

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: R. Blackman, Chair
Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

Subject: Revised Procedure for Library Course Assessments
(SCUS Reference: SCUS 05-7)

Date: February 18, 2005

For Information

Acting under delegated authority, at the February 15, 2005 meeting, SCUS approved the revised procedure for Library Course Assessments.

Documentation is attached.

Note: The revised procedure for Library Course Assessment was considered by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee at the February 14, 2005 meeting.

MEMO
WAC Bennett Library
Simon Fraser University

To: SCUS, SCGS
From: Gwen Bird, Head of Collections Management
Re: Revised Procedure for Library Course Assessments
Date: January 31, 2005

Background

The Library participates in the course approval process at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. By Senate motion (S.93-11) "no new course should be approved by Senate until funding has been committed for necessary library materials." The SFU Library addresses this policy by preparing for the relevant Senate committees (SCUS and SGSC) a report on the adequacy of the library's collections to provide support for the students in the course, and the cost of any new resources required. The Library also seeks agreement from the department involved to cover any attendant costs.

Since the inception of this policy in 1993, the Library has been conducting detailed assessments of all new courses at the proposal stage. During 2004, more than 100 such assessments were conducted. For the majority of these, the analysis of SFU Library's holdings and collection development activities resulted in the conclusion that no new resources were required. For others, in subject areas new to SFU and ranging up to full graduate programs in scope, amounts from \$500 to \$95,000 per year have been assessed and negotiated with the departments and Faculties involved. This financial support has been vital the Library's collection growth in important new areas of activity at the university. The goal of these assessments is to ensure that the Library is adequately resourced to provide the required support for new academic activity at the university, where no other source of funding for such library development is provided. This goal remains constant.

Although the majority of assessments conclude that no additional funding is required, in the past a full report with detailed holdings information had still been prepared. These reports list 10-20 Library of Congress Subject Headings and SFU's related monograph holdings, often compare SFU's holdings to those at benchmark universities, and list SFU's serial holdings and licensed bibliographic tools in the subject area covered by the course.

Revised Procedure

Beginning in 2005, in cases where no additional resources are required, no formal library report will be prepared. Instead, once the Library has verified that existing resources are adequate, the course will be added to a list of courses on which the Library has signed off, and the requesting department will be notified. The list of these courses will be maintained on the Library's web page for course assessments, along with the detailed assessments [www.lib.sfu.ca/about/collections/courseassessments/Index.htm]. The presence of a course on this list will replace the formal report as evidence that the Library is satisfied by existing resources for a given course proposal. In these cases, informal notes of the assessment work leading to the conclusion that no new resources are required will be kept on file in the Collections Management office, for future reference.

This revision does not change the requirement that the Library vet all new course proposals. As before, a statement from the department that no library resources are required is not adequate to address the Senate motion; this position must be confirmed by the SFU Library.

Full detailed reports will still be prepared for all courses requiring additional library resources, or where there are specific issues or resources the Library wishes to bring to the attention of the department.

Rationale

The revised procedure will permit library personnel to spend their time working on course assessments where additional funding is required, doing detailed bibliography and costing, rather than preparing reports in areas where existing resources are adequate.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Office of the Vice-President, Academic
MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate

FROM: J.M. Munro
Vice-President, Academic

RE: Library Resources

DATE: January 19, 1993

At the May 11, 1992 meeting of Senate, the following motion was approved:

"that Senate establish regulations which will ensure that no new or revised courses and programs, or offerings of existing courses and programs at new locations, including individual offerings of special topic courses, can be offered unless adequate library resources are in place, or funds for them guaranteed in the base budget of the Library".

Subsequently, the Chair of Senate asked me to develop a proposal in response to this motion.

Two questions must be answered to deal with this issue:

- (1) Who decides what additions to library materials are needed to mount new courses or programs?
- (2) Who pays for the additions?

The following proposal has been approved in principle by the Senate Committee on Academic Planning and is forwarded to Senate with my recommendation that it be approved in principle:

1. No new course should be approved by Senate until funding has been committed for necessary library materials. The definition of "necessary" will be made by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies for undergraduate courses and the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies for graduate courses based on reports by the Library and responses from Departments or Faculties which are proposing new courses. For library materials which involve continuing commitments, the source for this funding will be transferred from the base budget of the Faculty concerned into the Library acquisitions budget or from the current acquisitions allocation for the department. For one-time funding needs, the Faculty concerned shall transfer an appropriate one-time amount into the Library acquisitions budget or there shall be a transfer within the current acquisitions allocation for the department.

2. Off-campus programs will not be initiated until there has been appropriate consultation with the University Librarian with respect to the availability of library materials and services. The Vice-President, Academic shall determine the required level of library resources, and necessary funding will be provided from the program budget.
3. Special topics courses which have not previously been offered shall be presented to the Library for an assessment of the availability of library materials as early as possible.
4. No new program should be approved by Senate until funding has been committed for necessary library materials. The definition of "necessary" will be made by the Senate Committee on Academic Planning based on reports by the Library and responses from Departments or Faculties which are proposing new programs. For library materials which involve continuing commitments, the source for this funding will be transferred from the base budget of the Faculty concerned into the Library acquisitions budget or from the current acquisitions allocation for the department. For one-time funding needs, the Faculty concerned shall transfer an appropriate one-time amount into the Library acquisitions budget or there shall be a transfer within the current acquisitions allocation for the department. (Funding to support this and other needs of new programs may in some cases be provided from central University budgets.)

In discussions concerning this matter, the issue of the allocation among disciplines of the current Library acquisitions budget was raised. I intend to address this through the Senate Library Committee.

J. M. Muro