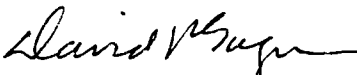


SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: D. Gagan, Chair 
Senate Committee on Academic Planning

Subject: Grade 12 courses for University admission

Date: January 14, 1997

SCUS Reference: SCUS 96-61

SCAP Reference: SCAP 97-6

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies and the Senate Committee on Academic Planning gives rise to the following motion:

Motion:

"that Senate approve, as set forth in S.97-22, the following changes:

- i) that the revised courses English 11 and 12 are acceptable for purposes of admission to Simon Fraser University
- ii) that the Principles of Mathematics 11 and 12 are acceptable for purposes of admission to Simon Fraser University"

Note: Applicants may not count both Principles of Mathematics 12 and Mathematics 12 towards the admission GPA.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH



BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA
CANADA V5A 1S6
Telephone: (604) 291-3136
Fax: (604) 291-5737

8 November 1996

To: Nick Heath, Director of Admissions

From: Carole Gerson, Associate Chair, English Department

Re: English Language Arts, 11 and 12, Integrated Resource Package, 1996

Although the cover of this lengthy and elaborate Integrated Resource Package refers only to English 11 and English 12, the document in fact pertains to three courses: English 11, English 12, and Technical and Professional Communications 12 (TPC 12).

English 11 and English 12 are updates of the two courses currently offered under those names, whereas TPC 12 will eventually replace the old Communications 12. (There is no mention of other related courses, such as Writing 12, English Literature 12 and Drama 12.)

The revised versions of English 11 and English 12 are as acceptable for university admission as their predecessor have been, with the added benefit that the IRP presents their aims, instructional strategies, content, and assessment strategies substantially more clearly than is the case with the earlier documentation I have been able to obtain for comparison.¹

More contentious is the Ministry's request that TPC 12, unlike its predecessor, Communications 12, be accepted as the equivalent of English 12 as a qualification for university entrance. When boiled down to its essentials, the course does not present adequate preparation for university-level work, but appears rather to be old-style business education reclothed in current language. The modes of scholarly discourse required at university, such as research papers and lab reports, are more likely to be properly taught and understood when presented within the contexts of the disciplines that require these methods of presentation, such as History 12, Chemistry 12, and so on. Much of the description of TPC 12 elaborates rather elementary practices of practical description, response, and presentation that could easily be incorporated into (and indeed frequently resemble aspects of) the overall English curriculum throughout high school, a point reinforced by the rather meagre list of "Learning Resources" for TPC 12 (20 books or handbooks, 7 video packages and 4 software packages), none of which probe theoretical

¹Ministry of Education, Language Arts English, Primary - Graduation, Curriculum Guide (Victoria, 1990); Ministry of Education, Language Arts English, Primary - Graduation: The Research Base: Research About Teaching and Learning (Victoria 1990); Ministry of Education, Language Art, English, Learning through Reading: Teaching Strategies Resource Book (Victoria 1990).

aspects of Communication Studies. While there is considerable emphasis on electronic modes of presentation, there is no assurance that schools across the province will be able to acquire the necessary hardware, software, technological support, and constant updating that electronic media require. Moreover, there is no explanation of how this course can be provincially examined (as English 12 is currently provincially examined). Finally, we need to recognize that Communications 12, which is not accepted in lieu of English 12 for entrance to SFU, currently serves a specific and necessary role by giving students unable to handle English 12 a course that permits them to graduate from high school, whereas university-bound students enroll in English 12. When TPC 12 replaces Communications 12, it will more than likely replicate this role.

The colleges which currently accept Communications 12 for entrance will be able to accept TPC 12, as they already employ various in-house means of assessing students' reading skills and writing abilities and placing them in an appropriate range of remedial or regular English courses. SFU, however, has no such assessment and offers no remedial instruction in writing. The Senate Admissions Committee at UBC has recommended that the UBC Senate not accept TPC 12 as an alternate to English 12; I recommend that we do the same.

Amended page 2
received from
C. Geison. Nov 15, 1996

MEMO

FROM: N.R. Reilly, Chair,
Department of Mathematics and Statistics,
Undergraduate Studies Cttee.

TO: J.L. Berggren, Chair,
Department of Mathematics and Statistics.

SUBJECT: New High School Mathematics Courses

DATE: 30th October, 1996.

The B.C. Ministry of Education is considering the introduction of the following new mathematics courses into the high school curriculum:

- Introduction to Mathematics 11
- Applications of Mathematics 11
- Applications of Mathematics 12
- Principles of Mathematics 11
- Principles of Mathematics 12.

We understand that these courses will replace the following current courses, although the fate of Mathematics 11A is unclear at the present time:

- Introduction to Mathematics 11
- Mathematics 11A
- Mathematics 12 (Survey)
- Mathematics 11
- Mathematics 12.

The courses Introduction to Mathematics 11, Principles of Mathematics 11 and Principles of Mathematics 12 differ little from the existing courses Introduction to Mathematics 11, Mathematics 11 and Mathematics 12. The major revision concerns the replacement of Mathematics 11A (?) and Mathematics 12(Survey) by Applications of Mathematics 11 and 12.

We have been asked to recommend on the possibility of these courses being accepted in lieu of current requirements for admission to the University or to any of our courses or programmes.

Current University Requirements include the following:

- General Admission to SFU:
 - Mathematics 11
- Admission to the Faculty of Science:
 - Mathematics 12
- Admission to Engineering Science:
 - Mathematics 12
- Admission to Kinesiology:
 - Mathematics 12



Prerequisites for specific Mathematics courses citing high school courses:

Mathematics 100, 110, 113 and 190:

Mathematics 11

Math 144, 151, 154, 157:

Mathematics 12 (with appropriate grade) or Math 100 or Math 110.

Stat 101, 203:

Mathematics 11

The syllabi for Applications of Mathematics 11 and 12 represent a bold departure from more traditional syllabi and include many interesting and important topics such as linear algebra, linear programming, probability, fractals, etc. We believe that the courses are innovative and have the potential, if taught properly and to good standards, to be exciting and challenging. We see some merit in a course designed for students planning to enter the Arts and Humanities as well as various non-academic career paths for whom a broader range of topics could have considerable appeal.

However the Committee has some major concerns.

(1) No text books are yet available and it is not clear from the sample examples provided how well each topic will be covered. Will the treatment be superficial, or will the coverage have some real depth to it?

(2) No sample examinations for these courses are yet available and so it is not yet possible to be confident of the standards that will be expected.

(3) In order to graduate from high school, students are required to pass a grade 11 math (or accounting) course. The present Math 11A is designed to be available to students who have rather poor mathematics skills. It enables them to graduate from high school but it has never been accepted for admission to the University or to any of our Math courses. From the information that we have available, it is not clear whether the present Math 11A will continue. If it does not, then where will the students that Math 11A used to cater to now go? If they pursue the Applications of Math stream, then the standards in that stream will probably be set at a level similar to that of the old Math 11A course in which case it would appear to be inappropriate to change any of our requirements.

(4) Applications of Mathematics 11 and 12 will not represent a good preparation for university level studies if the coverage of the various

topics is too superficial or if the math skills that are acquired are simply too weak. Mathematics is not a spectator sport, it is not sufficient to display pretty and interesting things; involvement and practice are essential to the acquisition of basic skills. Of major concern is the possibility that the courses will provide insufficient preparation in algebra even for students who wish to take our pre-calculus courses, never mind our calculus courses. One of the declared objectives of these new courses is to prepare students for more "applied" areas. However, most applied areas at Simon Fraser University (such as Business, Computing, Economics, Kinesiology as well as the Sciences and Applied Sciences) require their students to acquire a knowledge of the calculus. Many students change their goals after they come to the University and students would be ill-advised to pursue courses that would make it difficult for them to join the pre-calculus stream. Far from opening options to students, we fear that these courses may lead students into a dead end.

Consequently, until such time as we receive further information on the depth of the coverage and the standards to be set in the Applications of Mathematics stream, as well as some clarification as to what will replace the old Math 11A, the Undergraduate Studies Cttee recommends that the requirements for admission to the University and to various Mathematics courses remain the same, subject to appropriate name changes: for instance, that

Principles of Mathematics 11	replace	Mathematics 11
Principles of Mathematics 12	replace	Mathematics 12.

Norman R. Heilley

Fri Nov 1 20:05:42 1996

1

From: Len_Berggren@sfu.ca Fri Oct 11 17:36:00 1996
From: Len_Berggren@sfu.ca
Sender: berggren@sfu.ca
Date: Fri, 11 Oct 1996 17:35:55 -0800
To: nreilly@cs.sfu.ca
Subject: New BC curricula in Math and English
Cc: nheath@sfu.ca
Content-Length: 2781
X-Lines: 82

Norman, Re the material I put in your mail box today you can see from Nick Heath's letter below that there isn't quite the rush I had thought, so if your committee could have its response to me by Nov. 7 that would give me time to read it and add any comments and still meet Nick's deadline.

Thanks,

Len

>X-UIDL: 845074553.016
>Sender: nheath@sfu.ca
>Date: Fri, 11 Oct 1996 12:31:38 -0700
>To: len_berggren, carole_gerson
>From: Nick_Heath@sfu.ca
>Subject: New BC curricula in Math and English
>Cc: alison_watt
>Content-Type: text
>Content-Length: 1962

>Greetings, Carole and Len!

>Finally, the Ministry has asked us to review the new courses in Math and English and respond formally to the following five questions:

- >a) suitability for general admission
- >b) suitability for use in the calculated entrance average
- >c) use as a pre-requisite for any of our programs or courses
- >d) does it give advanced standing or placements in any program?
- >e) can it be used for entry to program or dept.

>I think questions a) and c) are the most important.

>Since your two departments are most closely connected with these disciplines, I ask that you respond with your respective recommendations (on behalf the whole University) by 15 November for discussion at SCUS, followed by SCAP and Senate. Please address your response to Alison Watt, Secretary, SCUS, in the Office of the Registrar. (I think e-mail is OK).

>The new courses are: For Dept of English to review
>English 11 (replaces current English 11)
>English 12 (replaces current English 12)
>Technical and Professional Communications 12 (new course they say, but I assume that they plan to drop Communications 12 when this starts?)

>For Dept of Math & Stats to review
>Intro Math 11 (replaces current Intro Math 11)
>Principles of Math 11 (replaces current Math 11)
>Principles of Math 12 (replaces current Math 12)
>Applications of Math 11 (new course)
>Applications of Math 12 (new course).

>The letter sent by David Williams to the University states that your department already has received copies of the 'Integrated Resource Packages' for these new courses. These are also available on WWW and I have a paper copy, if you need one. Let me know if I can help in any way.
>(Sorry I can't help much in translating the educational jargon into English.)

6.

>
>Good luck!
>
>Nick Heath
>Director of Admissions
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Dr. J. L. Berggren, Chair
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