

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

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

Subject: B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma
(SCUS Reference: SCUS 00-5)
(SCAP Reference: SCAP 00-8)

Date: March 17, 2000

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

"Graduates of the B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma who are at least 19 years of age and who have completed those courses specified for admission in the regular B.C. (secondary school) Graduation Diploma or equivalent courses offered through post-secondary institutions, except that a Grade 11 language course is not required, be eligible for admission in the high school admission category. The four Grade 12 or equivalent courses must be from different disciplines. A minimum average of 67% (C+) based on English 12 and three other academic Grade 12 courses or their equivalents is required. This policy is to be effective for three years, from May 2000 to September 2003, with a review to occur in Fall 2001."

J. Munro

Memo from
N. Heath, Director of Admissions
Simon Fraser University

To: SCUS
 Date: 1999 12 10

Subject: B.C. Adult Graduation Diploma

Suggested Motion

To admit graduates of the British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma who are at least 19 years of age and who have completed those courses specified for admission in the regular B.C. (secondary school) Graduation Diploma or equivalent courses offered through post-secondary institutions, except that a Grade 11 language course is not required. The four Grade 12 or equivalent courses must be from different disciplines. A minimum average of 67% (C+) based on English 12 and three other academic Grade 12 course or their equivalents is required. This policy is effective for three years, from May 2000 to September 2003, with a review to occur in Fall 2001.

Proposed Calendar Entry

Adult Graduation Diploma

Applicants who have completed the BCAGD must be at least 19 years of age and must meet the following requirements:

Advanced level or Grade 11 completion (must include English, mathematics, social studies or First Nations 12, experimental or laboratory science)

Four subjects at the provincial level or at Grade 12 (must include English and 3 additional subjects selected from

biology, mathematics, chemistry, English literature, languages, statistics, geography, history, physics.)

All four provincial level or Grade 12 subjects must be graded: a minimum average of C+ or 67% is required, based on the grading scale set by the Ministry of Education.

Entry requirements to business administration, computing science, engineering science, kinesiology and the Faculty of Science parallel those for BC secondary school graduates.

Current Calendar Entry

Adult Basic Education Provincial Diploma

Applicants who have completed the ABEPD must be at least 19 years of age and must meet the following requirements:

either ABE Advanced level

or Grade 11 completion (including English 11, math 11, language 11, social studies 11, science 11)

Four subjects at the provincial level incl. English and 3 additional subjects selected from

biology, mathematics, chemistry, computer science, English literature, languages, statistics, geography, history, physics.

All four provincial level subjects must be graded: a minimum average of C+ is required. Entry requirements to computing science, engineering science, kinesiology and the Faculty of Science parallel those for BC secondary school graduates.

Background

For B.C. adults, there were two forms of graduation diploma - the Adult Basic Education Provincial Diploma (ABEPD) issued by Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (MAETT) and the 'Adult Dogwood' issued by Ministry of Education (MOE). Both credentials will be phased out by August 2000 and replaced by the British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma (BCAGD), starting 1 September 1999. This common credential will be 'owned' jointly by the two ministries.

Our policy has been to accept graduates of the ABEPD only. SCUS's predecessor committee, SUAB, had serious misgivings about the former Adult Dogwood as it was offered by some districts to international students who were not necessarily adults. These misgivings related to lack of breadth. Our position was unique among educational institutions.

Another difficulty with the existing adult graduation programs has been that there was, at one time, no acceptance by either Ministry of the courses used by the other Ministry. If a student had all of the requirements for the Adult Dogwood except a Grade 11 Mathematics course, an Adult Basic Education Mathematics course taken at a college would not satisfy the missing math requirement. This had shown itself to be a problem when students attempted to 'upgrade' their secondary school records by attending a college. This position has changed substantially in the past two years. Now, each accepts many of the other's courses. In addition, college ABE courses are tuition-free for all (Canadian) students. Secondary school courses offered to adults are tuition free only if the student has not graduated.

SCUS looked at the consequences of this 'mix and match' form of upgrading earlier this year. SCUS ruled that repeated courses may not be computed into the average, but recognized that it is impractical to identify these repeats.

The BC Adult Graduation Diploma
"The Adult Dogwood"

To be eligible to graduate on this program, adult students (19 years of age or over) must earn at least 20 credits in the secondary system or five courses in the post-secondary system. Courses and credits can be counted from either or both of the following areas:

BC School System - Secondary Qualifying Courses			College ABE Program - Qualifying Courses
Language Arts 12	4 credits	or	A Provincial Level English or higher
Mathematics 11 or 12	4 credits	or	An Advanced Level Mathematics or higher
Three Grade 12 Ministry-authorized Courses (4 credits each)	12 credits	or	Three additional courses at the Provincial Level or higher
or			or
Social Studies 11 (4 credits) or First Nations 12 and two Grade 12 Ministry-authorized Courses (4 credits each)	12 credits		Advanced Social Sciences and two Provincial level courses or higher
Total: 20 credits			Total: 5 courses

ABE 'Provincial level' generally refers to a course at approx. Gr 12 level.

ABE 'Advanced level' generally refers to a course at approx. Gr 11 level.

The BC Secondary School Graduation Diploma
"The Dogwood"

BC Credit-Based Graduation Program – Foundation Studies	
	Credits
Language Arts 11	4
Language Arts 12	4
Social Studies 11	4
or First Nations Studies 12	
Mathematics 11 or 12	4
Science 11 or 12	4
Fine Arts 11	2
Applied Skills	2
Career & Personal Planning 11	2
Career & Personal Planning 12	2
Total	28
BC Credit-Based Graduation Program – Selected Studies	
	Credits
Ministry-authorized Grade 12 level	10
Additional 11 and 12 courses	14
Total	24
Grand Total:	52

As can be seen above, the BCAGD requires far fewer credits than the 'Dogwood' and its specified subject requirements are only Language Arts and Mathematics. The Dogwood requires in addition Social Studies, Science, Fine Arts, Applied Skills and, in the case of admission to SFU, a second language.

Example of minimum requirement for entry to SFU with the BCAGD

From BC School System - Secondary School Courses or Assessments	College ABE Courses or Assessments
	ABE Provincial Level English*
Principles of Mathematics 11	
Japanese 12* (by PLA or challenge)	ABE Provincial Level Geography* ABE Provincial Level History* (by PLA or challenge)
	Total: 5 courses

The Advanced level requirements of English, social studies and science are satisfied by completion of Provincial level (higher) requirements in those disciplines.

To calculate an admission average we would need to include courses shown with an asterisk, converting letter grades to % grades for the ABE courses, using either the following table, set by the Ministry of Education or the grade conversion table appropriate for each individual college, if different:

A = 91%, B = 79%, C+ = 70%, C = 64%, C- = 56%.

Notes

- To be eligible for the BCAGD, a person must be 19 years or older. An eighteen year-old who has been out of school for at least a year may be admitted with approval from the enrolling institution.
- Three courses must be completed through enrollment in a course or Prior Learning Assessment (PLA). PLA may be used to meet any of the requirements for the BCAGD. PLA involves a variety of techniques including equivalency reviews, challenge processes, in-depth interviews, etc.
- Provincial exams are optional for adult students in the BC School system. If the student chooses not to write a provincial exam, the grade will be reported with a "Q" code. College ABE courses will not be easily distinguished if added to a Ministry of Education transcript because they too will receive a "Q" code.
- Any course that is Ministry-authorized by either the MOE (4 credits) or the MAETT as requirements for graduation may be used towards the BCAGD.
- All articulated college ABE courses may be used for credit towards either the regular or Adult Dogwood.
- Colleges will issue the BCAGD from the registrar's office. The new diploma is a joint MAETT/MOE document signed by both ministers.
- Students may take their college course(s) back to the school district and apply for their diploma through the school district and MOE.
- A common transcript process is supposed to be developed by MOE and MAETT working with the post-secondary education institution registrars. It appears unlikely that this will occur. Until a common transcript is established, current practice will continue. The institution issuing the BCAGD identifies which courses have been used to qualify for the diploma, both internal and transfer courses. Students combining courses from the two systems for the BCAGD will need to include all relevant transcripts in situations where they need to verify their courses and grades.
- All colleges do not necessarily adhere to the Ministry of Education grading standards so some grade/mark adjustments might be needed in some cases (e.g. Ministry of Education pass grade is set at 50 % but a particular college might use a passing grade of 60%)
- A student must take at least 3 of the courses used towards the BCAGD as an adult, but may use PLA (where available) as an adult to get credit for these courses.

- If a student is only missing one or two courses from their high school graduation they could take the missing course(s) at the college or school district and take them back to the high school towards the regular Dogwood.
- At least one course must be from the institution granting the BCAGD. The other eligible courses may be brought from another institution or institutions.
- A student may use courses taken long ago for credit towards the BCAGD, as long as s/he has completed 3 as an adult.
- ABE students are generally unable to write MOE provincial exams.
- If a student wishes to write a provincial exam s/he must register for a course through a school district.
- Any course that is Ministry-authorized by either MOE (4 credits) or MAETT (see the ABE handbook information) may be used towards the diploma.
- Two credit courses cannot be used towards graduation in the adult program. The exception is CAPP 11 and 12, which, for adults only in the BCAGD, can now be combined as CAPP 12 and be used as a four credit course towards graduation.
- The ABE curriculum does not include languages other than English so it is not practical to require that candidates present a second language course.
- If an individual who already has a graduation diploma (e.g. a Dogwood) takes a course as an adult at a college or school to upgrade or getting a missing prerequisite, etc., the Dogwood can be updated to show the newly acquired course.
- If an out-of-province graduate returns as an adult and takes 3 courses, equivalency policies would be used for courses already held and, if the requirements were met, the BCAGD could be issued, resulting in two graduation diplomas.

Standards in BCAGD

There are currently no procedures to ensure that curriculum and marking standards in ABE courses match those of the respective BC Grade 12 courses. Both the content and assessment tools will be different. As far as can be determined from the 1999-2000 ABE Articulation Handbook, neither the ABE Steering Committee nor the various discipline working groups include representatives from the K-12 system, although these are now being added. It is rumoured that grading standards are more lax in ABE courses, but there is no way either to verify or to refute this.

Impact on SFU Admissions

It is difficult to assess the impact of this change. We had only a few dozen admissions under the former ABE Provincial Diploma and we admitted, on an exception basis, only one or two students who held the old Adult Dogwood (in spite of our policy to the contrary.) However, the significant change in 1999 is that there is now full interchangeability between courses taken in the ABE program and in secondary school. With admission averages for competitive programs in the 85% - 94% range, it is likely that substantial numbers of applicants will seek to maximize their admission averages prior to or after graduation by taking further courses to improve their records. SCUS has already ruled that repeated courses may not be computed into the average. A suggested modification to this has been suggested earlier.

This suggests that a cautious approach is best, in preparation for the possible opening of the floodgates!

Policies of other BC Universities

These are not yet known. Their previous policies are attached.

It appears likely that:

UBC will accept BCAGD but they have misgivings about the upgrading issue.

UVIC probably will accept BCAGD but seem determined that at least three courses Gr. 12 courses will be provincially examinable (impractical)

Tech BC will accept BCAGD but insist on all applicants having a language at Gr. 11 level (impractical).

UNBC will accept BCAGD.

Final comment

This issue is more 'political' than practical. There are excellent opportunities for adult students to enter universities, with or without adult graduation, through well-developed college-university transfer programs. These policies also apply to the BC Open University (BC OLA), which offers a broad-based and open-access distance education program at various levels.

All universities also have special policies for admitting mature students. No adult student would be excluded from SFU if the BCAGD were not to be recognized for admission, although admission might be delayed by up to a year.

nh Dec 1999

RECOGNITION OF THE ABE PROVINCIAL DIPLOMA

The ABE Provincial Diploma is recognized by colleges, institutes and universities in the British Columbia post-secondary system. Entries below are taken from 1994/95 calendars.

B.C. Institute of Technology

The Provincial Adult Basic Education (ABE) Diploma is considered to be equivalent to BCIT general prerequisites: that is, graduation from Senior Secondary School. Applicants should check with the Admissions department to ensure courses taken through the ABE program are acceptable for admission to BCIT.

Simon Fraser University

Adult Basic Education Provincial Diploma Admission Requirements

Applicants who have completed the Adult Basic Education Provincial Diploma must be at least 19 years of age and must meet the following requirements:

either Adult Basic Education Advanced Level
or Grade 11

If Grade 11 has been taken, the following courses must be included:

English 11
Mathematics 11
Language 11 (beginner's language 11 may be used)
Social Studies 11
Science 11 (acceptable subjects are Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, Physics)

Four subjects at the Provincial level including English and three additional subjects selected from:

Biology	Algebra or Mathematics
Chemistry	Computer Science
English Literature	Geography
Geometry	History
Languages	Physics
Statistics	Trigonometry

All of the four Provincial level subjects should be graded; a minimum average of C+ is required. Entry requirements for Engineering Science, Kinesiology and the Faculty of Science parallel those for BC secondary school graduates.

University of British Columbia

Adult Basic Education - Provincial Diploma

The university recognizes the ABE Provincial Diploma for admission to the first year of an undergraduate program. A minimum average of C+ is required based on mathematics, English, a science and a language at the Advanced Level and English plus three academic subjects at the Provincial Level chosen from the following: biology, chemistry, physics, geography, history, literature, mathematics and computer science.

Note: University transfer courses may not be used as part of the ABE Provincial Diploma for admission to UBC.

University of Northern British Columbia

Applicants may enter UNBC after successful completion of the ABE Provincial Diploma. A minimum of C+ average is required based on an applicant's performance in English, Math (Algebra) and at least one Science course at the Advanced Level. At the Provincial Level applicants must present evidence of successful completion of English plus three additional courses selected from: Algebra, Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Geography, Geometry, History, Literature, or Physics.

University of Victoria

Provincial Adult Basic Education Diploma

The Provincial Adult Basic Education Diploma is recognized for entry to the first year of an undergraduate program. A minimum C+ average is required based on Algebra, English, a laboratory science, and a second language (all at the advanced level), and English plus three academic subjects chosen from Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Earth Science, Geography, Literature, History, Mathematics (academic), Computer Science, Calculus, and Languages (all at the provincial level).

In addition, holders of the P.A.B.E.D. must be 19 years of age or over prior to the beginning of the session applied for. University level courses used to obtain the Diploma will not be recognized for transfer credit at the University of Victoria.

Trinity Western University

Students possessing an ABE Provincial Diploma will be admitted to TWU without restriction subject to the following conditions:

1. At least four academic courses have been successfully completed, one of which must be English.
2. The minimum recommended average is C+ standing.
3. We request that grades appear as 'letter grades' on the transcript (which must accompany the diploma).
4. International students from non-English speaking background will still be required to submit an acceptable TOEFL score.

8.