

OFFICE OF THE
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC AND ASSOCIATE PROVOST

MEMO

ATTENTION Senate	TEL
FROM Bill Krane, Chair Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies	
CC	
RE Student Success program - special exemptions from Undergraduate Academic Standing and Continuance Policy	
DATE June 26, 2007	

The Student Success program has been proposed as a two-semester pilot project which will address issues of retention during Fall 07 and Spring 08. Two groups of undergraduate students – International across the University and domestic students in the Faculty of Applied Sciences – have been selected to participate in this pilot which will be reviewed at the end of the Spring 08 semester.

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at a meeting held June 12, 2007 gives rise to the following recommendation:

“That Senate approve that exemptions be made to existing Standing and Continuance policies as follows:

1. At the end of the first enrolled semester subsequent to being placed on Academic Probation, International and Faculty of Applied Sciences students with both a SGPA and CGPA below 2.00, rather than being Required To Withdraw (RTW), will be invited to enroll in the "Student Success" program. If they choose this option, then their academic standing will be changed to Continuing Academic Probation (CAP). Students who do not take up the program will remain RTW, and will be required to meet the normal readmission requirements.
2. At the end of Semester One of the "Student Success" program, if both the SGPA and CGPA are below 2.00, a student will only be RTW if they have not completed the prescribed non-credit modules. This is the only exception to the current evaluation policy for students enrolled in the program. At the end of Semester Two, the current evaluation policy will apply to all students.
3. A student enrolled in the "Student Success" program will not be permitted to exceed 9 credit hours of regular course enrollment, with the exception of students whose CGPA ≥ 2.00 at the end of Semester One. These students will be in Good Academic Standing.

And that these exemptions be reviewed by the end of the Spring 2008 semester.”

MEMO

Student Services
MBC 3000
8888 University Drive
Burnaby, BC V5A1S6
Canada

ATTENTION SCUS

FROM Rummana Khan Hemani
Director, Academic Advising and Student Success

RE Student Success Program - Special Exemptions from Undergraduate
Academic Standing & Continuance Policy

DATE May 30, 2007

Further to my memo of April 25, 2007, I am providing clarification and additional detail regarding the "Student Success" program and proposed changes to the Academic Standing and Continuance policy. The attached document seeks to address concerns and questions raised by SCUS at its meeting on May 1, 2007. Also, previously three amendments to the Academic Standing and Continuance policy had been proposed. These are now put forth as a request for 'exemptions' to the current policy. The 'exemptions' that will be required for the students who are selected and enroll in the pilot program are as follows:

1. *Current:* An undergraduate student's academic standing is evaluated upon completion of 9 credit hours. If a student's CGPA is below 2.00, they are placed on Academic Probation (OAP). Upon completion of a subsequent semester, regardless of the number of credits completed, a student is RTW if both their SGPA (semester grade point average) and CGPA (cumulative grade point average) are below 2.00. If their SGPA is ≥ 2.00 and CGPA is ≤ 2.00 , then the student's standing is Continued on Academic Probation (CAP).

Proposed: At the end of the first enrolled semester subsequent to being placed on Academic Probation, international and Faculty of Applied Sciences students with both a SGPA and CGPA below 2.00, rather than being RTW, will be invited to enroll in the "Student Success" program. If they choose this option, then their academic standing will be changed to CAP. Students who do not take up the program will remain RTW, and will be required to meet the normal readmission requirements.

2. *Current:* A student whose academic standing is CAP will be RTW if both their SGPA and CGPA are below 2.00 in a subsequent semester. If their SGPA is ≥ 2.00 and CGPA is ≤ 2.00 , then the student's standing remains CAP.

Proposed: At the end of Semester One of the "Student Success" program, if both the SGPA and CGPA are below 2.00, a student will only be RTW if they have not completed the prescribed non-credit modules. This is the only exception to the current evaluation policy for students enrolled in the program. At the end of Semester Two, the current evaluation policy will apply to all students.

3. *Current:* A student whose academic standing is OAP or CAP will not be permitted to enroll in a course overload.

Proposed: A student enrolled in the "Student Success" program will not be permitted to exceed 9 credit hours of regular course enrollment, with the exception of students whose CGPA ≥ 2.00 at the end of Semester One. These students will be in Good Academic Standing.

If approved, the above policy exemptions, in conjunction with the "Student Success" program, should be reviewed at the end of the Spring 2008 semester. At that point the program will have been in place for two semesters, which should provide an adequate review period. Using both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods, the program's affect on student success will be measured, and a recommendation will be brought forward regarding the program's future.

- c. Nello Angerilli, Associate VP, Students and International
Nancy Johnston, Senior Director, Student Learning and Retention
Kate Ross, Registrar & Senior Director, Student Enrollment
Richard MacLeod, Director (Acting), Records & Registration

Standing Required for Continuance

Every student is expected to maintain an acceptable standard of scholarship. Specifically, a student must maintain a minimum CGPA of 2.00. A student who does not do so shall be considered to be performing unsatisfactorily in his/her studies.

- upon first admission to Simon Fraser University, a student shall be placed in good academic standing
- academic performance shall be evaluated on Simon Fraser University courses that have assigned grades ('assigned grade' include grades A+ through to D, F, and N, but exclude P, W, CR, AE, CC, DE, GN, FX, IP and AU)

Academic Alert

A student whose semester grade point average (SGPA) falls below 2.00, but who is not placed on any of the academic standings given below, shall receive an 'academic alert' notification and shall be advised to seek guidance at Academic Advising and Student Success in Student Services.

Academic Probation

A student who has a CGPA of less than 2.00 shall be placed on academic probation (OAP). A student on academic probation may not register in a course overload. A student on OAP standing may not receive a 'letter or permission' to attend another university or college.

Required to Withdraw

A student may be required to withdraw (RTW) after one or more semesters on academic probation (see 'outcomes for a student on academic probation' below). A student on RTW standing may not receive a 'letter or permission' to attend another university or college.

Extended Withdrawal

A student may be placed on extended withdrawal (EW) after she/he is required to withdraw (RTW), is readmitted and subsequently is on academic probation for one or more semesters (see Outcomes for a Student on Academic Probation below). A student on EW standing may not receive a 'letter of permission' to attend another university or college.

Outcomes for a Student on Academic Probation

A student on academic probation shall be evaluated at the end of each semester. If at the end of the semester

- the SGPA and the CGPA are each 2.00 or higher, the student shall be in good academic standing
- the SGPA is 2.00 or higher, but the CGPA is less than 2.00, the student shall continue on academic probation
- the SGPA is less than 2.00, but the CGPA is 2.00 or higher, the student shall continue on academic probation. (This could occur if a student repeats a course.)
- both the SGPA and the CGPA are less than 2.00, the student shall be required to withdraw (RTW) from the university or, if previously required to withdraw (RTW), shall be placed on extended withdrawal (EW)

Readmission of Involuntarily Withdrawn Students

A former student who is involuntarily withdrawn from the University (required to withdraw or placed on extended withdrawal) may apply for readmission based on performance achieved in external academic course work completed after she/he last registered at Simon Fraser University (see below for details).

Readmission after Required to Withdraw

A former student who is required to withdraw (RTW) shall be eligible for readmission if she/he completes externally further transferable academic work according to the following schedule (any of the following five options):

- 12-17 credit hours with a minimum 3.50 GPA
- 18-23 credit hours with a minimum 3.00 GPA
- 24-29 credit hours with a minimum 2.75 GPA or with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below) whichever is higher
- 30 or more credit hours with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below)
- a completed 2 year technical diploma with a 70% minimum average and at least 12 credit hours of transferable course work with a minimum 2.75 GPA. (The transferable work may be within the diploma program or supplementary to it.)

Readmission of Students on Extended Withdrawal

A former student on extended withdrawal (EW) shall be eligible for readmission if she/he completes further transferable academic work according to the following schedule (any of the following five options):

- 24-35 credit hours with a minimum 3.50 GPA
- 36-47 credit hours with a minimum 3.00 GPA
- 48-59 credit hours with a minimum 2.75 GPA or with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below), whichever is higher
- 60 or more credit hours with the acceptance GPA
- a completed two year technical diploma with a 70% minimum average and at least 24 credit hours of transferable course work with a minimum 2.75 GPA. (The transferable work may be within the diploma program or supplementary to it.)

Acceptance GPA

The acceptance GPA refers to the minimum admission GPA in effect for that semester for British Columbia college transfer students, according to enrolment limitation measures. The acceptance GPA may vary.

Discussion Paper: 'Improving Retention using an Integrated, Collaborative Approach to Student Success'

Under the current policy on Academic Standing and Continuance, an undergraduate student's academic standing is evaluated upon completion of 9 credit hours. If a student's CGPA is below 2.00, they are placed on Academic Probation. Upon completion of a subsequent semester, regardless of the number of credits completed, a student is Required to Withdraw if their SGPA (semester grade point average) and CGPA are both below 2.00. To be considered for readmission, students must complete transferable courses at another post-secondary institution; readmission is based on the number of transfer credits and CGPA achieved in transfer courses.

Background Data

Students on Academic Probation or Required to Withdraw within 2 Years of Admission (Admit Year=2004/2005)¹

	# Admitted	# OAP	% OAP	# RTW	% RTW
Overall	6617	1763	26.6	730	11.0
Domestic	5917	1517	25.6	623	10.5
International	700	246	35.1	107	15.3
BC College Transfer	2620	644	24.6	237	9.0
BC High School	2526	850	33.7	394	15.6

	# Admitted		# OAP		% OAP		# RTW		% RTW	
	Dom	Intl	Dom	Intl	Dom	Intl	Dom	Intl	Dom	Intl
APSC	791	78	256	24	32.4	30.8	132	12	16.8	15.4
ARTS	3700	424	936	153	25.3	36.1	359	65	9.7	15.3
BUS	319	99	46	22	14.4	22.2	16	10	5.0	10.1
SCI	877	99	278	47	31.7	47.5	115	20	13.1	20.2

52% of BC High School students with admission averages between 3.00 and 3.25 were on Academic Probation within two years of admission, compared to 27.7% with admission averages between 3.25 and 3.50 and 8.7% between 3.50 and 3.75. Similarly, almost twice as many BC College Transfer students with admission averages below 2.50 were on Academic Probation compared to those with averages between 2.50 and 3.25.

Students with Unsatisfactory Academic Standing²

	# OAP/CAP	% of Total Enrollment	#RTW/PW	% of Total Enrollment
Spring 2006	960	4.9	456	2.3
Summer 2006	530	4.1	232	1.8
Fall 2006	1548	7.5	316	1.5

The percentage of registered students that are RTW each term has been generally increasing since about 2000. While the percentage is small, the increasing SFU student population translates into even larger increases in the number of RTW students. It is important to note that the proportion of international students with unsatisfactory academic standing is higher than the proportion of domestic students enrolled in any given term. In terms of overall numbers, it is estimated that approximately 10 to 15% of students in poor academic standing are international students.

¹ Based on Dynamic Student Retention Reporting Tool provided by Analytical Studies

² Sources: SIMS Query and Analytical Studies Enrollment Reports

RTW Students Outcomes³

RTW Undergraduate Students Admitted Fall 1996 to Summer 2006

	#RTW			%RTW			BOA			BOA%	
	Dom	Intl	Total	Dom	Intl	Overall	BC12	BCCOL	Total	BC12	BCCOL
Returning	1087	28	1115	22.9	11.8	22.4	784	259	1043	25.1	19.9
Not Returning	3658	210	3868	77.1	88.2	77.6	2335	1040	3375	74.9	80.1

The main demographic differences between the groups that did and did not return are:

- Returners are less likely to be international students,
- returners are more likely to have been admitted to SFU from BC-12,
- and returners are more likely to have been in the Faculty of Science at RTW.

Problems with Current Practice

The intent of the current policy is to ensure that students maintain a minimum academic standard during completion of their program. However, because it is based on a very narrow set of criteria with fixed outcomes, it does not give due consideration to individual student situations. As such, we continue to turn away bright, capable students. It must be recognized that there are many factors that contribute to a student's poor academic achievement, particularly in their early semesters. These include, but are not limited to, inadequate learning and study skills, difficulty balancing work and study, transition issues, inappropriate course load/course selection, etc. Although there are a number of resources in place at the University that provide academic and personal support to students, they are largely uncoordinated, and under-utilized by those students who need them most.

Recommendations

In response to the growing number of students with poor academic standing, and the institutional objective to improve student retention, we must develop proactive strategies that support student success and retention. More importantly, these should be integrated and delivered collaboratively across the University. As part of this more progressive approach, we propose the following mechanism for assessing academic success based on broader criteria:

All students who would normally be Required to Withdraw under the current policy should be required to enroll in a one or two-semester 'Student Success' program which incorporates the following elements:

- a written agreement between the student, their academic advisor, and faculty designate outlining an action plan for the student based on a student self-assessment, an advisor assessment, and any other assessment deemed appropriate (e.g. learning specialist, counselor, etc.)
- mandatory one or two semester course designed to teach skills for academic success which incorporates learning and writing skills, peer mentoring, on-line resources, facilitated study groups, English language resources, library skills, etc.
- utilization of prescribed resources, e.g. Health and Counselling, Student Learning Commons, SFU International, Centre for Students with Disabilities, peer mentorship, etc.
- participation in prescribed workshops and seminars aimed at improving study skills, learning skills, time management, etc.
- regular consultations with an assigned academic advisor who will monitor and evaluate progress, approve course selection, make appropriate referrals, and update action plan, as necessary, in consultation with faculty designate
- where necessary, successful completion of preparatory courses, such as FAL and FAN
- restriction on course load to 9 credits per semester

Upon completion of each term in the 'Student Success' Program, a student's academic standing will be evaluated by their advisor and faculty designate. If the student has satisfactorily completed their action plan, then, depending on their level of academic achievement, they will either be reinstated to their regular academic program, on Academic Probation or in Good Academic Standing, or they will be required to enroll in the 'Student Success' Program for a subsequent semester. Details regarding minimum GPA requirements need to be determined.

³ Based on Academic Standing longitudinal study provided by Analytical Studies

**Anticipated Revenue from
Tuition & Fees for 250 Students
Retained**

Domestic Students (125)	\$372,798
International Students (125)	\$1,122,948
Total	\$1,495,745

Currently, a significant number of these students will expend their tuition dollars at other institutions after leaving SFU. With an estimated success rate of 60% (as per University of Alberta), we stand to retain an additional **125 international students annually**. A recent longitudinal study of academic standing undertaken by Analytical Studies shows the proportion of students returning to complete their degrees at SFU after being Required to Withdraw is already low and is decreasing. This is likely due to many factors, but we believe it is primarily a result of increased competition for students across the country. Given the relatively low cost of this initiative, the potential for a significant decrease in lost tuition revenue, and a unique opportunity to improve our reputation with our students and in the community, we recommend this proposal be considered for immediate implementation.

*Submitted by Rummana Khan Hemani & Bing Lee,
Academic Advising and Student Success
Updated May 9, 2007*

Student Success Program

Additional information requested by SCUS:

1. What is the cost to students for enrolling in the program?

The cost for the two-semester program will be \$500 (total for two semesters), and will be the same for both international and domestic students. The full amount will be charged at the beginning of the first semester. Students who are eligible to continue at the University, i.e. not Required to Withdraw (RTW), after completion of the second semester will receive a \$250 tuition credit towards their subsequent semester's tuition fees. In addition, students can enroll in up to 9 credit hours of regular courses. Normal tuition and fees will apply to credit courses, with international students admitted Fall 2003 and onwards paying the differential rate.

2. What contextual changes are driving this program?

In response to the growing number of students with poor academic standing, and the institutional objective to improve student retention, we must develop proactive strategies that support student success and retention. This type of program has been proven to improve retention rates amongst students who are struggling academically. Data shows that our RTW and OAP rates have been generally increasing since 2000. Given the declining admission averages of our new students, we can anticipate this trend to continue. Therefore, it will become increasingly important for us to support students who are facing academic difficulties. We know that improved retention rates results in improved reputation, which, over the long term, leads to greater success in recruiting high quality students. We can consider this program an investment in our students that should have long lasting returns.

3. Why is this program being targeted to RTW students?

The pilot program is targeted to RTW students; however, subsequent phases of the program would be expanded to include OAP students. Given the challenges the University is facing in meeting new student targets, we are more reliant on continuing or returning students. As a 'stop-gap' strategy, an immediate reduction in student attrition can be realized by reducing the number of students who are RTW. We know that significant numbers of these students are not returning to the University for various reasons that merit further investigation. It would certainly be a desirable long term strategy to implement this program for students on academic probation, or even earlier, and actually, reduce the number of students who reach 'academic crisis'.

4. Why is this program being targeted to International students?

The primary reasons for targeting international students:

- International students are overrepresented in the group of RTW students (see tables 1 and 2)
- International student retention is an area of significant concern, particularly as it becomes increasingly difficult to recruit new international students to meet enrollment targets
- Data shows that, after being RTW, International students return to study at the University at significantly lower rates than domestic students (see table 3)
- During the discussions regarding partnering with IBT, in response to concerns raised by students, the University promised to enhance activities for international student retention

Table 1 shows the proportion of international students versus domestic students, admitted in a given year, who became RTW.

Table 1: Students Required to Withdraw within 2 Years of Admission (Admit Year=2004/2005)

	# Admitted	# RTW	% RTW
Overall	6617	730	11.0
Domestic	5917	623	10.5
International	700	107	15.3
BC College Transfer	2620	237	9.0
BC High School	2526	394	15.6

Table 2 (a) shows the percentage of registered international students who were RTW over a 10 year period and Table 2 (b) shows the percentage of registered domestic students who were RTW for the same period.

Table 2(a)

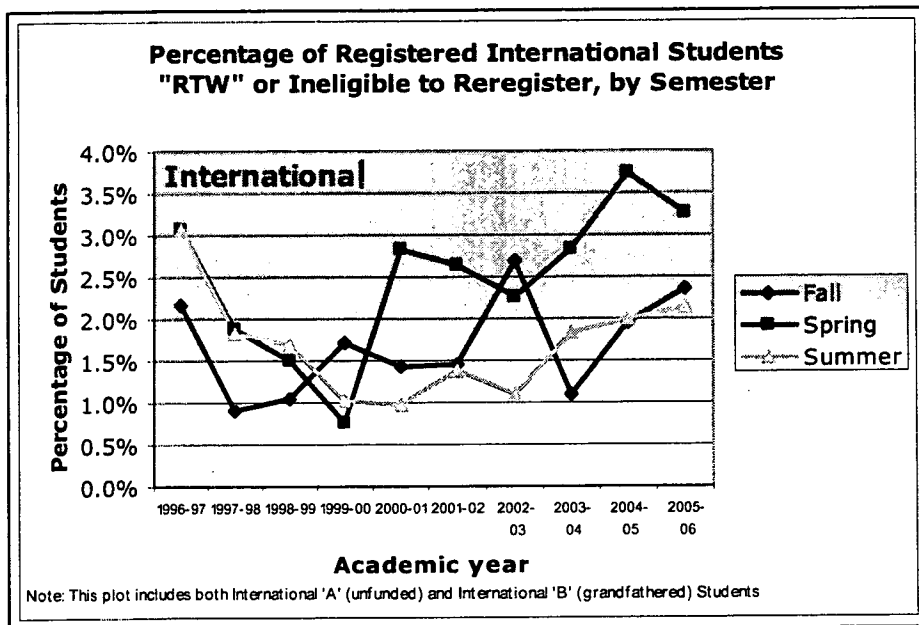


Table 2(b)

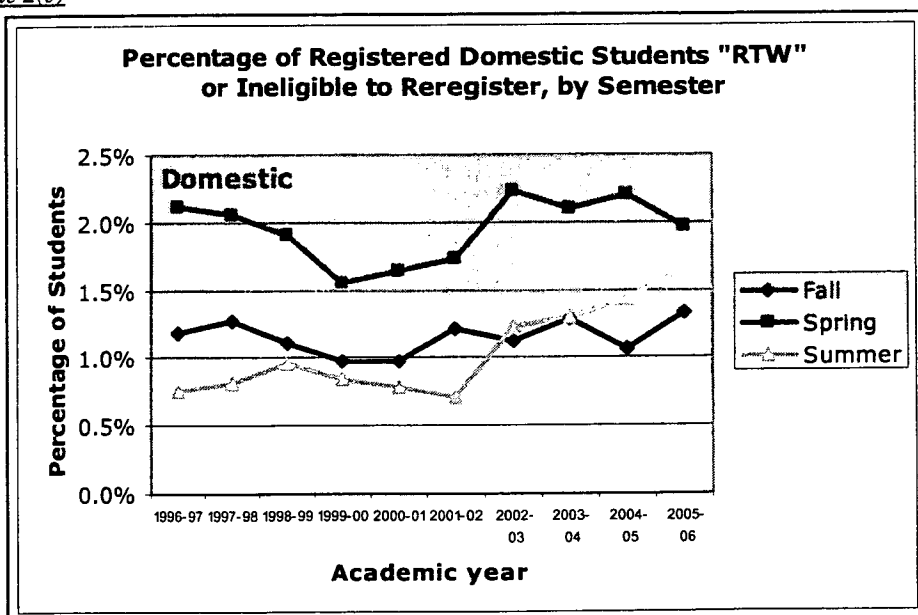


Table 3 shows the proportion of domestic students versus international students who returned to the University after being RTW.

Table 3: RTW Students Outcomes

RTW Undergraduate Students Admitted Fall 1996 to Summer 2006

	#RTW			%RTW		
	Dom	Intl	Total	Dom	Intl	Overall
Returning	1087	28	1115	22.9	11.8	22.4
Not Returning	3658	210	3868	77.1	88.2	77.6

5. What is the program budget?

Student Success Program Budget 2007/2008

Costs

Module development	\$20,000
1.0 FTE Program Coordinator	\$81,661
1.0 FTE Academic Advisor	\$65,524
On-line assessment tools	\$3,091
1.5 FTE Learning Skills Coordinator	\$122,492
Material & Supplies	\$4,000.00
Total	\$296,768

We will have to factor in resources required at the faculty level for additional advising

Revenue

Program Fee for 250 Students @ \$250/ea	\$63,750
Applied Science	\$100,000
Total	\$163,750

Funding request from VPA	\$133,018
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Incremental Tuition & Fees for 250 Students

Domestic Students (125)	\$372,798
International Students (125)	\$1,122,948
Total	\$1,495,745

6. What are the resource implications for the Faculties?

The pilot program is being developed for students in the Faculty of Applied Sciences and International students. All students entering the Student Success program will be assigned an academic advisor in Student Services. Where a student has a declared major, their assigned academic advisor will consult with their department or school advisor to

develop an appropriate course plan for the student. This will typically average one hour per student. The large majority of International students who are RTW do not have a declared major, and therefore, they will primarily seek academic advising in Student Services. The following table shows the breakdown of International and Applied Sciences RTW students by program and declared major:

RTW International Students (excluding Applied Sciences)

Spring 2007 Term (1071 Actual)

Prog	Intl A	Intl B	Declared	Undeclared
BA	28	1	2	27
BSC	13	0	7	6
BUS	5	0	5	0
HLTH	1	0	1	0
Total	47	1	15	33

* non-degree seeking Arts

Summer 2007 Term (1074 Projected)

Prog	Intl A	Intl B	Declared	Undeclared
BA	19	1	1	19
BSC	5	0	3	2
BUS	1	0	1	0
HLTH	0	0	0	0
Total	25	1	5	21

Fall 2007 term (1077 Projected)

Prog	Intl A	Intl B	Declared	Undeclared
BA	41	1	3	39
BSC	3	0	2	1
BUS	0	0	0	0
HLTH	0	0	0	0
Total	44	1	5	40

RTW Applied Sciences Students (Domestic and International)

Spring 2007 Term (1071 Actual)

Prog	Intl A	Intl B	Domestic
BACH	1	0	22
BGSAP	1	0	1
CMNS	1	0	9
CMPT	2	0	15
ENSC	2	0	10
IAT	2	0	1
IATA	0	0	2
KIN	0	0	9
PCMPT	1	0	0
Total	10	0	73

Summer 2007 Term (1074 Projected)

Prog	Intl A	Intl B	Domestic
BACH	2	0	8
BGSAP	0	0	3
CMNS	0	0	2
CMPT	0	0	5
ENSC	1	0	5
IAT	0	0	0
IATA	0	0	0
KIN	0	0	2
PCMNS	0	0	1
Total	3	0	26

Fall 2007 Term (1077 Projected)

Prog	Intl A	Intl B	Domestic
BACH	0	0	11
BGSAP	0	0	1
CMNS	1	0	2
CMPT	2	0	2
ENSC	3	0	7
IAT	0	0	1
IATA	0	0	0
KIN	0	0	1
PCMNS	0	0	0
Total	6	0	25

7. What is the program curriculum?

- The program curriculum is being developed by a working group with staff and faculty from Student Learning & Retention, Student Learning Commons, Health and Counselling, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics, and the FAL (Foundations of Academic Literacy) program
- Students will be allowed to take up to 9 credit hours per semester of regular courses, as prescribed by their academic advisor, in each of the two semesters
- Several individual academic advising consultations per semester
- A written agreement between the student and the program outlining expectations from each party
- Every student will receive an assessment of their study/learning skills and other academic skills, e.g. writing and numeracy; areas requiring strengthening and support will be identified
- Every student will develop a personal learning plan prescribing resources, workshops, and non-credit modules
- All students will be required to take a core study/learning skills module (non-credit); topics covered will include time management, motivation, exam anxiety, academic writing, library/research skills, etc.
- Where appropriate students will be directed to take FALX99 and/or FANX99
- Additional non-credit modules (two to four weeks) will be prescribed as required:
 - International student transition
 - English as an Additional Language modules for reading, writing, and oral skill development
 - Budgeting workshop offered by Financial Aid & Awards
 - Computer skills, e.g. MS Word, Excel, SPSS
 - On-line instructional modules for improving study/learning skills
 - Discipline specific modules will be developed by instructors/faculty
- Students will also be encouraged to participate in facilitated study groups led by peer educators and other peer led programs, such as the International Mentorship program