeting, the Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board recommends that Senate give consideration and approval to the following motion:

"That approval be given to the revised Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference and to the regulations on Standing and Continuance, as set out in the enclosed document, SUAB 222, and approved by the Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board."



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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Memorandum

To: Senate
From: Nick Heath,
Secretary, Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board

Date: 1991 09 25

Subject: SUAB 222 Summary

Senate Appeals Board

These changes re-iterate the right of an appellant to an in-person hearing but limit the types of appeal which may be considered by SAB.

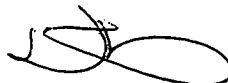
- An appeal will be considered by SAB only if there are grounds for an appeal.
- ~~Grounds for appeal are specified.~~
- Appeals will be checked by the Chair and Secretary to ensure grounds are present.
- Appeals will be handled in two stages - written and in-person.
- In-person appeals will be available to all appellants.
- A new internal review process will be set up in the Registrar's Office for dealing with other disputes over admission etc.

Standing and Continuance

These changes remove the requirement that all former RTW/^{EW}~~PW~~ students gain re-entry only through appeal to SAB. ~~Two re-entry routes are proposed.~~

- RTW students will be routinely re-admitted:
~~either~~ a) if they complete additional academic transfer work at a specified minimum performance level,
~~or~~ b) after 2 years, provided any additional academic transfer work is satisfactory.
- 'Permanent' Withdrawal (PW) becomes 'Extended' Withdrawal (EW)
- EW students will be routinely re-admitted:
~~either~~ a) if they complete additional academic transfer work at a specified minimum performance level
~~or~~ b) after 5 years provided any additional academic transfer work is satisfactory.
- Transfer credit will be granted for new course-work at a minimum C grade (currently B- minimum).

nh Sep 91



**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Registrar
Memorandum**

From: Nick Heath, Director of Admissions & Liaison
To: Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board
Date: 1991 09 16

Subject: Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference and Re-admission procedures for students who were formerly Required to Withdraw

Actions and discussions at the SUAB meetings of 22 and 28 August give rise to the following motion:

Moved

That SUAB approve and recommend to Senate for consideration and approval the revisions to the Senate Appeals Board terms of reference and to the policy on Standing and Continuance as given in document SUAB 222 and that these revisions be implemented with immediate effect.

This paper contains:

- Existing and proposed terms of reference for the Senate Appeals Board
- Existing and proposed Calendar entry giving the Policy on Standing and Continuance
- Existing and proposed Calendar entry giving information concerning appeals of various types.
- A rationale statement

Senate Appeals Board

Terms of Reference

Terms of reference and membership were established by Senate on 6 July 1970 and amended on 9 November 1970, 6 December 1971 and 5 June 1978.

Existing Version

Preamble

The Registrar's Office is charged with the administration and application of policy emanating from the Senate. If a need is felt for interpretation of such policy, the Registrar shall seek the guidance of the Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board (SUAB). It should be clearly understood that the decision to apply a policy of Senate (interpreted as necessary by SUAB) is the responsibility of the Registrar. It follows that if such a decision is appealed, only the propriety of applying a policy in a particular case can be disputed. In other words, appeal does not involve questioning the advisability of the policies of Senate. This does not mean that the rules of Senate are immutable, but simply points out that there is a difference between policy reform and appeals of specific cases. Where policy reform is deemed necessary, it shall be conducted by Senate acting either on its own initiative or upon a recommendation from SUAB.

Purpose

To consider cases wherein an individual feels aggrieved by the decision of the Registrar to apply a particular admission, readmission, standing, or credit transfer policy in his or her specific case. The appellant has the option of a personal appearance before the Board, if so desired.

Procedure

In cases where a student request with respect to admission, readmission, standing, or credit transfer is denied by the Registrar, the student will be informed, in writing, of his right to appeal the application of a particular policy in his case. If he wishes to appeal, he will be informed of the date of the next meeting of the committee in writing and of his right to appear before the committee in person, via a representative or both. The decision of the committee is final.

Proposed Version

Preamble

The Registrar's Office is charged with the administration and application of policy emanating from the Senate. *Admission, readmission and transfer credit decisions will be made by authorized personnel in the Office of the Registrar.*

Regardless of whether or not there are grounds for an appeal, the Director of Admissions and Liaison will authorize a review of any admission, readmission or transfer credit decision which has been questioned or disputed. This review will not constitute an appeal. A negative decision in a review will not prejudice a subsequent appeal. The purpose of this review will be to check decisions for accuracy and consistency and to bring attention to policies and procedures which may be giving rise to complaints or confusion.

The Registrar *shall refer* to the Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board (SUAB) for interpretation *or revision* of policy.

Purpose

To consider cases wherein an individual feels aggrieved by the decision of the Registrar to apply a particular admission, re-admission, standing, or credit transfer policy in his or her specific case, *when special circumstances are present.*

Procedure

In cases where a student request with respect to admission, readmission, 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 his *or her* case. *The appeal must be presented in writing and must specify the grounds for the appeal.*

Each appeal will be screened by the Chair and Secretary of the Board to ensure that there are grounds for the appeal. If no special circumstances are present, the appeal will not be forwarded to the Board for a decision and the appellant will be informed of this.

If special circumstances are present, the appeal will go forward to the Board at its next meeting. The

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)

Existing Version

Proposed Version

Procedure (continued)

Board will review the documentation. If the appellant had requested a written appeal only, or if the Board judged that the written material presented was sufficient for a positive decision to be made on behalf of the appellant, the appeal will be decided at this stage (to be known as Stage 1).

All other appellants will be informed of the date of the next meeting of the Board in writing and of their right to appear before the Board in person, via a representative or both.

Following an individual hearing, (to be known as Stage 2), the Board will decide each case *in camera*, based on the written and oral evidence presented. Decisions will normally be released shortly after the hearing.

The decision of the *Board* is final.

Grounds For Appeal

Special circumstances are limited to documented, significant physical or psychological distress, or documented serious mis-advice or improper administration by authorized University personnel, with evidence that the appellant's studies were adversely affected. The Board will assess cases based on the evidence submitted, both written and oral, the academic record of the appellant, and probable actions of a hypothetical "reasonable person" who might encounter circumstances similar to those encountered by the appellant.

Appeals based on dissatisfaction with University policy, or disagreements concerning the evaluation of admissibility (e.g. g.p.a. calculation, questions concerning English proficiency, etc.) or failure to meet published deadlines will not constitute special circumstances.

Operation

A quorum is three voting members.
Meetings shall be closed and proceedings shall remain confidential.

Regular meetings will occur three times a semester: in the week prior to registration; after regular registration, but before the final date to change courses; and in the ninth week of the semester.

Operation

A quorum is three voting members.

Meetings shall be closed and proceedings shall remain confidential.

Regular meetings will occur *at least* three times a semester: in the week prior to *the start of classes*; *during the course change period*; and in *approximately the ninth week of the semester*. Special meetings may be scheduled as deemed necessary by the *Secretary* and shall be announced well in advance of the meeting.

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)**Existing and Proposed Versions****Membership**

Student or Faculty	Chair (non-voting except in case of a tie, in which case it would be mandatory to vote)
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Selected by majority vote of the voting members of the SAB, subject to ratification by SUAB. In the event that the regular voting members of the SAB are unable to agree by majority vote on the selection of a Chair, the selection shall be resolved by SUAB. The Chair may be a student or a faculty member who is not otherwise a member of the SAB.

Faculty member	Elected by and from SUAB
Faculty member	
Alternate *	Elected by and from SUAB
Faculty Senator	Elected by and from Senate
Faculty Senator	
Alternate*	Elected by and from Senate
2 Student Members	Selected by the Student Society
2 Student Alternates	Selected by the Student Society
Registrar (or designate)	Secretary (non-voting)

* The faculty alternates may take the place of either faculty representative.

Existing Calendar Regulations

As given in 91/92 Calendar p.29

Standing Required for Continuance

All students at Simon Fraser University are expected to maintain acceptable standards of scholarship. Specifically, they are expected to maintain a minimum 2.00 CGPA. A student who does not maintain this minimum CGPA will be considered to be performing unsatisfactorily in his/her studies. Regulations are applied to obtain reasonable equitability between transfer and non-transfer students. The following procedures will apply for evaluating student performance in accordance with the policy governing Continuance, Withdrawal and Readmission.

- Academic performance will be evaluated on courses for which Simon Fraser University grades have been assigned. ("Assigned grades" will include grades A+ through to D, F, DE, and N, but will exclude P, W, CR, AE, CC, GN and AU).
- Following admission, no formal assessment will take place until the student has completed a minimum of 9 semester hours of assigned grades.

Proposed Calendar Regulations**Standing Required for Continuance**

All students at Simon Fraser University are expected to maintain acceptable standards of scholarship. Specifically, they are expected to maintain a minimum 2.00 CGPA. A student who does not maintain this minimum CGPA will be considered to be performing unsatisfactorily in his/her studies. Regulations are applied to obtain reasonable equitability between transfer and non-transfer students. The following procedures will apply for evaluating student performance in accordance with the policy governing Continuance, Withdrawal and Readmission.

- Academic performance will be evaluated on courses for which Simon Fraser University grades have been assigned. ("Assigned grades" will include grades A+ through to D, F, DE, and N, but will exclude P, W, CR, AE, CC, GN and AU).
- Following admission, no formal assessment will take place until the student has completed a minimum of 9 semester hours of assigned grades.

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)**Existing Calendar Regulations (continued)**

- Transfer students who were admitted to the University under the “Special Entry” category with an admission average below 2.00 and who have attempted 9 or more semester hours of transfer credit will be admitted on Academic Probation.

Ineligible to Re-register

A student with a CGPA of less than 1.0 in two consecutive semesters, or with only N or F grades in two consecutive semesters, will be ineligible to re-register for one calendar year.

Academic Probation

A student who has received assigned grades for at least 9 Simon Fraser University semester hours will be placed on Academic Probation if the CGPA earned is lower than 2.00.

During the probation period, the student must complete a minimum of 9 Simon Fraser University semester hours of assigned grades before re-assessment will occur. A student on Academic Probation may not repeat a course for which a grade of C or higher has been assigned. A student on Academic Probation may not register in a course overload as specified by the student's faculty.

If at the end of the probation period,

- the grade point average on assigned grades during the probation period and the CGPA are 2.00 or higher, the student will be considered to be in good academic standing.
- the grade point average on assigned grades during the probation period is 2.00 or higher, but the CGPA is less than 2.00, the student will continue on Academic Probation.
- the grade point average on assigned grades during the probation period is less than 2.00, but the CGPA is 2.00 or higher, the student will continue on Academic Probation. (This could apply to students repeating courses during the probation period.)
- both the grade point average on assigned grades during the probation period and the CGPA are less than 2.00, the student will be Required To Withdraw from the University for twelve (12) calendar months.

Proposed Calendar Regulations (continued)

- Transfer students who were admitted to the University under the “Special Entry” category with an admission average below 2.00 and who have attempted 9 or more semester hours of transfer credit will be admitted on Academic Probation.

Repeated Withdrawals

Students who withdraw from all courses in three consecutive semesters will be ineligible to re-register.

Ineligible to Re-register

A student with a CGPA of less than 1.0 in two consecutive semesters, or with only N or F grades in two consecutive semesters, will be ineligible to re-register.

Academic Probation

A student who has received assigned grades for at least 9 Simon Fraser University semester hours will be placed on Academic Probation if the CGPA earned is lower than 2.00.

During the probation period, the student must complete a minimum of 9 Simon Fraser University semester hours of assigned grades before re-assessment will occur. A student on Academic Probation may not repeat a course for which a grade of C or higher has been assigned. A student on Academic Probation may not register in a course overload as specified by the student's faculty.

If at the end of the probation period,

- the grade point average on assigned grades during the probation period and the CGPA are 2.00 or higher, the student will be considered to be in good academic standing.
- the grade point average on assigned grades during the probation period is 2.00 or higher, but the CGPA is less than 2.00, the student will continue on Academic Probation.
- the grade point average on assigned grades during the probation period is less than 2.00, but the CGPA is 2.00 or higher, the student will continue on Academic Probation. (This could apply to students repeating courses during the probation period.)
- both the grade point average on assigned grades during the probation period and the CGPA are less than 2.00, the student will be Required To Withdraw from the University.

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)

Existing Calendar Regulations (continued)

Required to Withdraw

After receiving Simon Fraser University assigned grades for at least 18 semester hours (9 if admitted on Academic Probation), a student may be Required to Withdraw after being placed on Academic Probation.

Permanent Withdrawal

A student must have received Simon Fraser University assigned grades for at least 27 semester hours (or 27 semester hours and transfer credits combined). A student may be placed on Permanent Withdrawal after first having been Required to Withdraw and then readmitted.

Appeals for Readmission

A student who is either Required to Withdraw, Ineligible to Re-register, or placed on Permanent Withdrawal, must submit an appeal for readmission to the Senate Appeals Board if he/she wishes to resume studies at Simon Fraser University. She/he may be readmitted following an absence from the University of at least 12 months (for Required to Withdraw/Ineligible to Re-register) or 3 years (for Permanent Withdrawal).

Readmission is at the discretion of the Senate Appeals Board and only a limited number of former students may be readmitted. In exceptional circumstances, students may be readmitted early. In general, students who have been withdrawn involuntarily are advised to attend another institution to complete further academic work or to repeat academic work taken previously in order to demonstrate their academic abilities. Appeals must be received at least 3 months before the start of the semester applied for.

Requests for transfer credit for work taken at other post-secondary institutions after a student has been required to withdraw from Simon Fraser University will be reviewed only if the student is subsequently readmitted. Normally, such transfer credit will only be granted if the grades obtained at the other institution are B- or better and if the content of the courses does not overlap with credit obtained earlier.

Proposed Calendar Regulations (continued)

Required to Withdraw

After receiving Simon Fraser University assigned grades for at least 18 semester hours (9 if admitted on Academic Probation), a student may be Required to Withdraw after being placed on Academic Probation.

Extended Withdrawal

A student must have received Simon Fraser University assigned grades for at least 27 semester hours (or 27 semester hours and transfer credits combined). A student may be placed on Extended Withdrawal after first having been Required to Withdraw and then readmitted.

Readmission of former students who have been withdrawn involuntarily

Former students who have been involuntarily withdrawn from SFU (Required to Withdraw, Ineligible to Re-register, or placed on Extended Withdrawal) will be considered for readmission based on :

~~either~~

a) the amount (sem. hrs. of credit) and quality of performance achieved (gpa) in academic course work completed after the student last registered at SFU

~~or~~

~~b) the elapsed time since the student last attended SFU.~~

Former students who are **Required to Withdraw** or **Ineligible to Re-register** (RTW or ING i.e.- CGPA less than 1.0 in two consecutive semesters) will be eligible for readmission if they ~~either~~;

a) Complete further transferable academic work, according to the following schedule:

- any of the following four options

sem. hrs.	min gpa.
12 - 17	3.50
18 - 23	3.00
24 - 29	2.75 gpa or at the acceptance gpa *, whichever is higher
30 or more	acceptance gpa *

Instead of the above, a completed 2 year technical diploma with a 70% min. avg and at least 12 sem hrs of transferable course work at a 2.75 gpa will be accepted. The transferable work may be within the diploma program or supplementary to it.

~~or~~

~~b) Are absent from the University for 6 semesters (2 years). If any post-secondary transferable work has~~

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)**Proposed Calendar Regulations (continued)**

~~been completed in the intervening period, it must be at a minimum overall gpa of 2.00, otherwise readmission will be denied.~~

Former students who are on **Extended Withdrawal (EW)** will be eligible for readmission if they

~~either~~

a) Complete further transferable academic work, according to the following schedule:

- any of the following four options

sem.hrs.	min gpa.
24 - 35	3.5 gpa
36 - 47	3.0 gpa
48 - 59	2.75 gpa or at the acceptance gpa *, whichever is higher
60 or more	acceptance gpa *

Instead of the above, a completed 2 year technical diploma with a 70% min. avg and at least 24 sem hrs of transferable course work at a 2.75 gpa will be accepted. The transferable work may be within the diploma program or supplementary to it.

~~or~~

~~b) Are absent from the University for 15 semesters (5 years). If any post-secondary transferable work has been completed in the intervening period, it must be at a minimum overall gpa of 2.00, otherwise readmission will be denied.~~

Former students who are **Ineligible to Re-register** (INF i.e. only N or F grades in two consecutive semesters or INW i.e. withdrew voluntarily in three consecutive semesters) whose SFU cgpas are below 2.00, will be eligible for readmission on the same basis as RTW/ING former students (see above).

Former students who are **Ineligible to Re-register** (INF i.e. only N or F grades in two consecutive semesters or INW i.e. withdrew voluntarily in three consecutive semesters) whose SFU cgpas are 2.0 or higher, will be eligible for readmission if they complete at least 3 sem hrs of further transferable work at a minimum 2.00 gpa:

* The acceptance gpa refers to the minimum gpa in effect for the semester which must be met by BC College transfer students, according to enrollment limitation measures.

Deadlines

Deadlines for consideration will be the same as for other students seeking readmission (currently day before start of classes). Decisions will be mailed or applicants will be phoned, depending on the date of the decision.

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)**Existing Calendar Regulations (continued)****Standing on Readmission**

If readmitted, students will be placed on Academic Probation again, subject to the conditions for Academic Probation as described above. However, if both the CGPA and the GPA on assigned grades are below 2.00 at the end of the probation period, the student will be placed on Permanent Withdrawal and will not be considered for readmission for a period of at least three calendar years.

Academic Alert

Students whose grade point average for the semester falls below 2.00, but who are not placed on any of the above academic standings, will receive an "Academic Alert" notification and will be advised to seek counselling at the Academic Advice Centre.

Repeated Withdrawals

Students who withdraw from all courses in three consecutive semesters will be ineligible to re-register for one calendar year.

Proposed Calendar Regulations (continued)**Duplicate Courses**

Duplicate courses (repeated attempts at courses which had been passed prior to leaving SFU with a grade of C or higher) will not count in the credit hour or gpa calculations in readmission cases.

Final Grades Evaluated

Assessment will be based only on final grades (i.e. courses in progress will not be evaluated).

Transfer Credit

Credit for transferable courses will be granted on readmission, subject to a C minimum grade in each course, and subject to normal transfer credit limits. Letters of Permission will not be issued to students who are not in Good Academic Standing.

Standing on Readmission

If readmitted, students will be placed on Academic Probation again, subject to the conditions described above. If both the CGPA and the GPA on assigned grades are below 2.00 at the end of the probation period, the student will be placed on Extended Withdrawal.

Academic Alert

Students whose grade point average for the semester falls below 2.00, but who are not placed on any of the above academic standings, will receive an "Academic Alert" notification and will be advised to seek counselling at the Academic Advice Centre.

Existing Calendar Information**Student Appeals**

For graduate student appeals, refer to 1.16 of the Graduate General Regulations.

Students may appeal certain University decisions as follows.

Grades

May be appealed to the instructor, Department Chair and, in some cases, Faculty Dean in accordance with Academic Policy AC39.

Course Drops

If a department denies permission to drop a course, students may appeal this decision to the Senate Appeals Board. This procedure is also followed for course drops after the extended course drop period (i.e., Week 12).

Proposed Calendar Information**Student Appeals**

For graduate student appeals, refer to 1.16 of the Graduate General Regulations.

Students may appeal certain University decisions as follows.

Grades

May be appealed to the instructor, Department Chair and, in some cases, Faculty Dean in accordance with Academic Policy AC39.

Course Drops

If a department denies permission to drop a course, students may appeal this decision to the Senate Appeals Board. This procedure is also followed for course drops after the extended course drop period (i.e., Week 12). (See Senate Appeals Board procedures below).

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)**Existing Calendar Information (continued)****Readmission**

After a period of involuntary withdrawal, appeals for readmission may be considered by the Senate Appeals Board.

Admission

Appeals for admission may be considered by the Senate Appeals Board.

Registration and Late Registration Fees, Tuition Fee Refunds

Appeals may be considered by the Registration Appeals Committee.

Academic Penalties (e.g. Suspension)

Appeals may be considered by the Senate Committee on Academic Discipline.

Entry to Limited Enrollment Program or Faculty

Appeals may be considered by the appropriate Chair, Director or Dean.

Procedure

The various committees mentioned above may be contacted through the following offices.

Registration Appeals Committee

Associate Director, Records and Registration
Office of the Registrar

Senate Appeals Board

Director, Admissions and Liaison
Office of the Registrar

Senate Committee on Academic Discipline

Registrar
Office of the Registrar

Proposed Calendar Information (continued)**Admission and Readmission**

Appeals for admission and readmission may be considered by the Senate Appeals Board. (See Senate Appeals Board procedures below)

Assignment of transfer credit

Appeals for revision to transfer credit may be considered by the Senate Appeals Board. (See Senate Appeals Board procedures below.)

Registration and Late Registration Fees, Tuition Fee Refunds

Appeals may be considered by the Registration Appeals Committee.

Academic Penalties (e.g. Suspension)

Appeals may be considered by the Senate Committee on Academic Discipline.

Entry to Limited Enrollment Program or Faculty

Appeals may be considered by the appropriate Chair, Director or Dean.

Procedure***Senate Appeals Board***

Secretary: Director of Admissions and Liaison
Office of the Registrar

The purpose of the Senate Appeals Board is to consider cases wherein an individual feels aggrieved by the decision of the Registrar to apply a particular admission, readmission, standing, or credit transfer policy in his or her specific case, when special circumstances are present.

An applicant, student or former student who disagrees with a decision of the Office of the Registrar has the right to appeal this decision.

Grounds for appeal must be specified.

A person who submits an appeal must specify the grounds for the appeal in writing.

Grounds for Appeal

Special circumstances are limited to documented, significant physical or psychological distress, or serious mis-advice or improper administration by authorized University personnel, with evidence that the appellant's studies were adversely affected. The Board will assess cases based on the evidence submitted, both written and oral, the academic record of the appellant, and probable actions of a hypothetical "reasonable person" who might encounter circumstances similar to those encountered by the appellant.

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)**Proposed Calendar Information (continued)**

Appeals based on dissatisfaction with University policy, or disagreements concerning the evaluation of admissibility (e.g. g.p.a. calculation, questions concerning English proficiency, etc.) or failure to meet published deadlines will not constitute special circumstances.

Leave to appeal

The Chair and Secretary of the Senate Appeals Board will jointly decide whether or not an appeal goes forward for consideration, based on the presence or lack of special circumstances. The relative strength of any special circumstances will be judged by the full Board. An appellant may re-submit an appeal for consideration only if new information is presented.

If special circumstances are present, the appeal will be submitted to the Board for consideration at its next meeting.

Stage 1 - Written submissions considered

All appeals which go forward to the Board will be reviewed in two stages. In Stage 1, the written documentation will be reviewed. The Board will decide cases in which

- a) the appellant requests a written appeal only
- or b) the appellant requests an in-person hearing appeal but the SAB considers that the written material presented is sufficient for a positive decision.

All other cases will be deferred until a later meeting for a Stage 2 hearing.

Stage 2 - In-person hearings

Appellants will be contacted by the Secretary and asked to appear at a scheduled SAB meeting. At the hearing, the appellant and/or her/his representative may provide information orally and answer questions posed by members of the SAB. Decisions will normally be released shortly after the hearing.

Decision review process

Regardless of whether or not there are grounds for an appeal, the Director of Admissions and Liaison will authorize a review of any admission, readmission or transfer credit decision which has been questioned or disputed. This review would not constitute an appeal. A negative decision in a review would not prejudice a subsequent appeal. The purpose of this review would be to check decisions for accuracy and consistency.

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)**Proposed Calendar Information (continued)**

The other committees mentioned above may be contacted through the following offices.

Registration Appeals Committee

Associate Director, Records and Registration
Office of the Registrar

Senate Committee on Academic Discipline

Registrar
Office of the Registrar

A) Rationale statement - Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference**Appeals limited to cases with special circumstances**

The existing terms of reference do not distinguish between cases of special hardship and cases of individuals who are displeased when University policies are applied in their case. It would be inappropriate for the SAB to hear each case involving an aggrieved person. For example, each of the approx. 1,400 applicants in 1991, who met all published admission requirements but who were not admitted, might be 'aggrieved' at not being admitted to the University, yet there is little SAB can do for them and it would be unreasonable for SAB to deal with each case individually in the absence of special circumstances.

Leave to appeal

If special circumstances are accepted as being necessary for a valid appeal, someone must decide which cases go forward. This matter has received considerable attention. The most obvious choice of individuals are the two SAB members who are (normally) non-voting, the Chair and Secretary. To include individuals from outside SAB would create an additional procedural level, requiring formal terms of reference and election or appointment procedures. A sub-committee of voting SAB members would create two levels of membership, which would also be undesirable.

Two stage appeal process

This process has evolved over approximately the period September 1990 to August 1991 and adds to the efficiency of the SAB while minimizing inconvenience to appellants, who frequently are not required to appear at a hearing because the written evidence is sufficient and satisfactory.

Registrar's Office Internal Review Process

An administrative review of cases is desirable, given the volume of cases handled in the Office (e.g. approximately 18,000 admission cases per annum). It is appropriate that the review be conducted by an individual in a higher position of authority than the one who made the original decision, but it is not appropriate for the review to be external to the Office, because accuracy of evaluations will be improved only by changes in procedures, which must be determined by the Office's management personnel.

B) Rationale statement - Readmission of students who were previously Required to Withdraw**Background**

Since approximately 1970, the Senate Appeals Board has dealt with appeals for retroactive course drops, admission and readmission and, occasionally, disputes concerning transfer credit. The admission and readmission appeals were restricted to special cases involving hardship or extenuating circumstances or former students on Permanent Withdrawal. All cases were considered by the Board only after the Office of the Registrar had evaluated the application and had rendered a decision.

In 1988, SAB was instructed to also decide on every case of readmission involving any student who had been formerly required to withdraw. These latter cases did not necessarily involve 'extenuating circumstances' and greatly added to the already large case-load of the SAB. Typically, the Board has reviewed 100-150 such

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)

cases each semester. To cope with the increased volume of cases, SAB suspended its rules and decided readmission cases only through written submission. SAB reported these actions to Senate in its annual reports, received by Senate in Spring 1989, 1990 and 1991. However, when SUAB attempted to legitimize this procedure in April 1991, the proposal was referred back by Senate. Senators felt that the right of a personal hearing should not be withdrawn and urged SAB and SUAB to find other solutions.

Interim procedures were used this Summer to decide on some 155 readmission cases for 91-3. On 9 July, SAB held an *in camera* meeting, followed by a hearing on 26 July which was attended by over 40 appellants. Each appellant was permitted 5 minutes to provide information to the SAB.

Reasons for and against limiting readmissions

SUAB favours rapid readmission for students who have demonstrated good academic performance and unlimited readmission for others who have been absent for a minimum period.

Prior to 1988, readmissions of students who were previously RTW were approved by the Office of the Registrar, provided that the former student had been absent for at least a year and that any academic work completed in the interim met the minimum 2.00 gpa standard.

This unlimited readmission suited the University; it provided predictable, simple criteria for readmission and it did not affect access to the University by qualified applicants. One weakness was that it provided little encouragement or incentive to students to solve their various problems or improve their performance. Remedial services at SFU are limited, and many students with specific weaknesses are not able to overcome these deficiencies here and might be better advised to attend a community college or similar institution where a broader range of preparatory programs are available.

The argument for limiting readmissions is based on perceptions of equity between former SFU students who were withdrawn for academic reasons and prospective SFU students for whom we are unable to find spaces. Individuals may favour one group over the other. SUAB has attempted to strike a balance between the two groups.

Lapse of Time as a readmission reason

The lapse of time has not been a factor in SAB's decisions, except that former students seeking early readmission (inside one year) would be expected to achieve higher standards than 'regular' readmissions. Some members of SUAB, however, wished to provide former students with an alternative to the academic criteria. In this way, students who had little to gain by attending another institution (in their upper levels or already had received maximum transfer credits) could achieve readmission without re-taking work which would not count toward their degrees. In addition, some SUAB members felt that a time lapse option would be a suitable way of dealing with students who had failed for non-scholastic reasons, such as financial and personal problems.

This position is supported by a memo submitted to SUBA. by M. Cairns, Director of the Academic Advice Centre.

Effects of previous readmission practices

Unlimited readmissions prior to 1988 resulted in substantial numbers of weak students re-entering the University. About one third of the readmits successfully resumed their studies. One third were quickly placed on PW and the remaining third did not persist or dropped out without regaining Good Academic Standing.

In 1988, the University began to exclude many prospective new students for lack of course space. The more restrictive readmission practices of the SAB resulted in substantially improved success rates of readmits. About two thirds of these regained Good Academic Standing and only one third went PW or dropped out.

In the past three years, data show the following evaluation outcomes immediately after grades are released:

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)

	1988	1989	1990	1991
Permanent Withdrawal	92	41	38	34§
Required to Withdraw*	732	649	811	421§

* includes all withdrawal types incl. RTW, ING, INF, INW but excl PW

§ Year to date - evaluation figures are for 91-1 and 91-2 only

About half of the withdrawn students seek readmission. Totals for the same years are:

	1988	1989	1990	1991
# readmission appeals	341	381	379	453
# students readmitted by SAB	88	97	130	174†

† includes 39 Special Semester readmits.

During this same period, the University has been restricting enrollment, and many fully-qualified students have been unable to enter:

	1988	1989	1990	1991
# of applicants excluded from SFU for space/resource reasons	793	392	1037	1472

If students were readmitted on no other basis than lapse of time and if the time lapse were 2 years for RTWs and 5 years for PWs, approximately 90 former RTW and 9 former PW students would have been readmitted in 1991 in addition to the approximately 140 who met academic criteria. It is likely that these numbers would be greater if former students knew that this time factor would ensure their readmission.

Reasons for developing Readmission Criteria

Over the past 3 years, SAB have established criteria for assessing which former students should be readmitted. These criteria have evolved as the University has alternately tightened and relaxed its acceptance standards, according to available space. It was originally believed that other criteria would also be helpful in deciding cases. As a result, the following questions were developed in consultation with the Director and Special Advisers in the Academic Advice Centre:

- 1) Can you identify the circumstances and causes of your previous poor performance? What are they?
- 2) What measures have you taken to remedy these problems or academic deficiencies?
- 3) Can you substantiate your responses to questions (1) and (2) (i.e. with letter, transcripts or other documents)?
- 4) Have you obtained advice on your future studies (e.g. from your former faculty or department, or from the Academic Advice Centre)? Please attach a copy of the adviser's report.
- 5) Why do you think you would now be successful as a student?

In practice, the SAB found that the answers given by the majority of appellants were vague and of little value in deciding the appeals. Clearly, there were many students who recognized, after being Required to Withdraw, that they were not sufficiently motivated, self-disciplined or mature to take advantage of the opportunities available at Simon Fraser University.

Consequently, the Board has decided most cases on grounds of demonstrated performance after leaving SFU.

The following excerpt from the current 'Guide to Academic Standing and Continuance' illustrates this.

The Senate Appeals Board generally expects that students who wish to be readmitted will have completed one or more semesters of further transferable course work (12 or more semester hours) at another institution in order to demonstrate that their academic performance has improved. A GPA of approximately 3.0 will be expected if the student has a further 12-15 semester hours of course work; a GPA of approximately 2.5 will be expected from students who have a further 18-30 semester hours of course work. These averages are estimates only and are subject to change without notice.

Senate Appeals Board Terms of Reference (continued)

The academic criteria presented in SUAB 222 recognize outstanding performance and allow good, but undistinguished, students to re-enter on academic criteria no lower than would be expected of incoming transfer students from B.C. Colleges. This represents a balance between giving preference to former SFU students and providing the best possible public access to SFU.

A major advantage of the new criteria are that they are specific requirements and not just guidelines, hence RTW students have a definite target to achieve if they wish to be readmitted.

Who makes the readmission decision

In the past four years, readmission decisions have been made by the SAB, largely according to the criteria they developed, but this is inefficient and cumbersome for all concerned: instead, evaluation of students' records would be better performed by Admissions staff in the Office of the Registrar, leaving the SAB to deal with the cases which deserve special attention because of unique or special conditions.

Transfer Credit on Readmission

For consistency with other students who may take courses outside SFU toward their SFU credentials, SUAB supported a change of the minimum grade accepted for transfer credit to be awarded from B- to C. Members felt that if improved academic performance had been demonstrated, the higher minimum grade was punitive and if there were problems concerning the standards in externally-taught courses, these should be addressed through the articulation process. They also noted that, for new students, D grades were granted transfer credit.

Consultation

These proposals have been circulated widely and appear to have the support of the student representatives on SUAB and SAB.

Implementation

If approved, these revised procedures can be implemented quickly and can be effective for students seeking readmission to 92-1. Former students who have been required to withdraw in the past will be contacted to advise them of the revised readmission procedures and criteria.

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