

S.05-81

*As amended
by Senate
13 June 05*

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate *R. Blackman*

From: Roger Blackman, Chair
Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

Subject: High School Admission Requirements related to New Curriculum
Requirements
(SCUS Reference 05-14 (rev. May 25/05))

Date: May 25, 2005

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting of May 25, 2005 gives rise to the following motion:

"That Senate approve the revisions to High School Admissions, effective Fall 2006."

Supporting documentation is attached.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Undergraduate Curriculum Implementation Task Force
Office of the Vice-President, Academic

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

From: UCITF; Barbara Frisken, Chair

Re: High school admission criteria

Date: May 17, 2005

Revised: June 15, 2005

Proposed Revisions to High School Admissions for Fall 2006 and following

In June, 2004, SFU Senate approved the following criteria pertaining to English competencies and writing skills for admission of students to SFU from high school:

Current: Direct admission from Grade 12

- (a) a grade of 86% (A) or higher in a course equivalent to (or more advanced than) English 12 (more advanced English courses would include Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate); or
- (b) a grade of 60% - 85% (C to B) in a course equivalent to (or more advanced than) English 12 plus a score of 4 or 5 on the essay portion of the Language Proficiency Index (LPI) or an equivalent score on an accepted language proficiency exam; or
- (c) a score of 6 on the essay portion of the LPI or an equivalent score on an accepted language proficiency exam.

Continuation requirement for students with English 12 grades in the 60% - 69% range

Applicants admitted on the basis of English 12 (or equivalent) grades in the 60% - 69% range must register in a Foundational Writing Skills (FWS) course within their first 30 credits at SFU and complete it with a grade of C or better within their first 45 credits before being allowed to register in a W course. Students who fail to obtain a grade of C or better in an FWS course after attempting it a maximum of two times will be required to withdraw. They can be readmitted if they establish that they have acquired the necessary proficiency in English.

Following discussions with Nick Heath, Director of Admissions, and Jeff McNab, Director of Student Recruitment, we propose the following revised criteria for admission of high school students to SFU. The proposed changes are based on compelling arguments that include:

- the consistency of the admission standards with the recent Admissions Guarantee, which has been very successful and will likely continue;
- UBC is now waiving the LPI for students with 80% and above in English 12;
- the application of admissions standards must be consistent for all incoming students, and the original admissions criteria introduced unintentional and inequitable differences for non – B.C residents related to the availability of the Language Proficiency Index outside of B.C.. This is a logistical problem not apparent at the time the original high school admissions criteria were adopted. Increasing recruitment of students from across Canada and internationally are established university goals, and the proposed amendments below will better support these efforts;
- the use of only the essay section of the LPI is problematic as it is likely an insufficient basis upon which to evaluate proficiency in English. The LPI consists of a section on reading comprehension, one on grammar, and a written essay. If students know that only the essay portion counts, they may adjust their time use accordingly while taking the exam. Using all three scores may give a better impression of overall proficiency in English. In particular, disregarding scores from other sections testing reading comprehension and grammar seems shortsighted. It is recommended that scores from the entire LPI test be considered, and that a minimum standard be required;
- the requirement to withdraw (RTW) for students who fail to meet minimum continuation requirements is an administrative mechanism that has specific criteria for readmission beyond those related to proficiency in written English. In SIMS, it is possible to block re-enrollment without the assignment of full RTW status.

On the advice of the offices of both Admissions and Student Recruitment, the UCITF believe that the original criteria for high school applicants require refinement to be fairly and easily administered, and the following proposed criteria will maintain an expectation of adequate preparation for those students to take courses at SFU while more effectively supporting recruitment of students from high schools across Canada and internationally.

Proposed: Direct admission from Grade 12

- (a) a grade of 80% or higher in a course equivalent to (or more advanced than) English 12 (more advanced English courses would include Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate); or
- (b) a score of 5 or higher on the essay section of LPI and a minimum score of 60% on all parts of the LPI (or an equivalent score on an accepted language proficiency exam)); or

- (c) a grade of 70% - 79% in a course equivalent to (or more advanced than) English 12, plus a score of 4 on the essay section of the Language Proficiency Index (LPI) and a minimum score of 60% on all parts of the LPI (or an equivalent score on an accepted language proficiency exam; or
- (d) a grade of 60% - 69% in a course equivalent to (or more advanced than) English 12, plus a score of 4 on the essay section of the Language Proficiency Index (LPI) and a minimum score of 60% on all parts of the LPI (or an equivalent score on an accepted language proficiency exam). Applicants admitted in this category must register in a Foundational Writing Skills (FWS) course within their first 30 credits at SFU and complete it with a grade of C or better within their first 45 credits before being allowed to register in a W course.

Continuation Requirements

- Non-B.C. resident students may write the LPI upon arrival at SFU. Students are advised to write the LPI as early as possible in their first semester at SFU.
- Non-B.C. resident students who write the LPI upon arrival at SFU and obtain a 4 or less on the essay section of LPI must register in the FWS course within their first 30 credits at SFU and complete it with a grade of C or better within their first 45 credits before being allowed to register in a W course.
- Students who fail to obtain a grade of C or better in an FWS course after attempting it a maximum of two times will be blocked from further course registration. Registration will again be permitted once they establish that they have acquired the necessary proficiency in written English.