

Simon Fraser University
Senate Graduate Studies Committee
Annual Report to Senate for 2004
February 2005

Submitted by Dr. Jon Driver, Dean of Graduate Studies

Composition and Mandate of the Committee

The membership of SGSC in 2004 consisted of the Dean of Graduate Studies (chair), Registrar (or designate), Librarian (or designate), chairs of the five faculty graduate program committees, a representative from the Faculty of Health Sciences (since September 2004), one other faculty member from each of the five graduate program committees, two graduate students, the Graduate Issues Officer of SFSS, and the Director Graduate Records (non-voting). This composition will be changing in 2005. The Registrar is replaced by the Director, Graduate Records, Admissions and Registration. *Now that* ~~representative of the Faculty of Health Sciences will attend meetings until that Faculty forms a Graduate Program Committee.~~ *has formed* The Dean of Graduate Studies' secretary will be secretary to the committee. The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies attends as a non-voting resource person. *representatives from that Faculty will attend SGSC meetings*

SGSC has established a regular monthly meeting schedule, in an attempt to spread the workload of the committee more evenly over the year. A list of meetings and activities for 2004 is attached as Appendix A.

SGSC is responsible to Senate for admissions (delegated to the Dean), maintenance of academic standards, changes to existing programs, evaluation of new programs, and administration of the graduate general regulations. SGSC approves admissions under Special Arrangements (via a subcommittee), and may act as an appeal body for student progress reviews (via a subcommittee).

Graduate Studies at Simon Fraser University

During the calendar year 2004 a number of new graduate programs were at various stages of development, and these are described in Appendix A. By the end of 2004 masters programs and doctoral programs were being offered in each faculty (except the newly created Faculty of Health Sciences). Graduate diploma programs were offered in Arts, Business Administration, Education and Science. In addition, the Dean of Graduate Studies office administers the Special Arrangements Program that provides a home for students with individual interdisciplinary programs of study and research. Summary statistics on enrollments and award of degrees are available from the Analytical Studies web site (see Appendix B of this report for data on enrollments and credentials awarded).

Enrollment and Graduation

Graduate enrollments in degree programs increased steadily from the late 1980's to the mid-1990's, remained relatively stable for a few years, and saw renewed increases since

2000 (see Appendix B). The recent increases in graduate degree enrollments early in this decade were probably due to a combination of factors: the development of new programs (such as the Masters of Public Policy or the MBA in Global Asset Wealth Management), the addition of programs at Surrey, the "Double the Opportunities" funding from the provincial government, and the recruitment of graduate students by new faculty members as they establish their research programs.

However, in 2004 headcounts were reduced slightly from 2003. This decline is due to reduced enrollments in professional masters programs in Business Administration and Education. The other three faculties showed various degrees of growth in graduate enrollments.

Data on credentials awarded are presented in the second table in Appendix B. We are now seeing an increase in masters degrees awarded, a result of increased enrollments since 2000. There has been a decline in doctoral degrees, but this should reverse in the next few years, because enrollments in doctoral programs have increased.

New Programs

Assessment Committee for New Graduate Programs (ACNGP) is a sub-committee of SGSC, responsible for the detailed assessment of new graduate degree programs, of which the most important element is an external review process. Since September 2004, the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies has chaired this committee. In 2004 ACNGP was busier than usual. Details are provided in Appendix A, and a summary of all new programs since 1981 is provided in Appendix C.

Funding for graduate students

Financial support for graduate students continues to be a concern, particularly as we have to compete for students with universities in provinces that provide a provincial scholarship plan and other provincially-funded recruiting incentives. Locally, UBC's policy of tuition scholarships for most PhD students has caused concerns about SFU's ability to recruit doctoral students. In view of the increases in numbers admitted to our doctoral programs (see Appendix B) this concern may be misplaced.

At the national level there continues to be recognition from the federal government of the importance of graduate education. Increased funding to the national granting agencies results in more graduate funding through research assistantships (from faculty member research grants) and through direct funding in the form of scholarships and fellowships. The granting agencies have stressed the importance of graduate training as a component of faculty research grants, and one way to increase graduate support at SFU is to encourage more faculty members to apply for research grants and to include graduate student support in their budgets.

2004 saw the consolidation of changes to funding programs offered by SSHRC and NSERC, as well as the introduction of a masters scholarship program by CIHR. Total external scholarships (held in fall 2004) from federal granting councils are summarized in the following table.

SSHRC MA	SSHRC PhD	NSERC PGS-M	NSERC CGS-M	NSERC PGS-D	NSERC CGS-D	CIHR Masters	CIHR Doctoral
40	37	37	7	25	7	1	3

In 2002 the Dean created a small working group to examine graduate student funding at SFU. In 2003 the Working Group consulted with the university community on principles of graduate funding, undertook a survey of graduate students, gathered data on graduate student funding, and prepared a draft report. (See <http://www.sfu.ca/dean-gradstudies/survey.htm>). The report was made public (February 2004) and comments were received. Based on these comments, a plan was prepared for consideration by faculty deans, and following a number of discussions with that group a proposal was submitted to SPCSAB in early 2005.

Student Information System

2004 was the first full year in which Graduate Studies operated under the new student information system (Peoplesoft) (introduced in October 2003). It was also the first year in which we administered new tuition rules that were implemented because of the new information system. We encountered numerous problems, delays and frustrations as a result of the transition to the new system, and many of these also affected individual graduate programs. Nevertheless, the new system has had some important benefits. Because of the need to program the new system with a consistent set of rules, the office of the Dean of Graduate Studies has taken a close look at many administrative procedures, and has rationalized and standardized a number of practices. As a result of the need for better information about these practices, we have replaced the printed Graduate Handbook with a re-designed web site that is more user-friendly. Graduate grades can now be entered electronically, saving time and increasing accuracy. We have designed an on-line application system that is currently being implemented, and we are very hopeful that 2005 will be the last year in which a paper-based system of graduate admissions is used. We are starting to work on the complex databases that are now available to us, and we are beginning to produce analyses that would have been impossible with the previous system.

Appendix A Senate Graduate Studies Committee, Activities 2004

Meetings were held in January, February, April, May, July, September, October, November, December

Changes to existing programs

Graduate curriculum and program changes were approved in Biological Sciences, Business Administration, Computing Science, Criminology, Earth Sciences, Education, English, Gerontology, Interactive Arts and Technology, Kinesiology, Linguistics, Mathematics, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Political Science, Psychology, Public Policy, Publishing, Resource and Environmental Management,

New programs

There is a two-stage process for approving new degree programs. A notice of intent and preliminary proposal is approved by SGSC and SCUP. The full program proposal is then developed, reviewed by ACNGP (including external review), and then approved by SGSC, SCUP and Senate. Graduate diploma programs and Graduate Certificates are approved by SGSC, SCUP and Senate.

In 2004 the following programs were given preliminary approval by SGSC: Educational Technology and Learning Design (MEd, MA, PhD); Population and Public Health (MSc).

The following programs were approved by ACNGP: PhD in Business Administration; MA, MASc, PhD in Interactive Arts and Technology; Master of Urban Studies; MBA (Global Assets and Wealth Management)

The following full program proposals are currently being considered by ACNGP: Educational Technology and Learning Design (MEd, MA, PhD); Population and Public Health (MSc).

The following programs were approved by SGSC: PhD in Earth Sciences; PhD in Business Administration; MA, MASc, PhD in Interactive Arts and Technology; Master of Urban Studies; MBA (Global Assets and Wealth Management)

The following certificates were approved by SGSC: Development Studies

Cohort Special Arrangements

These programs are offered on a short-term basis, either to fill an immediate need or to allow a "trial run" of a proposed program. The following programs were approved by SGSC in 2004:

MSc in Health Sciences

Other

Graduate General Regulation 1.12 was revised in order to deal with human rights issues.

SGSC recommended to Senate that the composition of the committee be changed to reflect the relocation of the office of Graduate Records, Admission and Registration within the Dean of Graduate Studies office.

SGSC initiated a survey of graduate courses, in order to investigate the practice of integrating graduate and undergraduate courses.

The steering committee for Special Arrangements reviewed 8 applications for special arrangements. 4 applicants were admitted. One masters student transferred to this program in 2004. A number of students will be transferring out of special arrangements, due to the approval of PhD programs in Business Administration and Earth Sciences.

The appeals subcommittee of SGSC heard one appeal of a student required to withdraw for poor progress. The appeal was upheld.

Appendix B. Graduate Enrollment and Credentials Awarded

Note: figures refer to headcounts; no allowance is made for full-time, part-time and on-leave status

Graduate enrollments

Faculty	Fall 1997	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Change 03 to 04	Change 97 to 04
Applied Sciences	443	446	466	452	476	574#	606	621	0.3%	40%
Arts	751	777	752	730	769	755	817	871	6.6%	16%
Business Administration	301	270	296	344	416	438	453	354	-21.9%	18%
(GDBA only)	0	0	(57)	(60)	(103)	(130)	(101)	(115)	13.9%	102% (since 1999)
(Degree program only)	(301)	(270)	(239)	(284)	(313)	(308)	(342)	(239)	-30.1%	-21%
Education	532	468	451	641	1124	1279	1078	1051	-2.5%	98%
(GDE only)	0	0	0	(155)	(608)	(721)	(607)	(603)	-0.7%	289% (since 2000)
(Degree program only)	(532)	(468)	(451)	(486)	(516)	(558)	(471)	(448)	-4.9%	-16%
Science	375	377	393	393	432	450	476	501	5.3%	34%
Total headcount *	2402	2338	2358	2560	3217	3445	3429	3401	-1%	42%
% change from previous year		-2.7	0.9	8.6	25.7	7.1	-0.5	-1%	-1%	
Total degree program headcount **	2402	2338	2301	2345	2506	2594	2706	2680	-26	12%
%change from previous year		-2.7	-1.6	1.9	6.9	3.5	4.3	-1%	-1%	

- * total of all graduate students, including those enrolled in diploma programs
 ** total of all graduate students enrolled in masters and doctoral programs
 # the sudden increase is due to the incorporation of graduate programs from the former Technical University of BC

Credentials awarded by academic year

Faculty/credential	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
Applied Sciences								
Masters	59	74	56	66	68	72	90	82
Ph.D.	14	20	15	16	22	11	15	14
Arts								
Diploma							2	
Masters	103	122	104	138	134	140	139	146
Ph.D.	29	40	26	38	24	28	29	15
Business Administration								
GDBA	0	0	0	26	27	66	80	55
MBA	99	126	113	132	119	144	164	163
Ph.D.(SAR)	1						1	
Education								
GDE	0	0	0	0	0	3	287	332
M.Ed.	91	116	151	121	94	104	117	166
Other Masters	38	33	48	22	21	20	19	31
Doctoral	3	8	13	13	7	13	14	11
Science								
Masters	48	55	57	49	51	61	60	66
Ph.D.	25	33	21	41	26	28	23	27
Total degrees	510	627	604	636	566	621	671	705
Total masters	438	526	529	528	487	541	589	638
Total doctoral	72	101	75	108	79	80	82	67
% Ph.D.	14.1	16.1	12.4	17.0	14.0	12.9	12.2	9.5

There is a recent downward trend in the award of doctoral degrees. Both the absolute numbers of degrees awarded, and the percentage of the total degrees awarded have declined. This may relate to a reduction in the numbers of doctoral students in the late 1990's, when the doctoral enrollments at SFU declined from 650 in 1996 to 598 in 2000. Because doctoral students take between 5 and 6 years to complete their degrees, we would expect to a lag time between periods of low enrollment and low graduation rates.

Statistics Canada recently reported a 5.4% decline in doctoral degrees awarded nationally from 1996 to 2001 (The Daily, January 18th 2005), but SFU did not conform to the national trend. Possibly we are seeing a later version of the national trend, but until national statistics are available for 2002 to 2004, we cannot judge. Doctoral enrollments at SFU have been increasing steadily since the low of 598 in 2000 to a headcount of 787 in fall of 2004, and it seems likely that within a few years we will see an increase in the number of doctoral degrees completed at SFU. Another possibility that we will investigate is that there have been increased withdrawal rates for doctoral students.

Appendix C. New program activity

Year of ACNGP approval	Program
1981	PhD, Education
1982	PhD, Computing Science
1983	PhD, Communication
1984	PhD, Criminology
1984	MA, Women's Studies
1984	MEng, Engineering
1984	MASc, Engineering
1985	MSc, Statistics
1985	MBA, Business Administration
1990	PhD, Engineering
1990	MPub, Publishing
1992	MA, Latin American Studies
1994	MA, Gerontology
1994	PhD, Linguistics
1994	PhD, Resource and Environmental Management
1994	MSc, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry
1994	PhD, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry
1995	MSc, Earth Sciences
1995	PhD, Political Science
1996	EdD, Education
1997	MET, Biological Sciences
2000	MBA(MOT), Business Administration
2002	Masters of Public Policy
2002	PhD, Women's Studies
2003	PhD, Earth Sciences
2004	PhD, Business Administration
2004	MA, Interactive Arts and Technology
2004	MSc, Interactive Arts and Technology
2004	PhD, Interactive Arts and Technology
2004	MBA (Global Assets and Wealth Management)
2004	Master of Urban Studies

Note: all dates since 1985 refer to the year in which ACNGP approval was given. Dates for final approval and first admission of students may be slightly later.