

DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED BY SENATE
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SENATE OF SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY HELD ON
MONDAY, APRIL 1, 1996 IN ROOM 3210 WMX, 7:00 P.M.
OPEN SESSION

Present: Boland, L., Acting Chair

Alderson, E.
Arnason, K.
Barrow, R.
Blaney, J.
Blazenko, G.
Bullock, D.
Ciconte, R.
Clayman, B.
Dahl, V.
D'Auria, J.
Dunsterville, V.
Eaton, C.
Etherington, L.
Frindt, R. (representing C. Jones)
Gagan, D.
Heinrich, K.
Hewitt, K.
Karabotsos, F.
LeMare, L.
Luk, W.S.
Mathewes, R.
McAskill, I.
McInnes, D.
Naef, B.
Osborne, J.
Percival, P.
Peterson, L.
Rawicz, A.
Reed, C.
Ross, D.
Scharfe, E.
Shapiro, S.
Sitter, R.
Stewart, M.L.
Whitbread, K.
Wickstrom, N.

Absent: Beattie, S.
Boote, D.
Bowen, M.
Dobb, T.
Giffen, K.
Howlett, M.
Jahn, R.
Keto, D.
Lewis, B.
Marteniuk, R.
Mauser, G.
Pierce, J.
Sanghera, B.
Segal, J.
Stubbs, J.
Underhill, O.
Warsh, M.
Wideen, M.
Winne, P.

In attendance:
Heath, N.
McClaren, M.
Nesbit, T.

W.R. Heath, Dean of Student Services and Registrar
A. Watt, Director Secretariat Services
B. Grant, Recording Secretary

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

A question of privilege relating to the proposal to charge faculty and students for modem use was raised by P. Percival, and the issue was placed under Item 6 - Other Business.

It was noted that R. Heath, Dean of Student Services and Registrar, was in attendance as a new administrator and inquiry was made about how his new role affected the structure of Senate membership. Senate was advised that R. Heath was entitled to attend Senate as a non-voting member in his capacity as Registrar. Since he was not sitting as a voting member in his capacity as Dean, changes were not required to the structure of Senate membership.

The Agenda was approved as amended.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OPEN SESSION OF MARCH 4, 1996

The Minutes were approved as distributed.

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

i) On behalf of Senate, the Chair welcomed newly elected Student Senator, D. Boote, Faculty of Education and advised Senate that he had been elected to fill an existing vacancy on Senate for a term of office up to May 31, 1996.

ii) Paper S.96-27 - Elections

Senate was advised that no further nominations were received; K. Whitbread is therefore elected by acclamation to the Senate Committee on Academic Planning and the Senate Committee on University Budget, and G. Mattu is elected by acclamation to the International Undergraduate Student Exchange Committee. All other positions remain vacant and will be brought forward.

iii) Budget

Inquiry was made as to whether or not SCUB, as Senate's representative on financial issues, had been involved in considerations related to the recent budget cutbacks and employee lay-offs since some of the decisions have affected academic matters. Since the Acting Chair of Senate is also the Chair of SCUB, L. Boland turned the Chair over to B. Clayman for discussion of this item.

Senate was advised that SCUB had not participated in the recent budgetary decisions. The Chair of SCUB is a member of PACOPAB, the President's advisory committee on budget and it was noted that SCUB has access to the budget process since the Vice-President, Finance and Administration attends all meetings of SCUB. The Chair of SCUB attended two meetings of PACOPAB before SCUB met with the President in mid-December to discuss SCUB's role in the budget process. At the December meeting, SCUB took the position that the President could benefit from meeting with SCUB because it has wide representation from the campus community, and is not composed of voting administrators. SCUB maintains the position that it would prefer to have genuine input to future decisions rather than as at present, simply reacting to things that have been done.

D. Gagan reminded Senate that public meetings to describe both the budget process and the content of budget reduction measures had been held. In addition, he, as Vice-President Academic, attended budget meetings in Departments and Faculties throughout the entire process and he felt there was fairly widespread consultation and opportunity for members of the university to participate in the budget process. There was however not a lot of public discussion about the issue relating to employee reduction since that process is subject to contractual obligations and has not yet been finalized. It is expected that the end result,

excluding TSSU positions, will be possibly up to ten involuntary layoffs once all the currently vacant jobs in the University have been filled by those who wish to fill them. Faculties have been advised that funding of approximately one million dollars has been re-distributed to be used at the discretion of the Deans with a proviso that the funds be used in the first instance to support TAs and the tutorial system.

P. Percival noted that SCUB had not been consulted about whether or not to institute cuts in advance of a budget announcement from the Government or about the one million dollar re-distribution of funds just announced to Senate.

L. Boland returned to the Chair.

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

There was no report from the Chair.

5. REPORT OF COMMITTEES

a) Senate Committee on Academic Planning

i) Paper S.96-28 - Diverse Qualifications Undergraduate Admissions Policy

Moved by D. Gagan, seconded by J. Osborne

"that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.96-28, the proposed policy on undergraduate admissions, for a trial period from Spring Semester 1997 until Fall Semester 1999, with a review to occur in 1998, as described in the attached paper 'Diverse Qualifications Undergraduate Admission Policy' and that an appropriate committee be established for the adjudication of this policy"

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

D. Gagan introduced the paper by pointing out that the diverse qualifications undergraduate admissions policy provides a slightly different way for students to acquire admission to SFU by softening the current admission policy at the margin allowing students to gain entry on the basis of special qualifications and activities in addition to academic performance. If implemented approximately 450 students per year are expected to be admitted to the university under the policy.

Concern was expressed about the quality of the information which this policy will produce. It was felt that there is opportunity for people to misrepresent themselves since much of the information which will be submitted in terms of diverse qualifications is not easily verifiable, and even if only a small percentage of applicants misrepresent themselves, a lot of error will be introduced into the selection process unless serious efforts at verification take place.

It was noted that given the necessity to restrict admissions to the University, it was crucial to choose the most appropriate and best students available. Having to base admission decisions solely on information supplied by an applicant, puts the assessor in a very difficult situation. Resources which are available and which will be devoted to a verification process appear to be minimal, and suggestion was made that it might be

simpler, less expensive and better information received if students were nominated on the basis of diverse qualifications by high school principals, for example.

Normally pilot projects set out written criteria which will be used to judge the failure or success of the project, and concern was expressed that no attempt has been made to do so in this proposal. Senate was informed that an evaluation process is currently in the process of being designed.

Reference was made to the policy statement and principles, and concern was expressed about the fairness of grouping outstanding students with students who suffer disadvantages. Suggestion was made that disadvantaged students would be better served in a special category such as extenuating circumstances. Suggestion was made that changes to the admission policy should allow for admission of a greater number of mature students.

Referring to the instructions to students, it was noted that applicants whose grades might be close to the admission cut-off were being invited to submit the supplementary PIP form. Suggestion was made that students should first be informed as to whether or not they were admissible and then request made to submit the form rather than leaving this decision up to the student.

Discussion turned to the issue of admission GPA and the perceived problem of grade inflation at the high school level. Opinion was expressed that the proposed policy is not meant to address that issue and if such a problem exists it should be addressed separately.

Since this is a test project subject to review in two years time, concern was expressed about the destruction of documentation after 12 months. It was pointed out that the student registration system could be adapted with a confidential identifier which would allow the tracking of students admitted under this policy.

Opinion was expressed that intellectual development and ability is not necessarily dependent on a high GPA and students who prove other achievements and show self motivation should be accepted. Since the selection process is difficult and very subjective, suggestion was made that faculty members, as academic teachers, should become more involved in the admission process.

In response to concerns that this policy will admit less qualified students with special circumstances over students with higher academic grades, it was pointed out that a significant portion of the 10% admitted under the DQ policy would have been admitted in any event and that the marginal students who would qualify under this policy already have a GPA above the published minimum and probably will be only one or two percentage points below the cutoff GPA.

Concern was expressed about the principle of admitting students who have succeeded in their studies in spite of difficult circumstances. Opinion was expressed that students who have endured difficult circumstances will be elevated in the admission consideration above other students with comparable GPAs and it was felt that this was not a rational basis to judge entry into a university.

Amendment moved by P. Percival, seconded by C. Eaton

"that the paper be amended to delete all reference to difficulties that individuals overcome in achieving educational objectives"

It was noted that it was quite appropriate to admit people who have experienced difficulty in their life circumstances yet have still maintained more than the minimum standard and demonstrated special agility, adaptability, flexibility and self motivation. Opinion was expressed that this was an entirely valid basis of admission and could be viewed as an equalizer rather than as having an advantage in the admission process. It was also noted that such students bring a different perspective to the classroom, enrich the teaching/learning experience, and add a more varied and creative mix of students.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

AMENDMENT FAILED

Referring to the proposed 10% intake of new admissions under this policy, opinion was expressed that this figure appeared to be too high for a trial program of this type.

Amendment was moved by R. Frindt, seconded by P. Percival

"that the 10% be replaced throughout the document by a maximum of 1%"

It was noted that if the number is too small, it would not be possible to measure outcome and it would be difficult to determine success or failure. It was also pointed out that implementation would not be financially feasible if the numbers were too small.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

AMENDMENT FAILED

Concerns were raised concerning the rejection of letters of recommendation and interviews. Senate was advised that SUAB had decided against interviews because of the cost involved and because they tended to be very unfair depending on the geographical location of the applicant. Although the Committee felt letters of reference had some value, their view was that for this policy they would not be an ideal instrument.

Amendment moved by D. Ross, seconded by K. Whitbread

"that the instructions to students on Page 9, under Referees be amended to include at least one letter of recommendation from an academic administrator familiar with the student's career"

Concern was expressed that this amendment made it difficult for persons who have been out of the educational system for some years, and opinion was expressed that in such cases there might be better qualified people other than academic administrators who are more familiar with a student's career/life to write a letter of recommendation.

Amendment (to the amendment) moved by N. Wickstrom, seconded by S. Shapiro

"that reference to an academic administrator be deleted from the amendment"

Question was called, and a vote taken.

AMENDMENT (TO THE AMENDMENT)
CARRIED

In order to clarify the intent of the original amendment, a suggestion specifying that the letter of recommendation will be taken into account was accepted as a friendly amendment, with the motion to read as follows:

"that the instructions to students on Page 9, under Referees, be amended to include at least one letter of recommendation which will be taken into account under the policy and guidelines"

Question was called, and a vote taken.

AMENDMENT CARRIED

An amendment to require the allocation of at least \$5,000 for telephone costs for the verification process was ruled to be unacceptable.

Amendment moved by D. Ross, seconded by S. Shapiro

"that there be a significant financial commitment for the verification of the Personal Information Profiles"

As a matter of clarification, it was pointed out that the intent of the amendment was not to require verification of every applicant but rather to require a serious effort at verification when appropriate. In response to concerns about time constraints, especially in August for start of the Fall semester, it was noted that it was not necessary to complete the verification process prior to admission. Verification is not unique to this category of student and if something amiss is found in a student's admission documents after admission, SFU has a policy which provides for discipline in such cases.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

AMENDMENT CARRIED

In response to questions about the criteria and method to be used to evaluate the program, Senate was informed that the Director of Analytical Studies is currently working on a draft evaluation proposal which would monitor students who are admitted under diverse qualifications so that they can be compared with an equivalent group of students in terms of the success of their studies at SFU.

There appeared to be general support for the intent of the proposed policy and a belief that the proposal was a step in the right direction, and opinion was expressed that despite perceived procedural flaws the project should be allowed to proceed as the problems are bound to be worked out over the three year trial period.

Opinion was expressed that further clarification was required with respect to the review process.

Amendment moved by J. D'Auria, seconded by P. Percival

"that a review by SCAP, with report to Senate, occur in Summer Semester 1998 before the process is continued"

Question was called, and a vote taken.

AMENDMENT CARRIED

Main motion (as amended):

"that Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.96-28, the proposed policy on undergraduate admissions, for a trial period from Spring Semester 1997 until Fall Semester 1999, with a review by SCAP, with report to Senate, to occur in Summer Semester 1998 before the policy, as described in the attached paper 'Diverse Qualifications Undergraduate Admission Policy' continues, and that an appropriate committee be established for the adjudication of this policy"

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MAIN MOTION (AS AMENDED)
CARRIED

Moved by J. Blaney, seconded by V. Dunsterville

"that the meeting be extended beyond 10:00 p.m."

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

ii) Paper S.96-29 - Centre for Labour Studies

Moved by D. Gagan, seconded by B. Clayman

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.96-29, the establishment of the Centre for Labour Studies as a Schedule B. Centre"

T. Nesbit, Director of Labour Studies Program was in attendance in order to respond to questions.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

b) Senate Committee on Academic Planning/Senate Committee on Continuing Studies

i) Paper S.96-30 - Non-Credit Certificate Program: Effective Public Governance in Education

Moved by D. Gagan, seconded by A. Rawicz

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.96-30, the proposed Non-Credit Certificate Program: Effective Public Governance in Education"

M. McClaren, Faculty of Education, was in attendance in order to respond to questions.

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

c) Senate Appeals Board

i) Paper S.96-31 - Senate Appeals Board - Annual Report - For Information
The Annual Report of the Senate Appeals Board was received by Senate for information.

ii) Paper S.96-32 - Ratification of Chair - Senate Appeals Board

Moved by K. Arnason, seconded by N. Wickstrom

"that Senate ratify the election of Kai-Lee Klymchuk as Chair of the Senate Appeals Board"

Question was called, and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

d) Senate Undergraduate Admissions Boardi) Paper S.96-33 - SUAB - Annual Report - For Information

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

e) Senate Committee on Continuing Studiesi) Paper S.96-34 - SCCS - Annual Report - For Information

Opinion was expressed about the inappropriateness of reporting departmental colloquia in the annual report. It was pointed out that the information is always inconsistent and does not reflect reality. Senate was advised that some departments report these activities, some do not, and the information was included for those who reported it. Since this same issue was raised year after year, J. Blaney indicated that if there were no objections to the contrary, this information would not be requested for future reports. There were some expressions of support for the inclusion of this information. Following this discussion, the report was received by Senate.

6. Other Business

i) Referring to recent changes to the terms of reference of the Senate Appeals Board, it was noted that a new appeal structure was to be established for appeals at the Faculty level. Inquiry was made as to the status of that process. R. Heath advised that a number of meetings had taken place with advisors in each of the Faculties and that special review committees are operational within the Faculties and appear to handling matters efficiently.

ii) P. Percival provided Senate with brief background information concerning the issue of charging for modem use which had previously been to Senate and referred to SCAP and presented the following notice of motion to Senate - "move that Senate declare its opposition to the principle of charging for modem access and urge the Vice-President Academic to withdraw his proposed policy on this matter". Concerns were expressed that this issue may not be in the purview of Senate, and the Chair indicated this matter would be forwarded to SCAR for consideration.

iii) In response to an inquiry about the disappearance of chairs, Senate was advised that the majority of the black Senate chairs had gone missing and could not be located.

The Assembly moved directly into Closed Session at 10:15 p.m.

A. Watt
Director of Secretariat Services