

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: J. M. Munro, Chair
Senate Committee on Academic Planning

Subject: Course space restrictions

Date: October 12, 1999

For Information

Acting under delegated authority of Senate, the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, the Senate Committee on Enrolment Management and Planning and the Senate Committee on Academic Planning approved the following motion:

"That academic departments offering courses where student demand exceeds course limits be allowed to restrict course availability in the initial registration round by total upper division hours in the department and/or semester upper division hours in the department with the following provisos:

- a. That students be notified as far as possible in advance of use of the course restriction mechanism through the Course Timetable and Exam Schedule sent to all students prior to the start of telephone registration
- b. That SCEMP be notified by Departments as far as possible in advance of use of the course restriction mechanism.
- c. That Departments report to SCEMP after each semester in which the course restriction mechanism is used."

J. M. Munro

Tuesday, August 31, 1999

Sharing Course Spaces: Additional
Registration Controls

SCUS 99 - 22

CA.SFU.FAS.UCC/Papers:1999-9

Sharing Course Spaces: Additional Registration Controls

Robert D. Cameron, Associate Dean, Faculty of Applied Sciences

August 31, 1999

Introduction

In order to give flexibility to departments in which course demand exceeds supply, new forms of registration restriction are proposed.

Current Registration Priority Rules

Senate paper S.85-59 introduced the four motions that were passed by Senate on December 2, 1985 to establish the current basis for registration priority at SFU.

Motion 1

That Senate delegate to the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies the responsibility to approve and review practices and procedures incorporating motions 2 through 5 which follow into the University's registration system.

Motion 2

That Faculties offering courses where student demand exceeds course enrolment limits be allowed to reserve a specified number of course places for particular groups of students, such as majors, coop students, etc.

Motion 3 [Failed]

That Faculties offering courses where student demand exceeds course enrolment limits be allowed to specify GPA minima for entry into the course.

Motion 4

That priority access to a reserved course place as set out in Motion 2 be determined on the basis of
a. semester hours completed, and to a lesser degree
b. level of performance in recent semesters.

Motion 5

That in the case of WD withdrawals from courses where student demand exceeds course enrolment limits, students lose priority in that course for the next semester.

In essence, these rules establish a registration framework in which departments may divide the spaces for each course into a number of registration slots, each slot is designated for students in particular programs, and students in each program have access to the spaces in a slot depending on credits completed and GPA as combined to give their registration priority number (RPN).

The Problem: Sharing Within Programs

Although the current system works well overall, it is not sufficiently fine-grained to deal with excess demand by students within a single program. A particularly acute case at present is the demand placed on upper division CMPT courses by CMPT majors. All CMPT majors are in the same registration "slot" for each course and hence have their relative priority for registration determined by RPN. This means that the most senior students have relatively unrestricted access and are free to take more upper division CMPT courses than they need. Many are indeed taking advantage of this flexibility in taking up to 48 upper division CMPT credits, although 30 to 36 are sufficient for the major. Unfortunately, with growing demand and decreased course

Tuesday, August 31, 1999

Sharing Course Spaces: Additional
Registration Controls

Page: 2

supply in 1999-3, this has left many students entering third year without any upper division CMPT courses at all. In essence, the system as currently constituted does not provide the flexibility to equitably allocate course spaces between students within a single program.

The Proposal: New Options for Registration Restrictions

In order to provide for sharing of course spaces within a program, it is proposed that two new options be created for encoding the registration restrictions associated with course slots. Note that these restrictions are only intended to be used early in the registration period, until the time at which every student has been given a chance to register for the courses they need. Subsequently, all restrictions should be lifted to allow free access to the remaining course spaces.

Restriction by total upper division hours in department.

A department may reserve course slots for those students whose total upper division hours in that department is less than a particular limit. For example, the School of Computing Science may reserve course slots for those CMPT majors who have fewer than 36 credit hours of upper division CMPT courses. Similarly, Computing may also restrict MSSC majors to 12 credit hours of upper division CMPT credit. The total should be calculated dynamically as students register for courses. For example, if a CMPT student with 33 upper division credit hours registers for CMPT 410-3, this would bring the credit total to 36, precluding further registration in upper division CMPT courses.

Restriction by semester upper division hours in department.

A department may restrict the total number of upper division credits in the department that are available to a student in the initial round of registration. For example, Computing Science may restrict CMPT Majors to at most 9 upper division CMPT credits in a semester, until such time as everyone has had a chance to register.

Motion: That academic departments offering courses where student demand exceeds course enrolment limits be allowed to restrict course availability in the initial registration round by total upper division hours in the department and/or semester upper division hours in the department.

*

These responsibilities now fall within the terms of reference of the Senate Committee on Enrolment Management and Planning (SCEMP)