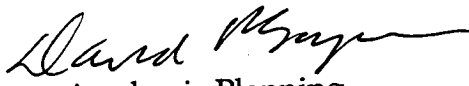


SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

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

Subject: Establishment of the Department of Humanities
(SCAP Reference: SCAP 99 - 3)

Date: February 11, 1999

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

Motion:

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors as set forth in S.99 - 2⁴, the establishment of the Department of Humanities."

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts
MEMORANDUM

To: David Gagan
Vice-President, Academic

From: John T. Pierce
Dean of Arts

Subject: Formation of a Department
of Humanities

Date: December 9, 1998

David, the Faculty of Arts held a referendum on the question should the Humanities program become a Department, and should various elements of IDS be amalgamated with Humanities? I am pleased to report that 123 voted in favour, 24 against, with 4 abstentions.

I would like this proposed status of Humanities to go before the January SCAP meeting.


John Pierce

Copy:
A. Watt

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts
MEMORANDUM

To: Distribution below
Faculty of Arts

From: John T. Pierce
Dean of Arts

Subject: Referendum Ballot
Humanities

Date: November 18, 1998

A proposal to create a new Department of Humanities has come forward to the Faculty, and is now being sent to you as a referendum measure.

The ground for this step has been prepared carefully, and is now ready for the Faculty's action. This proposal was recommended for approval in the Faculty three-year plan as part of the reorganization of independent programs reporting directly to the Dean's office. The proposal joins the existing Humanities Program, the Asia-Canada Program, and the Graduate Liberal Studies Program into one departmental unit, the shape of which has been negotiated among the constituent program units. The Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee and the Faculty of Arts Graduate Studies Committee have received this proposal for information. The Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee recently passed a proposal to institute a major program in Humanities.

I am confident that this proposed change to departmental status will enhance the development of programming in and improve the stature of the humanities at SFU, provide for improved co-ordination and linkages among cognate disciplines and to bring to a successful conclusion an important element of the Faculty of Arts Three Year Plan. I ask for your support in this matter.

Attached you will find an outline of the case in support of this motion



John T. Pierce

Distribution:

Tenure/tenure-track faculty

Continuing Lecturers/Sr. Lecturers

Limited Term faculty) With an appointment of

Continuing Lab. Inst.) longer than one year.

Simon Fraser University

Humanities Program

Memorandum

To: John Pierce, Dean of Arts

From: S. Duguid, Co-ordinator,
Humanities

Subject: Departmental Status

Date: 9 November 1998

The Humanities Program at Simon Fraser University has developed steadily from its relatively modest beginnings in 1979 to become one of the fastest growing academic units in the Faculty of Arts. Starting with the offering of a minor, the Program now includes an extended minor, a post-baccalaureate diploma, joint majors with the departments of History, English, Philosophy and French, and has recently proposed a major. The Program offers approximately 34 courses per year enrolling an average of 900 students. Following the recently negotiated inclusion of the Asia-Canada Program and Graduate Liberal Studies as affiliate members of the Humanities Program and the transfer of several individuals from IDS, the Humanities Program has a complement of 13 faculty positions and one endowed chair. Most of these have joint appointments, with nine faculty having Humanities as their "home department". The Humanities Program also works closely with the Institute for the Humanities in encouraging interdisciplinary approaches to teaching, research, social issues, and community development. In reviewing these and other accomplishments during the preparation of our Three Year Plan, members of the Humanities Program supported unanimously the movement to departmental status.

A. The Humanities Program

The nature and objectives of the Humanities Program are described in the calendar as follows:

The Humanities is the study of a broad range of ideas and subjects drawn from philosophy, art, literature, history, religion, science, and social and political thought. Through a comparative and interdisciplinary approach to classical, medieval, renaissance and modern culture, the study of the Humanities raises critical questions about the achievements and controversies associated with the concept of civilization itself.

It is this focus on an interdisciplinary, comparative and integrative process – the purposeful bringing together of historical, literary, philosophical, religious, scientific, and aesthetic perspectives in the analysis of human cultures and contemporary society – that gives courses in the Humanities their unique and important role in the University's curriculum. The Program's early focus on the Western Tradition has been augmented recently by the addition of core courses on Asian literature and culture, thereby enhancing the potential for comparative and cross-cultural perspectives. To accomplish these objectives the Humanities Program has over the years taken seriously its mandate to be inclusive in the study of human cultures, working closely with other academic departments both in terms of curriculum and in the inclusion of faculty as joint appointments or associates. Currently, for instance, the Humanities Program Steering Committee includes representation from nine other academic units from within the Faculty of Arts.

Faculty in the Humanities have worked diligently in designing and overseeing this specially designed interdisciplinary curriculum, with the aim of ensuring not only the intellectual coherence and distinctiveness of the Program's approach to the humanities, but also ensuring complementarity with other academic programs at the University. The utilization of

both a subject and problem centred approach to issues of critical thinking, historical continuity, literature, comparative and cross-cultural studies and philosophic inquiry is designed to serve the needs of both Humanities students and students from other disciplines who seek an interdisciplinary perspective on their chosen course of study.

B. Program Growth

The Humanities Program is already essentially a department in all but name, and for some time the Program Co-ordinator has been a member of the Dean's Advisory Committee. Since seven regular faculty have the Humanities as their home department the Program has a regular a DTC. Five other regular faculty and one Senior Lecturer have appointments in the Humanities and the Program is home to one Endowed Chair and to the current Dean of Continuing Studies. The number of undergraduate course offerings has grown from 3 courses a semester in 1985 to 12 courses a semester in 1998, with average enrollments of 450 per semester. The Humanities curriculum itself now consists of 29 courses, compared to only 11 courses in 1985.

The extended minor was added to the Program in 1994, with joint majors with History, English and Philosophy added in 1995 and a further joint major with French in 1997. Currently there are 28 students pursuing the Humanities Minor, 8 students working toward the extended minor, 5 post baccalaureate students, and 16 students pursuing joint majors. The largest number of students taking Humanities courses are adding breadth requirements to programs they are completing in other departments, and we consider that fulfilling this function will continue to be an important part of the role of a Department of Humanities. Courses are offered at both the Burnaby and Harbour Centre campuses and steps are underway to make some Humanities courses available through distance education. The proposed major in the Humanities, which recently received unanimous approval by the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee, will complete this process of development.

In response to the policy directions set out in the Faculty of Arts 1998 Three-Year Plan, the Humanities Program has successfully concluded affiliation agreements with the Asia-Canada undergraduate Program and with the Graduate Liberal Studies Program. Under these agreements, both of these units, while retaining large areas of autonomy in terms of curriculum, budget and planning, would be part of the proposed new Department of Humanities. The Humanities Program has as well agreed to offer positions to two Interdisciplinary Studies faculty members with expertise in European cultural traditions, thereby enhancing further the comparative perspectives within the Program.

C. Community Outreach

A major feature of the Humanities at Simon Fraser is the blending of the academic program with the research and community-programming orientation of the Institute for the Humanities. While administratively autonomous, the Institute and the Program have over the years shared common approaches to the Humanities and have worked closely in administering the J.S. Woodsworth Endowment Fund and the J.S. Woodsworth Chair in the Humanities. The proposed location of the Institute within a new Humanities Department - with its programmatic independence assured - would give Simon Fraser a unique opportunity to build strong links between one of the core areas of the university and the wider community.

D. Academic and Administrative Resources

No additional academic resources are required for the proposed Department of Humanities to operate in the manner described above. Administrative support staff, operating budget and initial equipment needs will be transferred from Interdisciplinary Studies.

E. Conclusion

The Humanities at Simon Fraser is committed to building on a strong foundation of interdisciplinary teaching and research, community liaison and institutional innovation in making the transition from program to department. As a department the Humanities will be better able to meet increasing undergraduate student demand for interdisciplinary courses and programs, will be a more effective voice for interdisciplinary approaches within the Faculty of Arts, will be better able to serve the academic and professional needs of its faculty members, and will be able to develop further the presence of the humanities, broadly conceived, within the wider community.