

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: W. Krane, Acting Vice-President, Academic

Subject: Revision of GP 26 – Accessibility for Students with Disabilities Policy

Date: August 26, 2003

On behalf of Dr. John Waterhouse, I am forwarding to Senate the attached revision of GP 26. The draft policy has been widely circulated for comment within the University.

Motion: That Senate approve, and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, the revised policy GP 26 Accessibility for Students with Disabilities as set forth in S.03-74.



Attachment

GP 26 Accessibility for Students with Disabilities Policy

Draft Revision 8/10/02

1. Policy

Simon Fraser University recognizes and affirms the rights of students with disabilities who are academically qualified, to have full, fair and equal access to all University services, programs and facilities and to be welcomed as participating members of the University community.

The University must provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities up to the point of undue hardship. This will not entail any modification of the academic standards of the University or the elimination of the academic evaluation of students.

Students seeking academic accommodation for a disability must bring the request to the attention of the Centre for Students with Disabilities in a timely manner, normally with one semester's notice, and must provide appropriate documentation of their disability.

2. Definitions

"Student" - In this policy "student" includes an applicant for admission as well as a person who has been admitted and is eligible to register in courses at the University.

"Disability" - A student with a disability is a person who:

- Has been diagnosed by an appropriate professional as having: a mental health impairment; physical impairment; neurological impairment; learning disorder; or sensory impairment, any/all of which may be permanent or temporary and is likely to continue and may significantly interfere with educational pursuits; AND
- Experiences functional restrictions or limitations in their ability to perform the range of life's activities; AND
- May experience attitudinal and/or environmental barriers that hamper their full and self-directed participation in life.

"Reasonable Academic Accommodation" - An academic accommodation is a modification or extension of University resources, or of teaching or evaluation procedures that mitigates the effect of a student's disability on learning. Simon Fraser University has a duty to provide reasonable accommodations to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified student who has a documented disability. Accommodations may be made by providing alternative ways for the student to meet requirements or by adapting the instructional delivery system and/or assessment procedures (for example, through visual language interpreters, note takers, alternate examination formats, adaptive equipment). These accommodations should enable the student to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skill without diluting curriculum or credentials, or detracting from the responsibility of the student to achieve individual results consistent with course/program requirements and objectives. All reasonable accommodations provided by Simon Fraser University must:

- be based on documented individual disability needs;
- allow the most integrated experience possible;
- not compromise the essential requirements of a course/program for all students; and
- not pose a threat to personal or public safety.

3. Accommodations For Students

3.1 General

Accommodations available for students with disabilities must be made on an individual basis and may include priority registration, assisted registration, alternate formats for texts and examinations, for example. Other services may include transition/education planning, campus orientation, accessible on-campus housing, referrals to community resources, and health, counselling, or career services. Students requiring accommodation of a disability must register with the Centre for Students with Disabilities.

3.2 Course/Program Modification

Modifications to program course-load, that is, course-load reduction, and other academic requirements will be available for students with disabilities for whom this is required. In cases where course substitutions are requested, the student and representatives from the department/faculty and the Centre for Students with Disabilities will meet in order to discuss an appropriate substitution. Where the department/faculty curriculum committee determines that there is no appropriate substitution, the student will receive written notification of this decision. This notification will include the rationale as to why the course is considered an essential component of the program of study. Decisions of the curriculum committee may be appealed to the Senate Appeals Board, which may seek the advice of the Dean of the Faculty.

3.3 Course Withdrawals

Students registered at the Centre for Students with Disabilities should follow the current withdrawal procedures as set out in the current University Calendar. However, students who must withdraw from classes after the fifth day of classes due to a change in disability should include with the appropriate forms a letter from the Centre indicating documentation has been received confirming the extenuating circumstances. Where applicable, the letter from the Centre should also contain an explanation of why an application is being made for a selective retroactive withdrawal.

3.4 Registration Assistance

Students needing specialized supports or technological aids may receive priority registration and advance notification of acceptance into a course or program to facilitate the implementation of these services or accommodations.

3.5 Financial Assistance

University scholarships and bursaries, which set minimum credit hour per semester requirements for applicants, may be modified for applicants with disabilities. Financial support from sources external to the University may be available to students with disabilities. There is a listing of internal and external sources of financial assistance in the University Calendar.

3.6 Access to Information

The University will provide individuals with disabilities the information necessary to access programs and services and will have this information available in alternative formats (e.g., taped text, large print, on computer disk).

4. Procedures

4.1 Upon admission to Simon Fraser University, a student with a disability who requires an accommodation(s) must supply supporting documentation/assessment to the Centre for Students with Disabilities. The student is responsible for the costs associated with the documentation/assessment. Students are also required to provide reasonable notice, normally one semester, of their intention to attend Simon Fraser University.

4.2 Services for students with disabilities will be provided upon receipt and evaluation of current documentation from an appropriate professional. Guidelines for what constitutes acceptable documentation will be available from the Centre for Students with Disabilities. For new students, the documentation must speak to the student's current condition and in no case should it be more than three years old. Returning students whose condition has remained stable since the time of submission of the original supporting documents will not be required to provide any further documentation. Returning students whose condition has changed, requiring a concomitant change in accommodation, must provide new documentation

4.3 The responsibility for requesting and reviewing documentation relating to a student's disability lies with the Centre for Students with Disabilities in conjunction with the Health, Counselling, and Career Centre.

Information about a student's disability will be handled only as permitted by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act of B.C. All personal information collected by the Centre will be treated as supplied in confidence. Personal information held by the Centre will be retained and disposed of in accordance with an approved records retention schedule and disposal authority.

4.4 In consultation with the student, the Centre for Students with Disabilities will assess the individual student's need for assistance and accommodation, make appropriate recommendations based on the documentation submitted and coordinate the support services to be provided.

4.5 Where a student is dissatisfied or disagrees with the accommodations recommended by the Centre for Students with Disabilities, s/he should first meet with the Director to review his/her concerns. If the matter is not resolved at this level the student can appeal to the Associate Dean of Student Services whose decision is final.

5. Advisory Committee

An advisory committee made up of students, faculty, staff and external representatives appointed by the Dean of Student Services will meet regularly to provide advice to the University and the Centre for Students with Disabilities in matters related to guidelines, policies and programs for students with disabilities.

6. Interpretation

Questions of interpretation or application of this policy shall be referred to the President, whose decision shall be final.



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Policies and Procedures

Date
November 2, 1995
Revision Date

Number
GP 26
Revision No.

Accessibility Policy for Students with Disabilities

Simon Fraser University acknowledges and affirms the rights of persons with disabilities to have equal access to the University. The University will provide equal opportunity for full participation in all activities of the University community for all academically qualified individuals.

Simon Fraser University is committed to accommodating the particular needs of self-identified persons with documented disabilities by making all reasonable efforts to create a barrier-free campus within the limits of available resources.

The University supports the right of such students to identify the pace and scope of the assistance they require in all aspects of their participation in the University community. The University will endeavor to meet the needs of each student by adapting services, courses, and programs where appropriate, while maintaining the high quality of educational experience that is characteristic of Simon Fraser University.

Application of the Accessibility Policy for Students with Disabilities

The University is committed to the following in order to achieve its objectives of attracting and retaining disabled students, and providing equal opportunities for academic success and participation in the University community for such students:

1. ensuring that students with disabilities are considered for admission to programs for which they are academically qualified;
2. modifying program course load (i.e. number of courses which might be required in a given semester), examination procedures, and other academic requirements to permit such students to complete their programs of study, while maintaining the University's commitment to high quality instruction;
3. making facilities accessible and safe for such students; and
4. fostering a supportive University community by working to remove attitudinal barriers and to inform and educate community members.

Centre for Students with Disabilities

The Centre for Students with Disabilities, in conjunction with appropriate University departments, will work to provide or facilitate the following forms of assistance:

1. assistance with application and registration;
2. orientation to the University;
3. referral to appropriate University, community, or government services or agencies;
4. liaison with Faculties, Departments, or faculty members and others to increase the accessibility of learning environments (e.g. arranging for the use of necessary technology and learning aids);
5. assistance with note taking, examination procedures, physical mobility on campus, library research, special project assistance, interpretation, and learning and study skills development;
6. acquisition and loan of assistive technology, including, but not limited to, alternate forms of required reading material and amplification devices (e.g. taped texts, Kurzweil reader, FM or Infrared systems, TDD);
7. special parking arrangements;
8. physically accessible on-campus housing;
9. program planning advisement;
10. personal counselling services;

- 11.** information and education programs for faculty, teaching assistants, tutors, staff and students to promote awareness and understanding of the special needs of students with disabilities;
- 12.** advocacy, both generally and in individual cases.