

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Senate Committee on University Priorities
Memorandum

S.07-120

*As amended by
Senate 15 Oct 07*

TO: Senate

FROM: John Waterhouse
Chair, SCUP
Vice President, Academic

RE: Report on Academic Operations at
Fraser International College
September 2006 to August 2007 (SCUP 07-53)

DATE: September 24, 2007

In ^{February}~~January~~, 2006, when Senate first discussed and approved the establishment of Fraser International College, the Vice President Academic committed to provide Senate with regular reports on the operations of the College. The attached report summarizes the academic activities at FIC from September 2006 to August 2007, the first academic year for FIC.

At its September 12, 2007, SCUP reviewed the attached Report on Academic Operations at Fraser International College, and requested it be forwarded to Senate for information and discussion.

encl.

c. S. Dench

Academic Operations at Fraser International College September 2006 to August 2007

In September 2006, Fraser International College (FIC) began its first semester of operation and admitted 85 students. FIC offered 4 University Transfer Program courses (UTP II) from Simon Fraser University, and 3 University Transfer Program preparatory courses (UTP I). In January 2007, an additional 74 students were admitted to FIC, and a further 52 in May 2007. FIC is now offering 19 UTP II courses and 8 UTP I courses. Thus far, FIC is meeting the enrollment projections agreed to with SFU.

Enrollment Issues

Total FIC students (as of May 2007, includes new and continuing)

Program	Number
UTP I	32
UTP II Arts	36
UTP II Business	100
UTP II Computing	21
Total	189

The table above indicates the preferred area of interest for FIC students at the time of admission to FIC. Areas of interest may change as students proceed through their programs, and preferences indicated at admission do not guarantee admission to programs.

Although final numbers for September 2007 intake are not yet confirmed, it is likely that a further 200 new students will enroll. Of the 22 FIC students who completed 10 courses as required for transfer, 20 students transferred to SFU for the Fall 2007 semester.

Students by Country (as of May 2007)

Country	Number
Belgium	1
Canada (non resident)	7
China	80
Hong Kong	35
India	4
Indonesia	3
Iran	1
Japan	4
Kenya	2
Korea	27
Macau	1
Mongolia	2
Pakistan	2

Singapore	2
Taiwan	13
Thailand	1
Turkey	1
United Kingdom	2
USA	1
Total	189

The current geographic distribution of students reflects the short lead-up period for recruitment prior to FIC beginning operations in September 2006. It is expected that over time the geographic distribution of students admitted to FIC will diversify and, in particular, a greater number of students from Africa countries and India will attend FIC. Prospective students from these countries continue to experience long delays receiving student visas for study in Canada.

Services for FIC students

Students at FIC are provided with a high level of personal support, both in adjustment to living in Canada and to make the transition to academic studies.

In addition to receiving pre-arrival information, FIC students are provided with arrival reception services and support finding accommodation. Orientations are held immediately prior to the beginning of every semester. These sessions are both informational and networking, and provide FIC students with the necessary logistical support as they transition to the college.

Due to the small college environment, students are known to FIC staff and instructors, which allows for early problem identification and intervention. FIC provides ongoing academic advising to students, and advisors work closely with instructors to address student needs and support retention. Students may also access a range of co-curricular workshops throughout the semester in areas such as time management and study skills. Students may self-select academic supports, or may be referred to these by their instructors or advisors when a need is identified or suspected.

As part of the supports and academic programming offered to FIC students, a program similar to SFU's English Bridge Program has been established. Preparation in Academic Skills in English (PAS) provides English language training for students who are admitted to FIC but require additional language training to upgrade their facility with English. Upon successful completion of PAS, students then move into the university transfer program at FIC. The PAS program has been developed and supervised by the Director of SFU's English Bridge Program, in order to ensure the students are adequately prepared for study in English at SFU.

As students move toward completion of their studies at FIC and prepare applications for admission to SFU, customized information sessions are conducted for students. In these

sessions, students are provided with information about major and course selection, and other academic advising as required.

Guarantees of admission to students transferring to SFU from FIC are set at 2.5 CGPA for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and Computing Science, and 3.0 CGPA for the Faculty of Business Administration. The CGPA for FIC students is calculated on performance in ten courses.

Instructional Issues

Courses and approximate students per course (as of May 2007)

BUS251	25
CMNS110	32
CMPT120	7
CMPT125	8
CMPT150	8
ECON103 (2 Sessions)	64
ECON105	25
ENGL101 (2 Sessions)	43
HIST102	27
KIN140	31
MACM101	26
MATH 100	36
MATH151	34
PHIL001 (2 Sessions)	63
POL100	22
PSYC099	22
STAT203	24
WL102	17

Feedback Mechanisms

FIC instructors are employed by FIC, and have qualifications comparable to SFU sessional instructors. Many of the instructional staff hired by FIC are also teaching at SFU or local public colleges, most have previous experience teaching international students, and instructors have been recommended to FIC by the SFU department.

FIC collects ongoing informal feedback and formal course evaluations from course coordinators (who are SFU faculty members), instructors, and students at the end of every semester in which courses are offered. Instructor feedback focuses on the overall quality of student performance, the degree to which course material was suited and challenging to the students, and any other issues instructors find relevant to course management. Instructors have provided semesterly feedback to FIC and to SFU course coordinators indicating that student performance at FIC is within reasonable expectations for university level work (normal distribution), and at a level comparable with international students attending other BC colleges.

SFU departmental course coordinators provide advice and regular liaison with FIC instructors and administrators in order to ensure academic equivalency of FIC courses.

SFU academic units whose courses are taught by FIC appoint a course coordinator at least 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the semester.

FIC collects feedback from course coordinators at the end of every semester in which courses are offered. Coordinators are asked to provide comment on any issues relevant to ensure ongoing course equivalency and maintain academic standards, and are specifically asked to comment on instructor-student dynamics and academic comparability of FIC students to SFU students. Overall, course coordinators have stated that FIC students are performing on a level equivalent to other international students admitted directly or transferring to SFU from other colleges, and that the academic standards in the FIC courses are equivalent to those at SFU.

Student feedback on evaluations has indicated that the majority of students find the courses interesting and challenging. Students have also noted their appreciation of the academic supports provided, related to the pedagogy, instructor availability, and the co-curricular offerings at FIC.

SFU will begin to track the performance of students transferring from FIC as they move into SFU programs. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning will include FIC as a college in the reports they produce regarding the academic performance at SFU of students transferring from BC colleges. The SFU Profile Reports provide a general overview of transfer students, analysis of academic performance at SFU, inter-college comparisons, and comparisons with students admitted directly from B.C. secondary schools. Comparisons between FIC transfer students and other SFU international students will also be possible.

Academic Advisory Committee

Chaired by Dr. John Waterhouse, the AAC has met once a semester since the opening of FIC. The membership and terms of reference of this committee are included as Appendix A of this report. Issues addressed at meetings have included regular semesterly reports from FIC on enrollment and academic performance, and discussion of the quality assurance mechanisms in place to maintain academic standards equivalent to SFU's.

Appendix A
SFU-FIC
Academic Advisory Committee

Membership

Chair

John Waterhouse

Three (3) members nominated by the University

Doug Allan

Maureen Fizzell

Nancy Johnston

Three (3) members nominated by the College

Bev Hudson

Barbara Davis-Leigh

Isabel Hume

Committee manager

Sarah Dench

Terms of Reference

The Academic Advisory Committee shall be responsible for providing advice to the College and the University regarding the University Transfer Program. It will also decide on:

- the manner in which reports are referred back to each of the University and the College;
- the frequency with which it meets, and
- establishing its terms of reference which shall include provision for regular consultation with students.

This Committee will be responsible for tracking and reporting on the following:

- 1) The academic performance of students who transfer from FIC to SFU;
- 2) The number of students who transfer to SFU, their country of origin, the programs into which they transfer, and the number who transfer to other institutions;
- 3) SFU will report annually on activities taken to increase international student recruitment and retention.
- 4) An analysis of increases to departmental workloads resulting from academic oversight of FIC;
- 5) Any concerns that FIC instructors have regarding working conditions;
- 6) FIC will provide statistical information to SFU regarding diversity, including issues such as disability accommodation.

The AAC will meet semesterly.