



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
ENGAGING THE WORLD

Minutes of a Meeting of the Senate of Simon Fraser University held on  
Monday, March 3, 2025 at 5:30 pm at the West Mall Complex (Room 3210)  
and via Zoom Video Conferencing

## Open Session

**Present:** Joy Johnson, Chair

Abu-Samhan, Mishael

Altmann, Rachel

Ashoughian, Gohar

Bhalloo, Shafik

Brennand, Tracy

Carcano, Luana

Chapman, Glenn

Collard, Mark

Denholm, Julia

Egri, Carolyn

Everton, Michael

Fisher, Brian

Fiume, Eugene

Frank, Richard

Gray, Bonnie

Gunawan, Derrick

Hall, Peter

Hashemi, Tara

Khangura, Harinder

Karaivanov, Alexander

Kim, Lisa

Kingsbury, Paul

Krogman, Naomi

Laitsch, Dan

Leznoff, Daniel

Liu, Connie

Lysova, Alexandra

Martell, Matt

Masri, Kamal

McKenzie, Janis

Neustaedter, Carman

O'Brien, Mary

O'Neil, Dugan

Percival, Colin

Rassier, Dilson

Schiphorst, Thecla

Snyder, Jeremy

Stockie, John

Szymczyk, Barbara

Thornton, Allen

Tucker, Rochelle

Weldon, Laurel

Whitehurst, David

Williams, Vance

Zickfeld, Kirsten

**Absent:**

Ali, Sikandra

Al-Rawi, Ahmed

Bagga, Rishu

Baker, Micah

Brooks-Wilson, Angela

Bullock, Cécile

Collard, Mark

Do, Henry

Eftenaru, Cristina

Elhayek, Abdulkarim

Fatima, Fatima

Fung, Aaron

Herrenbrueck, Lucas

Kessler, Anke

Liu, Landy

Myers, Gord

Pantophlet, Ralph

Ricker, Amy

Schmidt, Michèle

Sutherland, Jill

Tong, Pok Man

Traversa, Marissa

Vrooman, Tamara

Williams, JF

**In Attendance:**

Mahdavi-Amiri, Ali

Naqvi, Zareen

Ortabasi, Melek

**1. Approval of the Agenda**

The agenda was approved as distributed.

**2. Approval of the Minutes of the Open Session of January 6, 2025**

The minutes of the open session on January 6, 2025 were approved as distributed.

**3. The Minutes of the Open Session of February 3, 2025 will be considered for approval at the Senate meeting on April 7, 2025****4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

**5. Report of the Chair**

The Chair reported that the School of Medicine's Undergraduate Medical Education (UGME) accreditation application has been approved and the school has been granted Candidate Status. Site visits for the UGME program are scheduled for May and June 2025. In preparation for the site visits, SFU continues to make progress towards curriculum development, space planning and recruitment:

- A business plan has been submitted to the Ministry for the permanent home of the new School in Surrey.
- Recruitment for key leadership roles is progressing steadily, with roles such as Associate Dean of Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation, Associate Dean, UGME and Associate Dean, Research either confirmed or close to completion.
- Active searches for several other leadership and administrative roles continue, and faculty recruitment is also advancing. The School intends to have made at least 100 formal clinical faculty appointments before the accreditation site visit in June.

The Chair reported that as part of international enrolment and revenue generation efforts, SFU continues to build its presence internationally. Part of this work includes reconnecting with alumni and partners around the world to keep SFU top of mind. In support of this, the Chair, in her role as President, is travelling to Hong Kong and Singapore later this month to reconnect with alumni, ambassadors, donors and academic partners in the area, as well as to support recruitment outreach with high school students who may be interested in attending SFU. Connections will also be made with high school counsellors and recruitment agents who support prospective students to share more about SFU.

The Chair reported that the B.C. Centre for Agritech Innovation (BCCAI) is investing in 19 new agritech projects and nine training programs aimed at strengthening the province's food production and job growth. The 19 new projects and nine training programs aim to help tackle critical challenges faced by food producers in B.C., including soil health, indoor agriculture, plant and animal health, Indigenous food sovereignty, and training opportunities. Together, they represent a total investment of \$15.5 million, including \$4.8 million from BCCAI, matched by industry contributions.

The Chair reported that SFU has been working hard on government advocacy efforts during this challenging time for the post-secondary sector and provided the following updates:

- Over the past seven months -- ever since Government Relations function moved to sit under the President's Office -- SFU's federal lobbying has gone up by 200% and is being increasingly invited to the table to share SFU's perspective.
- The Provost presented at a Parliamentary Committee on Citizenship and Immigration last year, and participated in a small-group closed roundtable with Minister Miller on February 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Engagements with the provincial government continue to be strong and are showing results, with an increased number of government representatives reaching out to SFU to host tours and events.
- With U.S. tariffs on the horizon, SFU continues working closely with external partners such as the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade and Business Council of B.C. to ensure that the sector's contributions are being captured in conversations about innovation and the economy.
- The Government Relations team has been developing some resources to support SFU faculty and staff looking to advocate with their elected representatives. An advocacy toolkit is now available on the government relations website. The toolkit shares information about how to set up a meeting with your MP or MLA, what to expect and how to best use your meeting time to support SFU's efforts.

**i) Report of the Provost**

The Provost reported that the 2025/26 budget has been submitted to the Board of Governors for approval at its March 27<sup>th</sup> meeting. It was added that there are plans to bring to Senate in the next few months multi-year budgets for the next four or five years. These projections will take into account some of the challenges facing the post-secondary sector.

A question was asked regarding if the current budget situation is expected to improve over the next few years or does this represent a new normal. Senate was informed that about a year ago, the university started collecting data from the faculties and non-academic units on a quarterly basis on not only costs but also on predictions and plans for the months and years to come. Previously, the budget was based on how much money was received from the government and the expenses for that year. Moving forward, the plan is to base the budget on quarterly projections on what's going to happen over the next three or four years. It was added that SFU does now have a consolidated balanced budget for 2025/26, and depending on what happens around the recovery of international enrollment, SFU may face one or two more years of tight budgeting.

A question was asked around the most effective means of lobbying the government given current financial constraints. Senate was informed that one's approach would differ depending on if you are speaking with your local Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) or your Member of Parliament (MP), and also if you are speaking with someone from the government or with someone from the opposition. For the provincial government, focus would be on the government providing funding if recruitment goes above domestic targets and increasing operating grants. For the federal government, focus would be on increased funding and tighter regulations around

private institutions. In either case, relaying personal stories about the importance post-secondary institutions play in their community is helpful.

A question was asked regarding to what extent increases to domestic tuition fees are factored into budget models. Senate was informed that for the 2025/26 budget undergraduate domestic tuition fees will increase by 2%, while international undergraduate fees will increase by 4%. Consideration was given to increasing international undergraduate fees by more than 4%, but after consultation with student groups such an approach is not being pursued.

## **6. Question Period**

No questions were submitted.

## **7. Report of Faculties regarding students who have met requirements for Degrees, Certificates, and Diplomas**

### **i) Adjustments – Graduate and Undergraduate Credentials (S.25-41)**

Senate received Adjustments – Graduate and Undergraduate Credentials for information

## **8. Reports of Committees**

### **A) Senate Committee on Enrollment Management and Planning (SCEMP)**

#### **i) Enrollment Plan 2025-2026; Undergraduate Admission Targets for 2025/2026 (S.25-42)**

Zareen Naqvi, Director - Institutional Research and Planning, was in attendance to respond to questions.

#### **Motion 1:**

Moved by P. Hall, seconded by T. Schiphorst

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the SFU Enrolment Plan for fiscal year 2025/2026.”

Citing Table 3, a question was asked to explain why having the targeted number of domestic new intakes is producing more than targeted number of students taking courses, and why having slightly lower targeted number of international new intakes is producing less than the targeted number of students taking courses. Senate was informed that on the domestic side new intakes form about 25% of the total student body, and there has been a slight increase in new intake numbers over the last five years. It has also been noticed that domestic students are taking slightly higher credit loads, which explains why PFTEs are increasing faster than the number of new intakes. On the international side, there has been a decline in headcounts along with a decline in credit load.

With it being noted that undergraduate domestic students are taking a higher average credit load, a follow-up question was asked regarding if there is concern that the headcount numbers might suddenly drop when these students graduate. Senate was informed that the multiyear projections

informing the budget contemplate tapering towards a lower enrollment level and is why next years target numbers for domestic undergraduates is similar to the current year to avoid such a scenario.

A question was asked regarding if there is a multiyear enrollment plan that runs parallel to the multiyear budget plan, and if so, can Senate see it. Senate was informed that development of the multiyear budget does take into account all of the predictions for enrollment, both domestic and international. It was added that it is the intention to make this information available at a future meeting.

A question was asked regarding how the enrollment plan will impact SFU's academic mission, especially in terms of the impact on teaching, workload, and resource availability. Senate was informed that such consideration is why a plan is being put forward that starts with next year's targets but is informed by longer term projections that dial back the level of over enrollment. The strategy of using the existing instructional capacity by enrolling domestic students to make up for the loss of international students is not a sustainable one. The need has been recognized to bring the overall level of instructional load on faculty more in alignment with the resources available.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**Motion 2:**

Moved by P. Hall, seconded by R. Tucker

"That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Proposed Domestic Undergraduate Admission Targets by Faculty and Basis of Admission—All Campuses (Headcount), for fiscal year 2025/2026."

Noting the increase in domestic students versus the target numbers, a question was asked regarding if the admission cutoff for entry into SFU will continue to decline. Senate was informed that SFU does not intend to continue the recent trend of over enrolling domestic students, with the intention to bring the numbers in line with the level of funded seats. It is expected that doing so will improve intake standards.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**Motion 3:**

Moved by P. Hall, seconded by V. Williams

"That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Proposed International Undergraduate Admission Targets by Faculty and Basis of Admission—All Campuses (Headcount) for fiscal year 2025/2026."

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**B) Senate Committee on University Priorities (SCUP)****i) External Review Report and Action Plan for the Faculty of Education (S.25-43)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by D. Laitsch

“That Senate approve the Action Plan for the Faculty of Education that resulted from its External Review.”

A concern was raised with the line *Review whether tending to Indigeneity is considered in all processes and work done in the Faculty...* It was argued that such phrasing may compel individual faculty members to teach in a certain way, or may imply that faculty members who don't subscribe to that particular way of thinking might be penalized at biannual reviews. Senate was informed that that line comes from the External Review Report, which is the report of the external reviewers and thus the faculty has no control over the content.

Noting that similar language appears in the Action Plan and comprise part of the core values for the faculty, a follow-up question was asked regarding the consequences to faculty members who don't share those values and are prospective faculty members less likely to be hired if they don't share those values. Senate was informed that every faculty member's academic freedom is protected in the Faculty of Education. The value of the faculty relates closely to equity, indigeneity and the culture of inquiry and it's important for educational institutions to pay attention to them. It was added that faculty members within Education are welcome to research whatever is of interest to them and they are able to bring whatever materials they want into their courses. Faculty members are encouraged to address issues of equity and indigeneity in their course work, but there is no one monitoring or sanctioning their teaching or research.

Under *Educational Goals*, a concern was raised with the goal of enabling students to *develop their critical voice and agency in issues of social justice... and that they actively participate in creating and sustaining a just society*, noting that such wording could mean that the program is training teacher to be social activists. Senate was informed that when going into classrooms and looking at how relationships are developed between students and within the community, its important to create an environment within that community that is welcoming, and that is open to diverse people and students. Many of the standards will be referencing the teacher's responsibility to create a community that is welcoming and supportive of all, and understands that there are student populations who have been historically disenfranchised and disadvantaged. Thus, this goal is to make sure the teachers are tending to that and engaging and supporting all the students in their class.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**ii) Full Program Proposal for a Graduate Diploma in Big Data (S.25-44)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by H. Khangura

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for a Graduate Diploma in Big Data in the School of Computing Science within the Faculty of Applied Sciences, effective Fall 2025.”

Ali Mahdavi-Amiri, Assistant Professor - Program Chair and Director, Master's in Professional Computer Science, was in attendance to respond to questions.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**iii) Full Program Proposal for a Graduate Diploma in Cybersecurity (S.25-45)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by C. Liu

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for a Graduate Diploma in Cybersecurity in the School of Computing Science within the Faculty of Applied Sciences, effective Fall 2025.”

Ali Mahdavi-Amiri, Assistant Professor - Program Chair and Director, Master's in Professional Computer Science, was in attendance to respond to questions.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**iv) Full Program Proposal for a Graduate Diploma in Visual Computing (S.25-46)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by C. Liu

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for a Graduate Diploma in Visual Computing in the School of Computing Science within the Faculty of Applied Sciences, effective Fall 2025.”

Ali Mahdavi-Amiri, Assistant Professor - Program Chair and Director, Master's in Professional Computer Science, was in attendance to respond to questions.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**v) Full Program Proposal for a Medical Humanities and Social Sciences Minor (S.25-47)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by R. Tucker

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Full Program Proposal for a Medical Humanities and Social Sciences (MHSS) Minor within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.”

Melek Ortabasi, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programming – Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, was in attendance to respond to questions.

Noting that the program plans to include subjects such as critical race theory (CRT), it was suggested that the subjects could be broadened to instead say *combating racism*, given the controversial nature of CRT. This would allow faculty to teach CRT if they so choose, but it also leaves the door open to consider other approaches to combating racism. Senate was informed that the phrasing in the proposal does state *subjects such as*, meaning CRT is just one potential subject for teaching, and that CRT is a recognized term in the field and there would be no reason to remove it.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**vi) Suspension of Admission to the Semester in Dialogue Program (S.25-48)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by C. Liu

“That Senate approve the Suspension of Admission to the Semester in Dialogue program within the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.”

A question was asked regarding if an altered version of this program is being considered to allow for its continuation in at least some form. Senate was informed that this program has been a successful but expensive program to run and consideration is being given to finding ways of delivering or highlighting dialogical pedagogies using other programs or delivery methods.

A question was asked as to why this program is so expensive to deliver. Senate was informed that the program features a highly experiential mode of learning with intensive instructional interaction delivered through one primary instructor to a small group of students numbering between 20 to 30. Beyond this, the program lacks a permanent home and is no longer centrally funded by the university, thereby losing a central revenue stream to support it.

A question was asked around how much money is being saved with the suspension of this program. Senate was informed that the savings from the suspension would total approximately \$500,000.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**vii) Termination of the Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Sustainable Development (S.25-49)**

Moved by D. Rassier, seconded by V. Williams

“That Senate approve and recommend to the Board of Governors the Termination of the Post Baccalaureate Diploma in Sustainable Development in the School of Resource and Environmental Management, Sustainable Development Program, within the Faculty of Environment.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**viii) External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Physics (S.25-50)**

Senate received External Review Mid-Cycle Report for the Department of Physics for information.

**C) Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (SCUS)**

**i) Post-Secondary Transfer Admission Requirement Changes to the Faculty of Science (S.25-51)**

Moved by P. Kingsbury, seconded by T. Schiphorst

“That Senate approve, effective Fall 2025, the changes to the Post-Secondary Transfer Admission requirements for the Faculty of Science.”

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**ii) Undergraduate Program Block Admission and Transfer Pathways (S.25-52)**

Moved by P. Kingsbury, seconded by A. Lysova

“That Senate approve, effective Fall 2025, the discontinuation of the Undergraduate Program Block Admission and Transfer Credit Pathways.”

A question was asked regarding if there was a process of consultation with the departments that are affected by this change, in particular Computing Science. Senate was informed that there was consultation with the affected faculties.

A question was asked regarding if the recent SFU-Douglas College transfer partnership would fall under this motion. Senate was informed this motion applies to programs five years or older or to those agreements that haven’t rearticulated. Once approved, Student Services will reach out all affected faculties or programs to confirm any discontinuations.

The question was called and a vote taken.

MOTION CARRIED

**iii) Program Changes (S.25-53)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Engineering Science), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Cognitive Science Program, Economics, School of Criminology, School of Public Policy, World Languages and Literatures), the Beedie School of Business, the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School of Contemporary Arts, School of Communication, School of Interactive Arts and Technology), the Faculty of Environment (Archaeology), and the Faculty of Science (Biological Sciences, Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Statistics and Actuarial Science).

**iv) New Course Proposals (S.25-54)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved new course proposals in the Beedie School of Business, the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School for the Contemporary Arts, School of Interactive Arts and Technology), the Faculty of Environment (School of Resource and Environmental Management), and the Faculty of Science Mathematics, Statistics and Actuarial Sciences).

**v) Course Changes (S.25-55)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved course change in the Beedie School of Business, the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (School for the Contemporary Arts, School of Interactive Arts and Technology), the Faculty of Environment (Archaeology), and the Faculty of

Science (Mathematics, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Physics, Statistics and Actuarial Science).

**vi) Removal of WQB Designations (S.25-56)**

Senate received information that the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, acting under delegated authority, approved the removal of WQB designations in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Philosophy).

**D) Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)**

**i) Program Changes (S.25-57)**

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved program changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Sustainable Energy Engineering), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (Psychology), and the Faculty of Science (Biological Sciences).

**ii) New Course Proposals (S.25-58)**

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved a new course proposal in the Faculty of Science (Physics).

**iii) Course Changes (S.25-59)**

Senate received information that the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, approved course changes in the Faculty of Applied Sciences (School of Computing Science, School of Engineering Science, School of Mechatronic Systems Engineering, School of Sustainable Energy Engineering), the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (School of Criminology, Economics, French, History, School for International Studies, Latin American Studies, Liberal Studies, Linguistics, Political Science, Psychology, School of Public Policy, Sociology and Anthropology, Urban Studies Program), the Beedie School of Business, the Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology (Digital Media, School of Interactive Arts and Technology), the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Environment (Geography, School of Resource and Environmental Management), the Faculty of Health Sciences, and the Faculty of Science (Biological Sciences, Biomedical Physiology and Kinesiology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Mathematics, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Physics, Statistics and Actuarial Science).

**E) Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)**

**i) Senate Committee Elections (S.25-60)**

Senate received a summary of the nominations, positions elected by acclamation, positions requiring an online vote, and outstanding vacancies for Senate committees.

**F) Senate Policy Committee on Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries (SPCSAB)**

**i) Annual Report 2023-2024 (S.25-61)**

Senate received the Senate Policy Committee on Scholarships, Awards and Bursaries (SPCSAB) Annual Report 2023-2024 for information.

**9. Other Business**

**10. Information**

**i) Date of the next regular meeting - Monday, April 7, 2025**

Open session adjourned at 7:04 p.m.

Kris Nordgren  
Senate Secretary pro tem