



Simon Fraser University

Dean of Student Services & Registrar

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Memorandum

To: Senate

From: Ron Heath
Dean of Student Services & Registrar

Subject: Guaranteed Admission Initiative

Date: January 7, 2005

Senators may have seen recent notices in *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Globe and Mail* as well as some of the local community newspapers setting out a guarantee of admission, residence access and scholarships for students who meet prescribed admission criteria. This new initiative follows from experience in the last admission cycle in 2003/04 that saw a rather dramatic drop in the number of applications received at Simon Fraser University and at most other universities. In the course of our recruitment visits to secondary schools and at other public events, it became apparent that there was a lot of misinformation about admission requirements and there was the distinct possibility that this was having a significant negative impact on whether or not students were choosing to consider applying to university. Similarly, the opening of new residence accommodation within the past year dramatically changes the historic situation where only a small portion of applicants could expect to gain entry to residence.

The University has been advised of our funded enrolment targets for the 2004/05 year and the minima admissions criteria set out in the guarantee have been developed based on our experience over the past few years. Assuming some moderate success with the campaign, there is the possibility that the admission targets will be achieved based on these guaranteed minimum admissions averages. In the information about the guarantee, it is specified that these criteria will be in effect until such time as the University reaches its enrolment targets; thereafter, applicants meeting the criteria will be offered admission to a subsequent semester.

The basics of the guarantee are:

- 1) Students who satisfy the subject requirements with a minimum average of 80% are guaranteed admission to all programs except Business Administration. For Business Administration the guarantee applies at 85%. While the preliminary offers will be made on the basis of self-reported grades or interim grades provided by the secondary school, students are expected to achieve the minimum 80% on their final examination results.
- 2) Students who are accepted for admission and who submit an application for residence before the specified deadline will be guaranteed residence accommodation. This should be of particular interest to students from outside both the lower mainland and the province who might otherwise have not considered SFU if they would be expected to seek off-campus accommodation.
- 3) New semester one students are able to register in the first few days of registration.

- 4) Students with a minimum admission average of 90% are guaranteed a \$3500 Summit Scholarship. They are also encouraged to apply for other major scholarships. For students outside the lower mainland, the scholarships include an additional travel grant.
- 5) A special award for students with admission averages between 85% and 89% will be introduced. While the Summit Scholarships (#4, above) compare favorably with scholarship programs at other universities, many are offering awards to students in this admission grade range and we will be able to do the same and remain competitive for these quality students.

There are some other features of the new campaign. Students submit applications electronically through PASBC (PostSecondary Applications Service for British Columbia) and our goal is to respond within two working days acknowledging receipt of the application and confirming documentation required to complete the application. Once a file is complete in terms of required documentation, our goal is to provide a response on admission to the student within two working days. While these are goals, because we are unable to control the flow of applications, it may take more or less time to respond. Additional staff worked over the Christmas break and they will also work evenings during the application period to assist us in meeting our goals. We are also developing an enhanced admissions package that will be sent to all successful applicants. Faculties who wish to contact successful applicants will be able to do so in order to establish direct contact with potential students.

To track the interest generated by the newspaper ads and other press releases, different website URLs were attached to each media format. The first ads appeared on December 5th and by the 19th of December, there were over 11,000 hits to our special web sites. We will be continuing with the ads in *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Globe and Mail* and other community papers during the weekends of January 8th and 22nd. We have also notified all BC and other Canadian secondary schools of the guarantee.

Details on the guarantee can be found at the following website:
<http://students.sfu.ca/guarantee/>