



**INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH
AND PLANNING**

MEMO

ATTENTION Senate	TEL
FROM Zareen Naqvi, Director, Institutional Research and Planning (IRP)	
RE IRP Reports for Information	
DATE August 9, 2016	TIME

At a meeting of Senate held on March 7, 2011, Senator Paul Percival requested that relevant IRP reports, such as the annual Grades Report, be brought to Senate for information.

Attached are two reports for information:

- **2015/16 Grades Report:** This report is prepared once a year and it summarizes student course grades at the University over a ten year period. The 2015/16 Grades Report covers the period from 2006/07 to 2015/16. Attached is the Summary Report. More detailed information is available on IRP's website: <http://www.sfu.ca/irp/students/grades-report.html>
- **2015 Undergraduate Student Survey (UGSS) Report:** The UGSS survey is conducted every fall term. The attached Highlights Report presents a summary of key findings from the Fall 2015 survey. Topics covered are selected in consultation with Faculties, Student Services and other administrative units of the University. The topics included: course availability, credential completion time, teaching and curriculum, services, and university culture and environment. The full report is located at: <http://www.sfu.ca/content/dam/sfu/irp/surveys/ugss/ugss2015report.pdf>

Enclosure



Simon Fraser University
Institutional Research and Planning

2015/16 Grades Report:
Historical Distribution of
Undergraduate and Graduate Course Grades
2006/07 to 2015/16

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Summer 2016

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I – Introduction

This report summarizes student course grades at Simon Fraser University over the ten year period from 2006/07 to 2015/16¹. SFU faculty and staff can access more detailed information at the SFU Institutional Research and Planning website (<http://www.sfu.ca/irp/students/grades-report.html>).

II – Definitions and Notes

To calculate the average course grades, each grade is assigned a numeric value, defined in Table 1. These values are weighted by the number of students who received each particular grade, to produce an overall average.

Table 1: Simon Fraser University's Grade Scale

A+ = 4.33	B+ = 3.33	C+ = 2.33	D = 1.00	N = 0.00
A = 4.00	B = 3.00	C = 2.00	F = 0.00	
A- = 3.67	B- = 2.67	C- = 1.67	FD = 0.00	

Note: FD is defined as a fail (academic discipline) and has only been in use since Summer 2009.

Table 2 lists the grades that have no numerical equivalent, and are therefore omitted from the calculation of average grades, and from this report. Although they are not included in the averages, credit is granted for the following grades: "AE", "CC", "CR", and "P".

Table 2: Grades with No Numerical Equivalent

Grade	Definition
AE	aegrotat standing, compassionate pass
AU	audit
CC	course challenge
CF	course challenge failed
CN	did not complete challenge
CR	credit without grade
DE	deferred grade
FX	formal exchange
GN	grade not reported
IP	in progress
P	pass, ungraded
W	withdrawn
WD	withdrawal
WE	withdrawal under extenuating circumstances

Among undergraduate courses, "lower division" courses are those numbered from XX1 to 299, inclusive. "Upper division" courses are numbered 300 to 499, inclusive.

Data reported on a yearly basis refers to fiscal year. For example, 2015/16 grades are the grades accumulated over the 2015 Summer term (SFU term code: 1154), the 2015 Fall term (SFU term code: 1157), and the 2016 Spring term (SFU term code: 1161). The grades data for each fiscal year is taken as

¹Effective April 1, 2009, SFU introduced two new faculties: the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology, and the Faculty of Environment. Also, effective April 1, 2011, the Department of Archaeology moved from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to the Faculty of Environment. This new faculty structure has initiated the move of certain courses to different faculties. All data in this report reflect the current faculty structure.

of the middle of the following summer term, to allow time for grade challenges and deferred grades to be resolved.

To protect student privacy, grade distributions based on five grades or fewer are not reported. Co-op courses, work-terms, and practicums are excluded from this report. Where they could be identified, courses graded as Pass/Fail are also excluded.

III – Analysis

III.A – Undergraduate Course Grades

III.A.1 – Lower Division Course Grades (Courses Numbered XX1-299 Inclusive)

FACULTY COMPARISONS (see Table 3 and Figure A):

- For each of the past ten years, the faculties of Communication, Art and Technology (CAT), Education (EDUC), and Health Sciences (HSCI) have awarded higher average lower division grades than the rest of the faculties.
 - The Faculty of Education (EDUC) awarded the highest average lower division grades in 2015/16. EDUC has awarded the highest average lower division course grades in four of the last ten years, with an average awarded grade of 3.03 over the past decade.
 - In 2006/07, the Faculty of Health Sciences (HSCI) began offering undergraduate courses. In its first three years, Health Sciences awarded the highest average lower division grades, and has since remained among the top three faculties for awarding the highest average lower division course grades (10-year average of 2.99).
 - The Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (CAT) awarded an average grade of 2.98 for lower division courses over the past decade.
- In general, lower division courses in the Faculty of Environment (ENV) have awarded higher average grades than those in Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS) and Applied Sciences (APSC). For each of the past ten years, APSC courses have awarded a higher percentage of "A" grades² and a higher percentage of "F" grades³ than courses in ENV and ARTS.
- Lower division courses in the Beedie School of Business (BUS) and the Faculty of Science (SCI) have generally awarded the lowest average grades.

² This includes "A+", "A", and "A-"

³ This includes "F", "FD", and "N"

Figure A
Average Lower Division Course Grades Awarded by Faculty

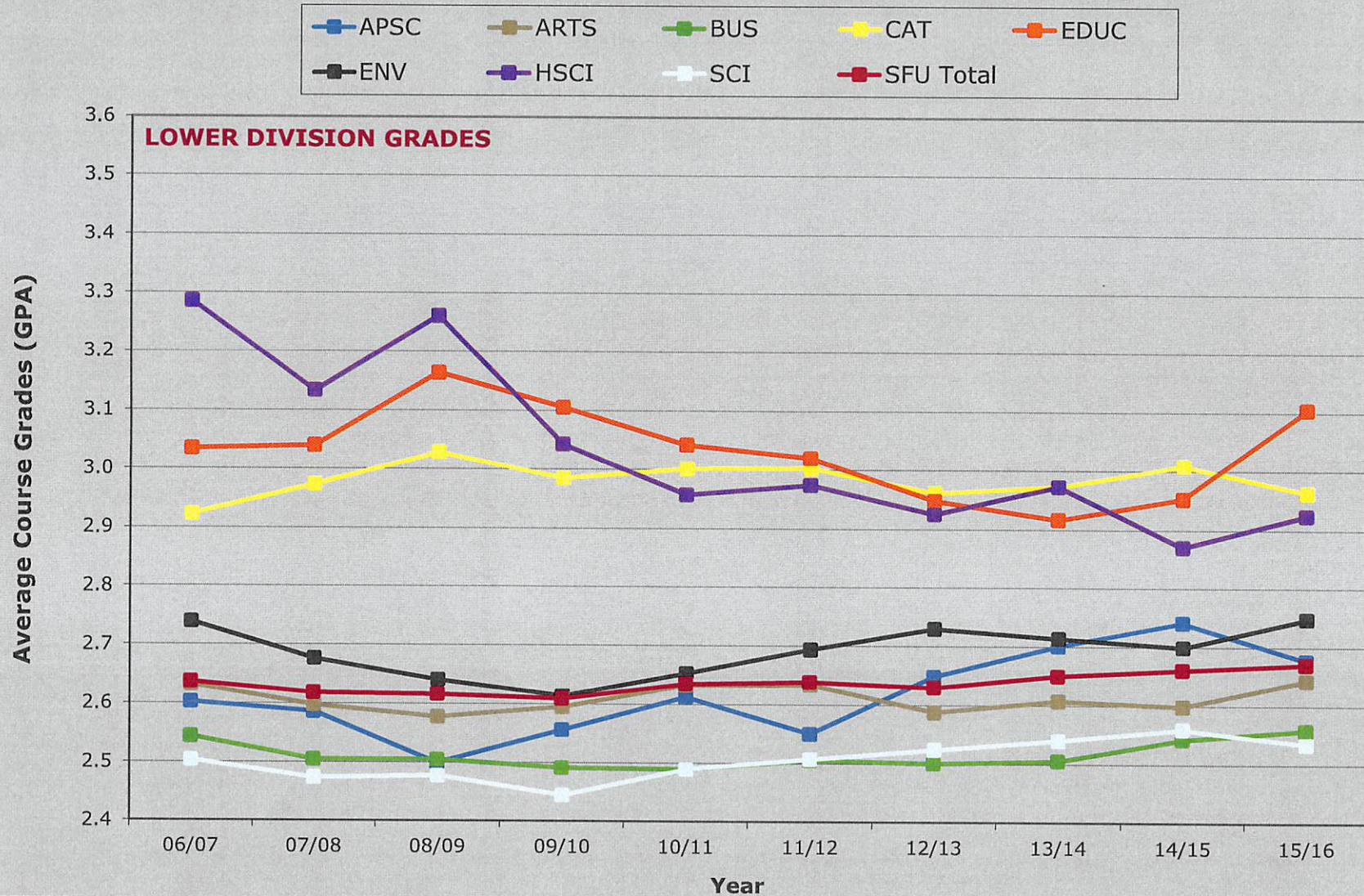


Table 3: Average Undergraduate Course Grades Awarded and Percentage of “A” Grades Awarded, by Course Faculty – Lower Division

Course Faculty	Average Course Grades		% “A” Grades Awarded	
	2015/16	10-Year Average	2015/16	10-Year Proportion
Applied Sciences	2.68	2.63	26.3%	25.5%
Arts and Social Sciences	2.64	2.61	18.0%	17.5%
Business	2.56	2.51	14.1%	13.5%
Communication, Art and Technology	2.96	2.98	25.5%	27.8%
Education	3.10	3.03	40.3%	34.4%
Environment	2.75	2.69	22.6%	21.3%
Health Sciences	2.92	2.99	25.4%	31.5%
Science	2.53	2.51	20.9%	20.4%
University Total	2.67	2.64	21.1%	20.5%

LONG-TERM COMPARISONS AND TRENDS WITHIN FACULTIES⁴:

Comparing the average lower division grades awarded over the last ten years⁵:

- Applied Sciences (APSC):
 - Courses in Chinese (CHIN) have awarded the highest average lower division grades. Note that 2013/14 was the first year that this subject was offered by APSC.
 - Mathematics and Computing Science (MACM) courses have awarded grades considerably below the APSC average.
- Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS):
 - Courses in Greek (GRK) have awarded the highest average grades. In fact, the five subjects in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to award the highest average grades in the last ten years are all language subjects (Greek, Persian, Arabic, Chinese, and Italian). Note that this is only the third year that Arabic (ARAB) courses have been offered, and only the sixth year that Persian (PERS) courses have been offered.
 - Philosophy (PHIL) and Economics (ECON) courses have awarded the lowest average lower division grades.
- Business (BUS):
 - Over the last ten years, lower division courses in Business Administration and Economics (BUEC) and Business Administration (BUS) have awarded very similar average grades.
- Communication, Art and Technology (CAT):
 - Publishing (PUB) and Contemporary Arts (FPA) courses have awarded the highest lower division course grades over the last ten years. Note that this is only the fourth year that lower division PUB courses have been offered.
 - Communication (CMNS) courses have awarded the lowest average lower division grades.
- Education (EDUC):
 - On average, Education (EDUC) courses have awarded higher lower division grades than Foundations of Academic Literacy (FAL) courses.

⁴ Faculties with only one subject at the lower division level are not discussed in this section since there are no comparisons to make.

⁵ excluding subjects that awarded five or fewer grades in the most recent fiscal year

- Environment (ENV):
 - Courses in the Environment (ENV) subject have awarded the highest average lower division grades. Note that this is only the third year that lower division ENV courses have been offered.
 - Archaeology (ARCH), Development and Sustainability (DEVS), and Geography (GEOG) courses have awarded the lowest average lower division grades. Note that this is only the fifth year that DEVS courses have been offered.
- Science (SCI):
 - Other than Management and Systems Science (MSSC) courses (which are seminars with small numbers of students) and SCI courses (the first lower division course with this subject code, SCI 191, was offered for the first time in 2015/16), the highest average lower division grades have been awarded in Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology (BPK) courses.
 - Actuarial Mathematics (ACMA), Mathematics (MATH), and Mathematics and Computing Science (MACM) courses have awarded the lowest average lower division grades.

CURRENT COMPARISONS AND TRENDS WITHIN FACULTIES⁶:

2015/16 Average Lower Division Course Grades:

- Applied Sciences (APSC):
 - The highest average lower division grades awarded in 2015/16 were in Chinese (CHIN) courses.
 - The lowest average lower division grades were awarded in Mathematics and Computing Science (MACM) courses.
- Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS):
 - The highest average lower division grades awarded in 2015/16 were in Greek (GRK).
 - The lowest average lower division grades were awarded in Economics (ECON).
- Business (BUS):
 - Business Administration and Economics (BUEC) courses awarded lower average lower division grades than Business Administration (BUS) courses in 2015/16.
- Communication, Art and Technology (CAT):
 - The highest average lower division grades awarded in 2015/16 were in Publishing (PUB) courses.
 - The lowest average lower division grades were awarded in Interactive Arts and Technology (IAT) and Communication (CMNS).
- Education (EDUC):
 - In 2015/16, Education (EDUC) courses awarded higher average lower division grades than Foundations of Academic Literacy (FAL) courses.
- Environment (ENV):
 - The highest average lower division grades awarded in 2015/16 were in Sustainable Community Development (SCD) courses. Note that this average is based on a relatively small number of grades.
 - The lowest average lower division grades were awarded in Archaeology (ARCH) and Resource and Environmental Management (REM) courses.

⁶ Faculties with only one subject at the lower division level are not discussed in this section since there are no comparisons to make.

- Science (SCI):
 - The highest average lower division grades in 2015/16 were awarded in Management and Systems Science (MSSC) courses, followed by courses with the Science (SCI) subject code. Note that these averages are based on a relatively small number of grades.
 - The lowest average lower division grades were awarded in Actuarial Mathematics (ACMA). Note that this average is based on a relatively small number of grades.

Large Changes in 2014/15 to 2015/16 Average Lower Division Grades:

- The following subjects have seen large changes (of at least 0.25) in the average lower division grade awarded from last year to this year:
 - Increases: Actuarial Mathematics (ACMA: 1.54 to 2.08), Development and Sustainability (DEVS: 2.65 to 3.05), Spanish (SPAN: 2.57 to 2.96), and Sustainable Community Development (SCD: 3.12 to 3.47). Note that relatively few grades were awarded in ACMA, DEVS, and SCD this year.
 - Decreases: Greek (GRK: 3.91 to 3.58).

III.A.2 – Upper Division Course Grades (Courses Numbered 300-499 Inclusive)

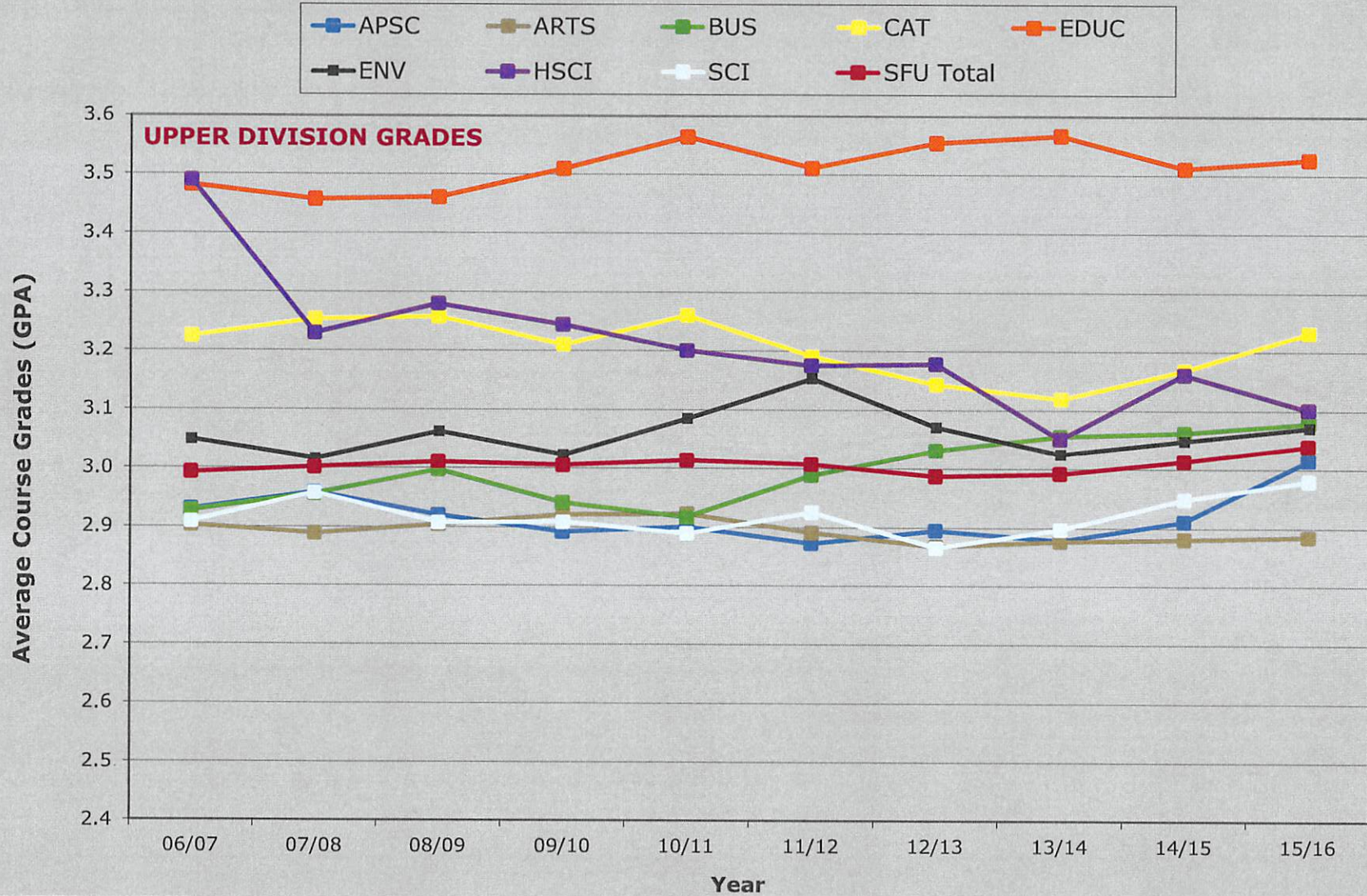
FACULTY COMPARISONS (see Table 4 and Figure B):

- With the exception of 2006/07, the Faculty of Education (EDUC) awarded the highest average upper division course grades in each of the last ten years (average grade awarded: 3.51).
- After Education, the Faculties of Communication, Art and Technology (CAT) and Health Sciences have awarded the highest average upper division grades over the past ten years (10-year averages of 3.20 and 3.15, respectively).
- The remaining faculties have consistently awarded lower average upper division grades, in the range of 2.89 to 3.06. Upper division grades awarded in the Faculty of Environment (ENV) have generally been higher than those awarded in the remaining faculties.

Table 4: Average Undergraduate Course Grades Awarded and Percentage of “A” Grades Awarded, by Course Faculty – Upper Division

Course Faculty	Average Course Grades		% “A” Grades Awarded	
	2015/16	10-Year Average	2015/16	10-Year Proportion
Applied Sciences	3.02	2.92	35.6%	32.2%
Arts and Social Sciences	2.89	2.89	26.4%	27.0%
Business	3.08	3.00	30.6%	28.4%
Communication, Art and Technology	3.23	3.20	38.4%	39.1%
Education	3.53	3.51	61.7%	61.2%
Environment	3.07	3.06	35.0%	34.2%
Health Sciences	3.10	3.15	34.8%	37.3%
Science	2.98	2.92	34.5%	32.3%
University Total	3.04	3.01	33.6%	32.6%

Figure B
Average Upper Division Course Grades Awarded by Faculty



LONG-TERM COMPARISONS AND TRENDS WITHIN FACULTIES⁷:

Comparing the average upper division grades awarded over the last ten years⁸:

- Applied Sciences (APSC):
 - Mechatronic Systems Engineering (MSE) courses have awarded the highest average upper division grades.
 - Computing Science (CMPT) courses have awarded the lowest average upper division grades.
- Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS):
 - The highest average upper division grades have been awarded in German (GERM).
 - Business Administration and Economics (BUEC) courses have awarded average upper division grades considerably below the faculty average.
- Communication, Art and Technology (CAT):
 - Contemporary Arts (FPA) courses have awarded the highest average upper division grades.
 - Publishing (PUB) courses have awarded the lowest average upper division grades. Note that this is based on only six years of data.
- Environment (ENV):
 - Development and Sustainability (DEVS) and Sustainable Community Development (SCD) courses have awarded the highest average upper division grades. Note that this is only the fifth year that DEVS courses have been offered, and that DEVS has awarded fewer than 30 upper division grades each year.
 - Geography (GEOG) courses have awarded the lowest average upper division grades.
- Science (SCI):
 - The highest average grades have been awarded in Marine Science (MASC) and Dialogue (DIAL). Note that MASC courses have awarded fewer than 40 upper division grades each year.
 - Mathematics and Computing Science (MACM) and Mathematics (MATH) courses have awarded the lowest average upper division grades.

CURRENT COMPARISONS AND TRENDS WITHIN FACULTIES⁵:

2015/16 Average Upper Division Course Grades:

- Applied Sciences (APSC):
 - In 2015/16, Mechatronic Systems Engineering (MSE) courses awarded the highest average upper division grades, and Computing Science (CMPT) courses awarded the lowest.
- Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS):
 - The highest average upper division grades awarded in 2015/16 were in German (GERM) and First Nations Languages (FNLG). However, note that very few grades were awarded in these subjects. Among the subjects which awarded more than 50 grades in 2015/16, Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies (GSWS) awarded the highest average upper division grades.
 - Business Administration and Economics (BUEC) and Economics (ECON) courses awarded the lowest average upper division grades in 2015/16.

⁷ Faculties with only one subject at the upper division level are not discussed in this section since there are no comparisons to make.

⁸ excluding subjects that awarded five or fewer grades in the most recent fiscal year

- Communication, Art and Technology (CAT):
 - The highest average upper division grades awarded in 2015/16 were in Contemporary Arts (FPA).
 - The lowest average upper division grades awarded in 2015/16 were in Interactive Arts and Technology (IAT).
- Environment (ENV):
 - The highest average upper division grades awarded in 2015/16 were in Sustainable Community Development (SCD).
 - The lowest average upper division grades were awarded in Geography (GEOG) and Resource and Environmental Management (REM).
- Faculty of Science (SCI):
 - The subjects awarding the highest average upper division grades in 2015/16 were Marine Science (MASC) and Dialogue (DIAL). Note that very few grades were awarded in MASC this year.
 - The lowest average upper division grades were awarded in Mathematics and Computing Science (MACM).

Large Changes in 2014/15 to 2015/16 Average Upper Division Course Grades:

- The following subjects have seen large changes (of at least 0.25) in the average upper division grade awarded from last year to this year:
 - Increases: International Studies and Political Science (ISPO: 2.26 to 3.04⁹), Chinese (CHIN: 2.91 to 3.33¹⁰), Actuarial Mathematics (ACMA: 2.91 to 3.22), and Sustainable Community Development (SCD: 3.21 to 3.48). Note that very few grades were awarded in ISPO courses this year.
 - Decreases: Cognitive Science (COGS: 3.43 to 3.06) and Japanese (JAPN: 3.35 to 3.07). Note that very few grades were awarded in upper division COGS and JAPN courses this year.

III.A.3 – General Observations (All Undergraduate Courses)

- In 2015/16, the average undergraduate grade awarded was 2.83.
- The average undergraduate grade awarded over the past ten years is 2.79.
- Over the past ten years, upper division courses have consistently awarded higher average grades than lower division courses in all faculties.

⁹ ISPO courses were not offered in 2013/14 and 2014/15, so these averages are for 2012/13 and 2015/16, respectively.

¹⁰ Upper division CHIN courses were not offered in 2013/14 and 2014/15, so these averages are for 2012/13 and 2015/16, respectively.

III.B – Undergraduate Course Grades by Student Faculty (see Table 5 and Figure C)

This section summarizes the 2015/16 undergraduate course grade distributions within each faculty, controlling for the faculty of undergraduate students enrolled in the courses.

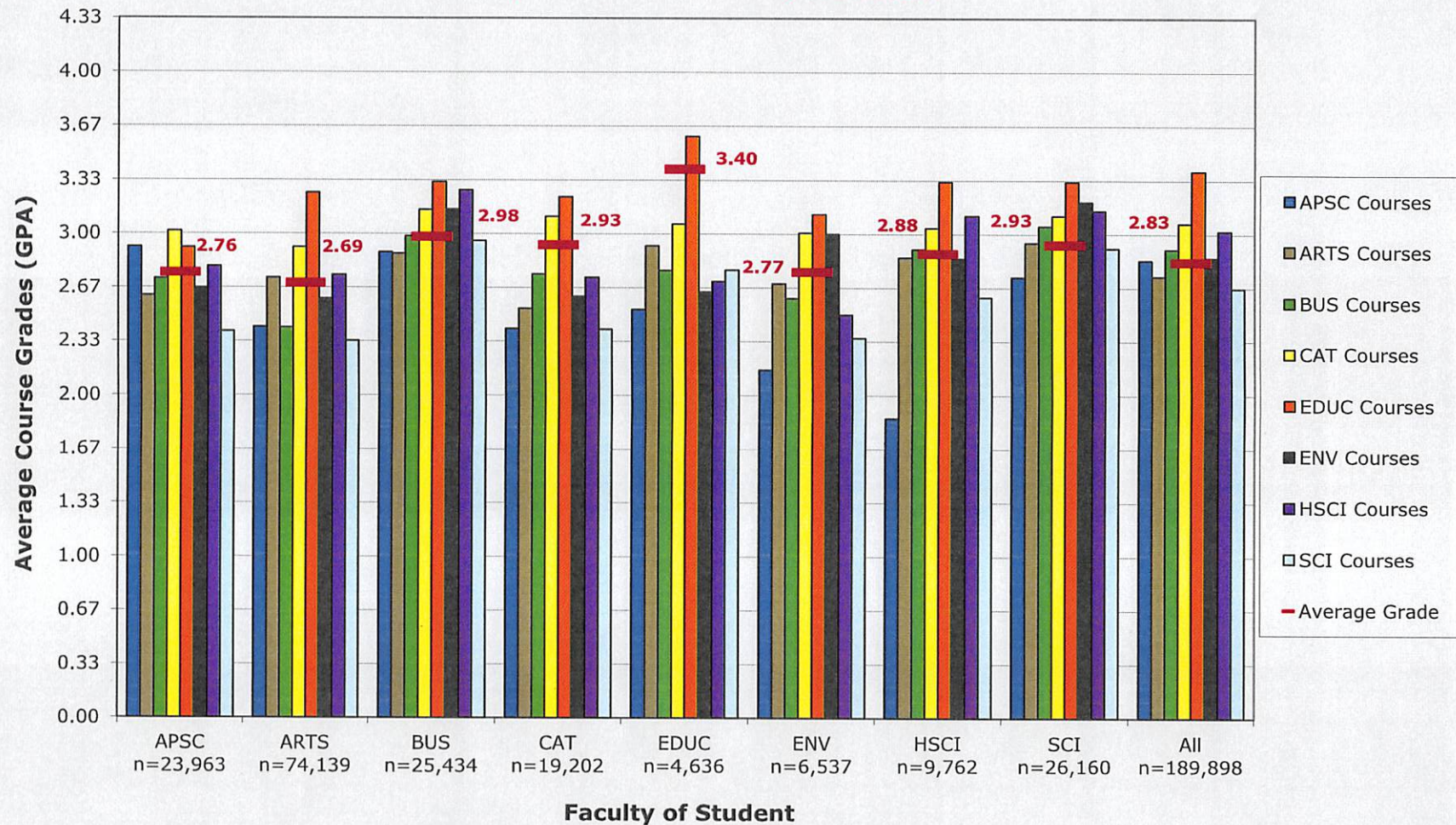
Table 5: 2015/16 Average Undergraduate Course Grades Awarded and Percentage of “A” Grades Awarded, by Faculty of Student

Faculty of Student	Average Course Grades	% “A” Grades Awarded
Applied Sciences	2.76	27.4%
Arts and Social Sciences	2.69	21.1%
Business	2.98	28.1%
Communication, Art and Technology	2.93	28.3%
Education	3.40	56.1%
Environment	2.77	25.3%
Health Sciences	2.88	27.7%
Science	2.93	31.9%
All Undergraduate Students	2.83	26.4%

By Faculty of Students:

- Students from the Faculty of Education (EDUC) were awarded the highest grades overall in 2015/16, with an average course grade of 3.40.
- Students from the Beedie School of Business (BUS) were awarded average course grades of 2.98.
- Students from the Faculties of Communication, Art and Technology (CAT), Science (SCI), and Health Sciences (HSCI) were awarded average grades from 2.88 to 2.93.
- Students from the Faculties of Environment (ENV) and Applied Sciences (APSC) were awarded average course grades of 2.77 and 2.76, respectively.
- Students from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS) were awarded the lowest average grades in 2015/16, with an average course grade of 2.69.
- Students from all faculties most frequently took courses from their own faculties.
- Students from the Faculty of Applied Sciences (APSC) achieved their highest average grades in courses taught in Communication, Art and Technology (CAT).
- Students from all other faculties achieved their highest average grades in courses taught in Education (EDUC).

Figure C
Undergraduate Course Grades, 2015/16
Faculty of Course vs. Faculty of Student



Notes: Only averages based on 6 or more grades are graphed.
 'All' category includes students who are not associated with a faculty.
 Only includes grades awarded to undergraduate students.

By Faculty of Courses:

- In courses offered by the Faculty of Applied Sciences (APSC), students from the Faculty of Applied Sciences (APSC) received the highest average grades in 2015/16.
- In courses offered by the Beedie School of Business (BUS) and the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS) and Environment (ENV), students from the Faculty of Science (SCI) received the highest average grades in 2015/16.
- In courses offered by the Faculties of Communication, Art and Technology (CAT), Health Sciences (HSCI), and Science (SCI), students from the Beedie School of Business (BUS) received the highest average grades in 2015/16.
- In courses offered by the Faculty of Education (EDUC), students from the Faculty of Education (EDUC) received the highest average grades in 2015/16.
- Apart from the Faculty of Education (EDUC), courses in all faculties were most frequently taken by students from within those faculties. Faculty of Education (EDUC) courses were most often taken by students from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS), followed by students from the Faculty of Education (EDUC).

III.C – Graduate Course Grades**FACULTY COMPARISONS (see Table 6 and Figure D):**

- The Faculty of Environment (ENV) awarded the highest average graduate level course grades from 2006/7 to 2012/13, and the second-highest average graduate level course grades from 2013/14 to 2015/16 (10-year average of 3.92).
- The Faculty of Education (EDUC) has awarded the highest average graduate level course grades in the past three years, and the second-highest average graduate level course grades in the six years prior to that (10-year average is 3.91).
- The Faculties of Communication, Art and Technology (CAT), Science (SCI), and Health Sciences (HSCI) have awarded similar average grades over the past decade, with 10-year averages of 3.86, 3.83 and 3.81, respectively.
- The Faculties of Applied Sciences (APSC) and Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS) have generally awarded lower average graduate grades than all other faculties except Business (10-year averages of 3.71 and 3.69, respectively).
- The Beedie School of Business (BUS) has awarded the lowest average grades in each of the last ten years, with an average grade awarded of 3.48.

Figure D
Average Graduate Course Grades Awarded by Faculty

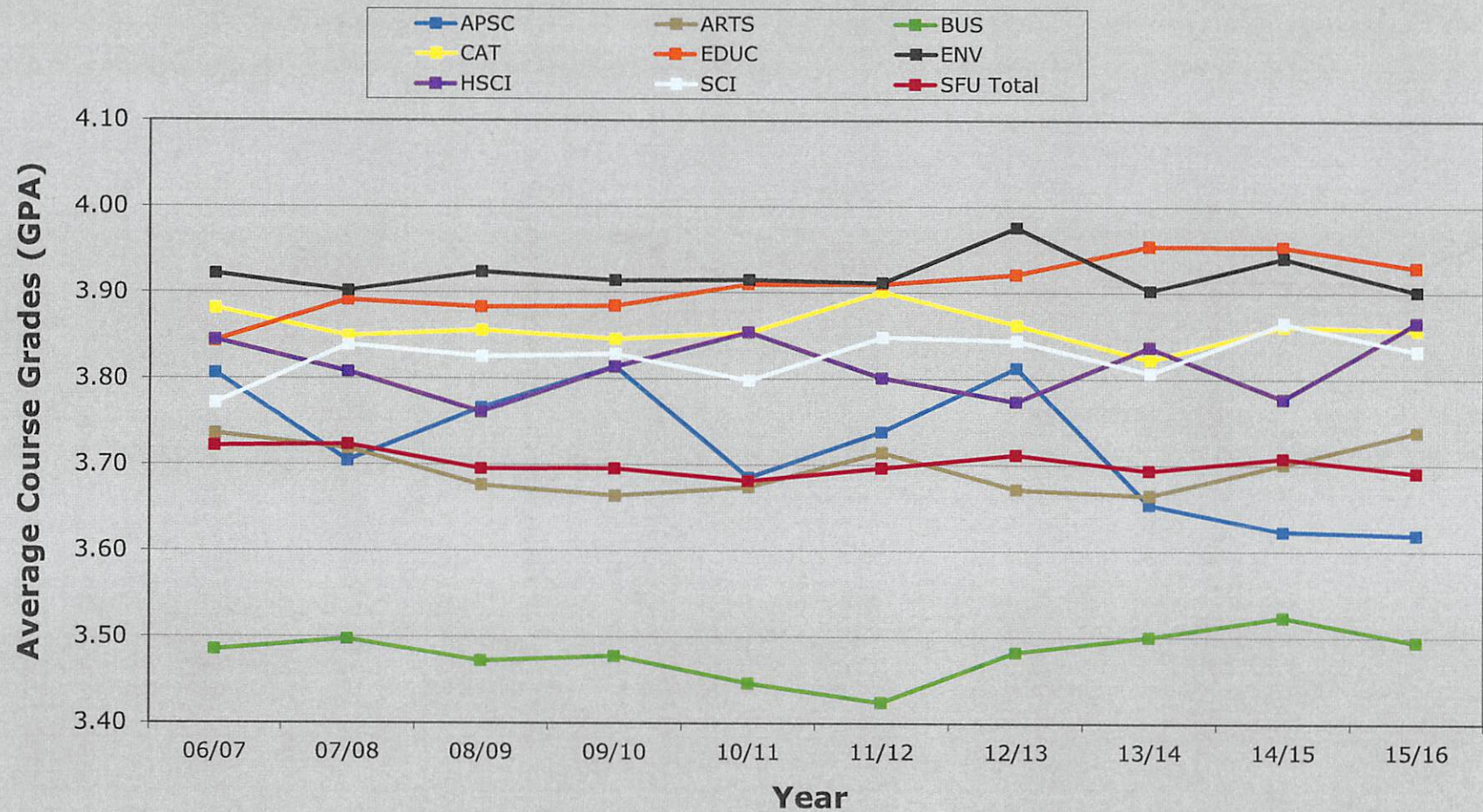


Table 6: Average Graduate Course Grades Awarded and Percentage of “A” Grades Awarded, by Course Faculty

Course Faculty	<u>Average Course Grades</u>		<u>% “A” Grades Awarded</u>	
	2015/16	10-Year Average	2015/16	10-Year Proportion
Applied Sciences	3.62	3.71	66.9%	74.9%
Arts and Social Sciences	3.74	3.69	78.1%	75.0%
Business	3.49	3.48	51.2%	48.8%
Communication, Art and Technology	3.86	3.86	86.5%	87.6%
Education	3.93	3.91	92.8%	90.6%
Environment	3.90	3.92	94.0%	94.2%
Health Sciences	3.87	3.81	89.2%	85.3%
Science	3.83	3.83	85.7%	83.9%
University Total	3.69	3.70	71.4%	72.2%

LONG-TERM COMPARISONS AND TRENDS WITHIN FACULTIES¹¹:

Comparing the average graduate course grades awarded over the last ten years¹²:

- Applied Sciences (APSC):
 - Mechatronic Systems Engineering (MSE) has awarded the highest average graduate course grades. Note that MSE has only been offering graduate-level courses for the past eight years.
 - Computing Science (CMPT) has awarded the lowest average graduate grades.
- Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS):
 - Psychology (PSYC) has awarded the highest average graduate grades over the past decade.
 - Applied Legal Studies (ALS) has awarded the lowest average graduate grades.
- Communication, Art and Technology (CAT):
 - Contemporary Arts (FPA) and Communication (CMNS) have awarded the highest average graduate grades.
 - Publishing (PUB) has awarded the lowest average graduate grades.
- Environment (ENV):
 - Resource and Environmental Management (REM) has awarded the highest average graduate grades.
 - Ecological Restoration (ECO) has awarded the lowest average graduate grades, but this is based on only one year of data (2015/16 was the first year that ECO courses were offered).
- Science (SCI):
 - Courses in Biological Sciences (BISC) and Molecular Biology and Biochemistry (MBB) have awarded the highest average graduate course grades.
 - Physics (PHYS) courses have awarded the lowest average graduate grades.

¹¹ Faculties with only one subject at the graduate level are not discussed in this section, since there are no comparisons to make.

¹² excluding subjects that awarded five or fewer grades in the most recent fiscal year

CURRENT COMPARISONS AND TRENDS WITHIN FACULTIES¹³:

2015/16 Average Course Grades:

- Applied Sciences (APSC):
 - In 2015/16, Mechatronic Systems Engineering (MSE) awarded the highest average graduate course grades.
 - Computing Science (CMPT) awarded the lowest average graduate course grades.
- Arts and Social Sciences (ARTS):
 - The highest average graduate grades in 2015/16 were awarded in Linguistics (LING). Note that very few grades were awarded in graduate level LING courses this year.
 - Applied Legal Studies (ALS) courses awarded the lowest average graduate course grades in 2015/16.
- Communication, Art and Technology (CAT):
 - The highest average graduate grades in 2015/16 were awarded in Interactive Arts and Technology (IAT) and Publishing (PUB) courses.
 - Courses in Communication (CMNS) awarded the lowest average graduate grades.
- Environment (ENV):
 - In 2015/16, courses in Resource and Environmental Management (REM) and Geography (GEOG) awarded the highest average graduate grades.
 - Archaeology (ARCH) awarded the lowest average graduate grades in 2015/16.
 - Note that very few grades were awarded in GEOG and ARCH.
- Science (SCI):
 - The highest average grades in 2015/16 were awarded in Biological Sciences (BISC).
 - The lowest average course grades were awarded in Actuarial Mathematics (ACMA). Note that very few grades were awarded in ACMA.

Large changes in 2014/15 to 2015/16 Average Course Grades:

- The following subjects have seen large changes (of at least 0.25) in the average graduate course grade awarded from last year to this year:
 - Increases: Geography (GEOG: 3.64 to 3.94). Note that very few grades were awarded in graduate level GEOG courses.
 - Decreases: Archaeology (ARCH: 3.99 to 3.59) and Actuarial Mathematics (ACMA: 3.64 to 3.35). Note that very few grades were awarded in graduate level ARCH and ACMA courses.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS:

- In 2015/16, the average graduate grade awarded was 3.69, which is similar to last year. The average graduate grade awarded at the university has been fairly stable over the last ten years.
- The average graduate grade awarded over the past ten years is 3.70.

¹³ Faculties with only one subject at the graduate level are not discussed in this section, since there are no comparisons to make.

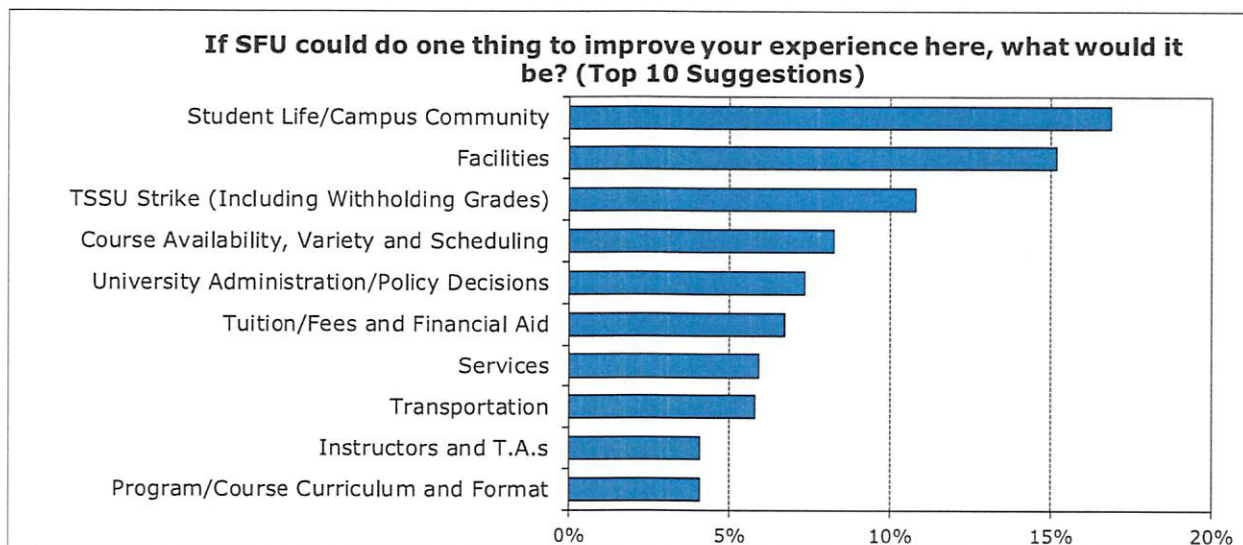
Fall 2015 Undergraduate Student Survey: Highlights

The Undergraduate Student Survey has been conducted at Simon Fraser University every Fall semester since 1992¹ (except in 2002). This annual survey provides essential feedback on the academic experiences and concerns of our undergraduate students. Every year, the survey asks students about their experiences with course availability and credential completion at SFU, as well as a range of other topics that change from year to year. This year's topics included teaching and curriculum and services, and university culture and environment.

A total of 7,878 students participated in this year's survey, yielding an overall response rate of 31.3%. Highlights of the survey results are presented here. Statistics provided in this summary and in the full report are estimates based on survey respondents. Assuming that the sample is representative, proportions calculated on all respondents are accurate within $\pm 1.0\%$ ², 19 times out of 20. The full report is available on the Institutional Research and Planning web-site: <http://www.sfu.ca/irp/surveys/ugss.html>

General Experience

- 84% of respondents are satisfied with their general SFU experience.
- When students were asked what single thing SFU could do to improve their experience here, the most common responses were:
 - improve student life,
 - improve facilities, and
 - end the TSSU strike³ and stop withholding grades.



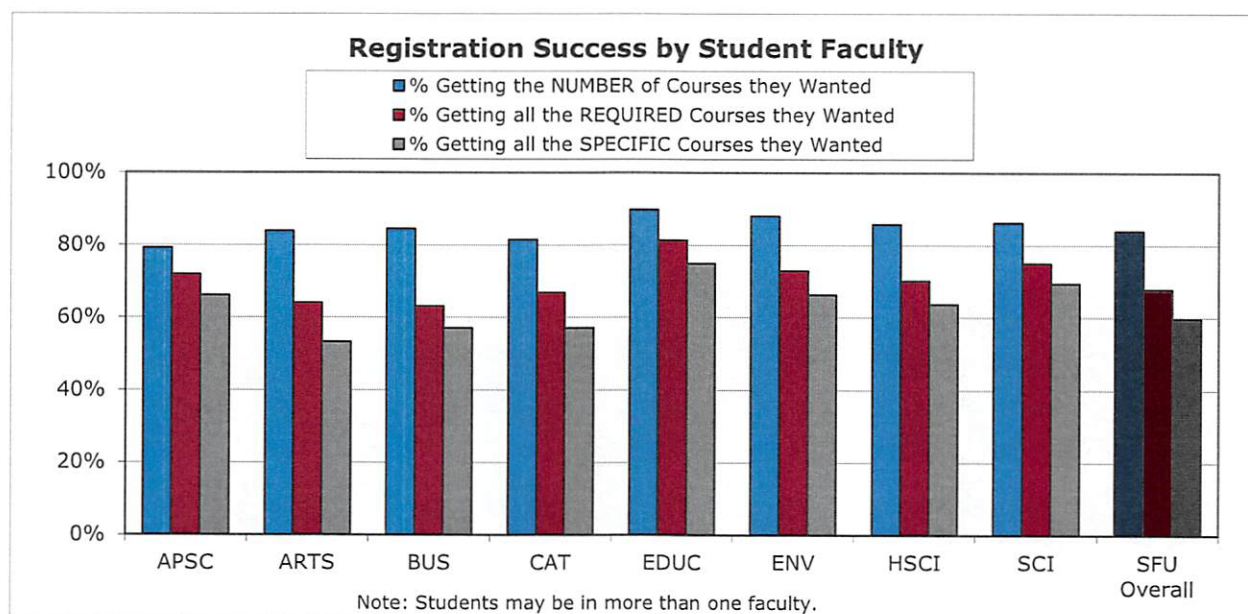
¹ It should be noted that a change in methodology, from in-class paper survey to online survey, was instituted in 2006. The paper surveys, administered to a random sample of classes, resulted in a "captive audience" and high response rates. In contrast, the online surveys, usually administered to the entire SFU undergraduate student population, result in larger samples but lower response rates, which could make the results less generalizable. Measures were taken to reduce potential biases resulting from a lower response rate.

² Note that this margin of error does not control for multiple comparisons. Survey research should be considered exploratory, and definitive conclusions must be drawn with caution.

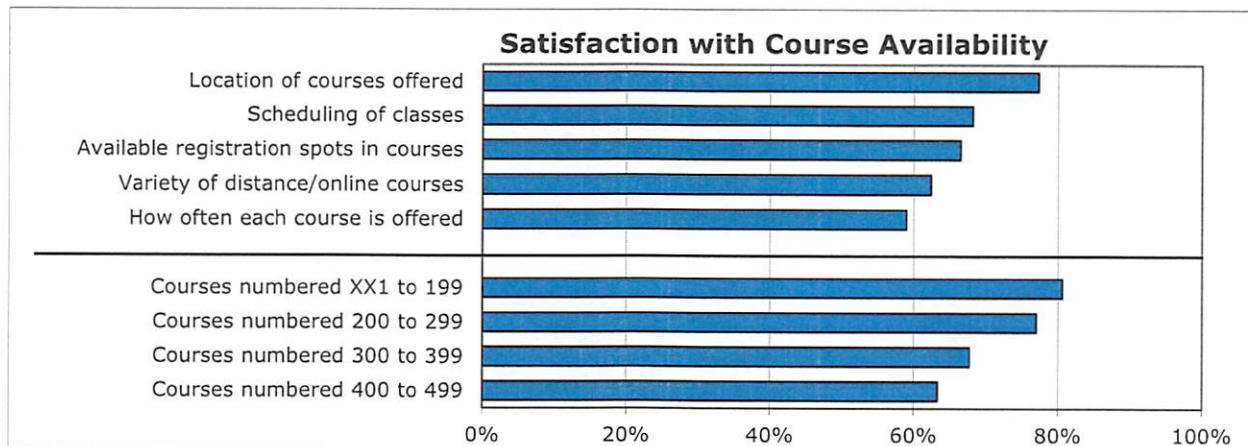
³ Students specifically mentioned the "TSSU Strike" in their responses to this question.

Course Availability

- **NUMBER of Courses:** 84% of respondents were able to register in the number of courses they wanted this fall. This is similar to last year's rate.
- **SPECIFIC Courses:** 60% were able to register in all of the specific courses they wanted to take this term, slightly higher than last year's rate of 58%, but not statistically significant.
- **REQUIRED Courses:** 68% were able to register in all of the required courses they wanted this term. This is similar to last year's rate of 67%.
 - Registration difficulty in required courses was most often due to:
 - full classes,
 - scheduling conflicts,
 - courses not being offered this term, and
 - spaces being reserved for other students.



- **Satisfaction with Course Availability:**
 - Satisfaction decreases as course level increases, ranging from 81% satisfaction for courses numbered XX1 to 199, down to 63% for courses numbered 400 to 499.
 - Satisfaction with the availability of courses numbered 200 to 299 dropped from 80% last year to 77% this year. This is a statistically significant difference. The rest of the satisfaction rates also decreased, but are not statistically significant.
 - Satisfaction with available registration spots in courses (66%) is higher than last year, but this is not a statistically significant difference.
 - Satisfaction with other aspects of course availability is quite similar to last year:
 - 77% are satisfied with the location of courses,
 - 68% are satisfied with course scheduling,
 - 62% are satisfied with the variety of distance/online courses offered, and
 - 59% are satisfied with the frequency of course offerings.

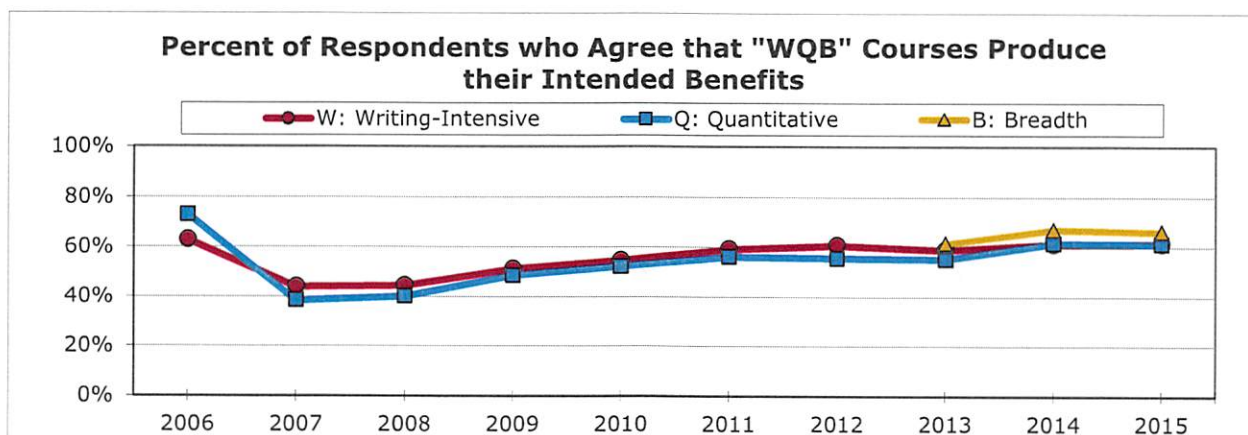


Credential Completion Time

- **Expected Time to Completion:**
 - 16% of respondents expected to complete their credential in under four years,
 - 58% expected to complete in four years, and
 - 26% expected to complete in five or more years.
 - 82% of respondents thought that it was important that they complete their credential within the timeframe they expected.
- **Delayed Credential Completion:** 63% of respondents reported that they are taking longer than expected to complete their credential. This is similar to last year.
 - Commonly cited reasons for taking longer include:
 - course availability issues - e.g. full courses, schedule conflicts, courses not offered, etc. (56%),
 - taking a reduced course load (42%),
 - participation in co-op (36%), and
 - employment outside of co-op (36%).

Teaching and Curriculum

- **Quality of Teaching:** 85% of respondents are satisfied with the overall quality of teaching at SFU (compared to 87% last fall – not a statistically significant difference).
- **WQB Courses:** Just over half of this year's respondents agreed that these courses produce the benefits for which they were designed (62% agreement for "W" courses, 61% for "Q" courses, and 66% for "B" courses).



- **Learning Resources:**

- 67% of respondents think SFU should encourage the use of more digital learning resources (e.g. interactive assignments and tests, eTextbooks, wiki series, etc.)
- When asked to rank a set of aspects of learning resources,
 - 49% of respondents ranked the quality of the information in the material as most important,
 - 43% ranked the low cost of the materials as most important,
 - 6% ranked ease of gaining access to or purchasing the materials as most important, and
 - 2% ranked “uses the latest technology” as most important.

- **Textbooks:**

- 64% of respondents purchased at least one textbook from the SFU Bookstore, 62% did so from another location such as online or from another student, and 11-13% did so from the SFU Online Bookstore/eShop or directly from a publisher website.
- 24% of respondents spent less than \$100 on their textbooks this term,
- 54% spent \$100-\$399 on their textbooks, and
- 22% spent \$400 or more on textbooks.

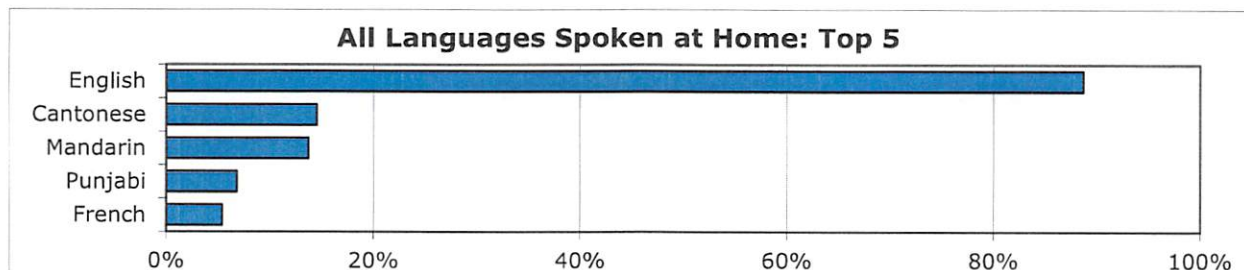
- **Academic Integrity:**

- Most respondents learned about SFU's academic integrity/cheating policies from their instructors (93%) and TAs/TMs (63%).
- Over the past year, 12% of respondents suspected another SFU student of purchasing a paper to hand in as their own assignment, 14% suspected another student of cheating during a test/exam using technology (such as a cell phone, smart watch, graphing calculator, etc.), and 22% suspected another student of cheating during a text/exam using other means.

- **Research with Faculty Members:** 18% of respondents considered to be in fourth year or higher (based on credits completed and basis of admission) said that they have worked within a faculty member's research team, outside of coursework.

Language Skills

- 89% of respondents speak some English at home, with 41% speaking only English at home.
- 59% speak at least one non-English language at home, and 11% speak no English at home.
- 49% of respondents speak more than one language at home.
- 60% of respondents said that English was the first language they learned as a child and still use.
- 90% of respondents speak English most often with their friends.

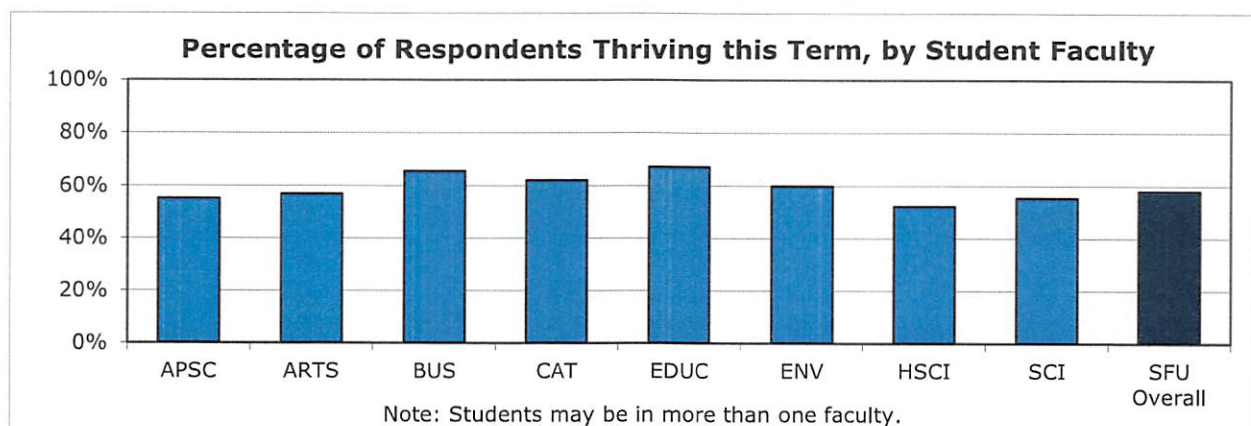


Services

- **Library (other than SLC):** 91% of respondents are satisfied.
 - 85% of respondents are satisfied with the physical space of the Burnaby Library,
 - 76% are satisfied with the physical space of the Surrey Library, and
 - 64% are satisfied with the physical space of the Vancouver Library.
- **Academic Advising:** 78% are satisfied, compared to 75% last year (a statistically significant difference).
- **Career Services, Work Integrated Learning, and Volunteer Services:** 62-64% are satisfied.
- **Student Learning Commons (SLC) Services:** 49-60% of respondents are satisfied with the learning strategies assistance, academic writing assistance, and English language support that the Student Learning Commons (SLC) offers.
 - Note that only 18-24% of respondents have used these services.

University Culture and Environment

- 58% of respondents feel that they are thriving⁴ as a university student this term.
- 57% are satisfied with the sense of community within their academic program.
- 42% are satisfied with the sense of community on campus as a whole.



General

- **Employment:**
 - 55% of respondents are currently employed or self-employed (compared to 53% last fall – not a statistically significant difference). Among these:
 - 11% work 30 hours or more per week in a paid job,
 - 22% work 20–29 hours per week, and
 - 42% work 10–19 hours per week.
- **First Generation Students:** 24% of respondents are first generation post-secondary students (i.e. their parents/guardians have not attended a post-secondary institution).
- **Attendance of Science Workshops/Events:** 13% of respondents had attended an on-campus Science workshop/event prior to applying to SFU, and 89% were satisfied with it.

⁴ Thriving was defined in the question as “getting the most out of your university experience, so that you are intellectually, socially, and psychologically engaged and enjoying the university experience.”

- **Engagement in the Community:**
 - **Local Community:**
 - In the last year:
 - 68% have done volunteer work,
 - 39-49% have engaged in civic and humanitarian activities, and
 - 19-27% have engaged in social justice activities, environmental activities and community service work that made use of their SFU education.
 - **International Setting:**
 - In the last year:
 - 13-14% have engaged in humanitarian activities and volunteer work, and
 - 5-8% have engaged in civic activities, social justice activities, environmental activities and community service work that made use of their SFU education.

Recommendations

- **Student Life/Campus Community:** Students continue to request improvements to student life and the campus community, such as holding more social events, including parties and group activities.
- **Facilities:** Based on comments received, student satisfaction with facilities could be further improved by:
 - continuing to improve and increase the number of study spaces on campus (creating more group and quiet study areas, increasing the number of comfortable chairs and tables available, etc.),
 - continuing to repair and improve the washrooms,
 - improving the heating and cooling of SFU buildings, and
 - continuing to renovate and repair buildings, such as fixing the broken chairs and desks in classrooms and improving the lighting and amount of colour on campus.
- **Course Availability and Scheduling:** Student responses suggest the need for continued effort to:
 - increase the frequency of courses, especially required courses,
 - increase the number of evening and online courses, and
 - offer a wider variety of courses.
- **Policies and Services:** Some additional student suggestions over the last few years for improving their experience at SFU include:
 - providing more advertising about available services,
 - improving transportation service and parking availability,
 - increasing the amount of practical/hands-on experience in courses,
 - improving the English-language skills of instructors and TAs,
 - lowering tuition and fees, and/or improving financial aid,
 - continuing to improve food quality while keeping prices low,
 - improving access to wi-fi and power outlets,
 - continuing to improve the SFU website, enrollment system, and online course systems, and
 - improving academic advising.