

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: Allan MacKinnon, Chair
Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

Subject: Second or Subsequent Bachelor's Degrees
(SCUS Reference 01 – 23 rev. #2)

Date: December 18, 2001



Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting of December 11, 2001 gives rise to the following motion:

Motion:

"That Senate approve the change in regulations for Second or Subsequent Bachelor's Degrees, as set forth in S. 02-5 ."

Revisions: Second Bachelor's Degrees

Robert D. Cameron, Associate Dean of Applied Sciences

Revision C - December 11, 2001

Introduction

Changes are proposed to streamline the regulations for a second bachelor's degree, as follows.

Current	Proposed
Second Bachelor's Degrees A student who already holds a bachelor's degree (or degrees) may complete a second or subsequent bachelor's degree at the University, subject to the following conditions and regulations. Normal admission policies apply to all applicants for further bachelor's degrees. First bachelor's degrees from certain jurisdictions may qualify the applicant to proceed to a first bachelor's degree only. For more information, please contact the admissions office, Office of the Registrar. The basic requirement for any further degree shall not be less than 60 credit hours of credit for a general degree, and not less than 72 credit hours of credit for an honors degree. Of the minimum 60 credit hours required for a further general degree, not less than 44-45 credit hours must be upper division credit. Of the minimum 72 credit hours required for a further honors degree, not less than 60 credit hours must be upper division credit. The department or program in which the further degree is being taken has the right to require completion of prerequisite lower division courses in addition to the minimum conditions specified above. General University regulations covering a first bachelor's degree apply to further bachelor's degrees unless otherwise stated or clearly implied. These include, but are not limited to: • minimum CGPA and minimum GPA calculated on the basis of all upper division courses taken at Simon Fraser University required for graduation • maximum number of transfer credit hours that may be counted toward minor/major/honors programs General faculty and departmental regulations apply, including completion of any group requirements not completed in a previous degree. A student may not enrol in a further bachelor's degree program in a subject in which she/he already holds a degree. A student who has a minor (or equivalent) in a particular subject may enrol in a further degree with a major or honors program in that subject. Credit earned towards a previous degree or diploma may not be used toward the further bachelor's degree. However,	Second Bachelor's Degrees A student who already holds a bachelor's degree (or degrees) from an approved institution may complete a second or subsequent bachelor's degree at the University, subject to the following conditions and regulations. The basic requirement for a further bachelor's degree shall be the completion of the upper division requirements associated with a first bachelor's degree (except for the B.Ed. degree; see <i>Faculty of Education</i>). Prior completion of lower division prerequisites may also be required or may be waived at the discretion of the department or program in which the further degree is being sought. A student may not enrol in a further bachelor's degree program in a subject in which she/he already holds a degree. A student who has a minor (or equivalent) in a particular subject may enrol in a further degree with a major or honors program in that subject. Credit earned towards a previous degree or diploma may not be used toward the further bachelor's degree. Transfer credit may be given for additional course work taken beyond the previous credential but prior to SFU admission. However, the normal upper division residency requirement applies: at least two thirds of the upper division course work for the degree must be completed at Simon Fraser University. Some faculties may have additional residency requirements. Faculties may limit inter-faculty transfer for second degree students.

recognition may be given for the content of such previous work. In such cases, students will be required to obtain credit in appropriate courses in lieu of those for which exemption or advance standing has been granted.

Rationale

The ideal second degree student is one who has a clear academic goal in mind and who is ready and motivated to pursue that goal. The ideal second degree program is one that caters to the well-motivated student, allowing her or him to proceed through the essential requirements without delay. These changes are intended to allow departments to offer effective and efficient second degree programs.

The core requirement for completion of a second degree is the completion of upper division requirements including an honors or major program. Faculties may have additional group requirements. But beyond these, what is the point of requiring students to take additional elective credits to make up a 60 credit total for the general degree or a 72 credit total for the honors degree? Furthermore, if we compare these requirements with those for Associate Degree holders, why is no additional recognition given for the Bachelor's degree holder? Particularly anomalous is the fact that, under approved (though not yet implemented) residency requirements, an Associate degree holder has a *lower* minimum requirement for completion of an honors degree, namely 66 credits.

It is often the case that second degree students will indeed take 60 credits or more in completing the requirements of a major together with necessary preparatory work. Thus the practical effect of these changes may not be large for many students. On the other hand, for the well-motivated and well-prepared student, the completion of program requirements might well be achieved within 45 credits of upper division work. Arbitrarily requiring these students to complete an additional 15 credits of lower division elective work seems an unnecessary delay. It also seems a somewhat unproductive use of course spaces, which might be better directed towards students who need them for their first degree programs.

In fact, the current requirements have their genesis in the simple but now superseded notion of limiting the recognition given to prior work. That is, the recognition of the previous Bachelor's degree is limited to 60 credits total and that figure is simply subtracted from the total requirements of a first degree to obtain the current requirements. However, the recent introduction of residency requirements has changed the way in which prior work is addressed. In effect, rather than taking a negative approach which limits the recognition of previous work, residency requirements take a positive approach in stating what work must be completed at SFU for a degree. The changes proposed here thus bring second degree requirements in line with this shift in philosophical orientation.

Transfer between faculties is an appropriate option for first-degree students who often benefit from an exploratory period of broad university education. For second degree students, however, the existence of a transfer option may encourage applicants to accept an offer of admission into one Faculty in the hopes of transfer into a limited enrolment program in another Faculty. Transfer programs designed for first-degree students are generally based on lower-division work and hence may be ill-suited to second-degree students. The result may be long delay in completing the desired second-degree program, or inability to transfer at all. To avoid these problems, students are advised that inter-faculty transfer may be limited.