

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, ACADEMIC

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: D. Gagan, Chair *David Gagan*
Senate Committee on Academic Planning

Subject: Special Arrangements - Cohort Option
(SGSC Meeting June 16, 1997)
(SCAP Reference: SCAP 97-36)

Date: September 16, 1997

Action undertaken by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee and the Senate Committee on Academic Planning gives rise to the following motion:

Motion:

"that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors as set forth in S.97 - 68 , a cohort option for the Masters Degree under Special Arrangements."

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Alison Watt, Director
Secretariat Services

From: Phyllis Wrenn
Acting Dean, Graduate
Studies

Subject: Cohort Option - Special
Arrangements

Date: August 14, 1997

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee, at their Meeting on June 16, 1997, approved the following motion and it is now being forwarded to the Senate Committee on Academic Planning for approval:

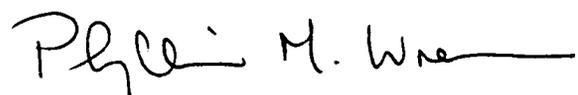
MOTION:

"That the Senate Graduate Studies Committee approves and recommends to the Senate Committee on Academic Planning the proposal described in the document dated March 25, 1997, entitled "A Cohort Option for the Masters degree Under Special Arrangements" with the following amendment:

Page 4, Item V. Approval Process

Add after sentence ending "...academic merits."

The Committee may decide that recommendations for admission be subject to review by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee or a sub-committee thereof."



Phyllis Wrenn
Acting Dean, Graduate Studies

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Memorandum

TO: Senate Graduate Studies Committee

FROM: Bruce P. Clayman
Dean of Graduate Studies

SUBJECT: Cohort Option - Special Arrangements **DATE:** March 25, 1997

I enclose a proposal for an expansion of Special Arrangements. As you are aware, at present individual students may submit proposals of individual programs of study for consideration by my office and, ultimately, this committee.

I have assisted in the development of the attached proposal from Dean of Arts Evan Alderson to expand the definition and applicability of this approach. As you will see, it provides an avenue for innovation while retaining appropriate safeguards on university resources and academic standards.

I support this proposal and am placing it on the agenda of the next meeting of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee with the following proposed motion:

“The Senate Graduate Studies Committee approves and recommends to the Senate Committee on Academic Planning the proposal described in the document dated March 25, 1997, entitled “A Cohort Option for the Masters Degree Under Special Arrangements.”

Please consult members of your Graduate Program Committee and your Department Chair in preparation for discussion of this matter.

- c. M. McGinn (for immediate distribution)
P.M. Wrenn
Faculty Deans
D. Gagan



A COHORT OPTION
for the
MASTERS DEGREE UNDER SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

This is a proposal that Graduate Admission under Special Arrangements be amended to provide for a cohort option for the Masters degree.

I. BACKGROUND

Graduate study under Special Arrangements is defined as work toward a degree that falls "outside or between existing programs" but which has a "well-developed plan of studies in an area which can be shown to have internal coherence and academic merit and in which the University has appropriate expertise and interests among its faculty members." (Graduate Regulation 1.3.4)

Until this time, this mode of study has been open only to individual students, but it is becoming clear that the flexibility to create a program focused on a specific interdisciplinary goal need not be limited to individual students. The opportunity to apply the Special Arrangements designation to groups of students would be very useful. It would enable new and innovative programs to be offered to specific groups of students (as with the individual program), it would permit the prototyping of programs which might eventually be regularly established under normal procedures, and it would give the university the opportunity to respond quickly and responsibly to new areas of need without creating cumbersome infrastructures that then must be maintained.

As with the individual Special Arrangements, the cohort option would exist only for the life of the cohort Special Arrangement and resources would have to be assured only for the duration of the particular program. Once the cohort had completed its work, the program would cease to exist. Any subsequent cohort program in the same area would require its own separate approval. Because the approval for Special Arrangements rests with the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, the review process can be done in a timely way. Approval will be given only if the committee is confident that the proposed program has academic merit and that adequate resources are available. The Dean of Graduate Studies will be responsible for reviewing the program budget and insuring that all necessary

financial and other resource commitments are in place and are in conformity with University policies. If the proposed tuition fees differ from the normal university fee schedule, Board of Governors' approval will also be required.

II. STEERING COMMITTEE

The Academic Steering Committee will be composed of at least four SFU faculty members drawn from the departments relevant to the course of studies, including at least one faculty member from each constituent discipline. The members of the committee will create and present the proposal for the program, administer the individual program, and provide for instruction and supervision. It will be their responsibility to construct the curriculum for the program as well as to insure that it is adequately delivered. They are also responsible for recommending admissions and reviewing students' progress. The Steering Committee will function as the cohort's Graduate Program Committee as set out in Graduate General Regulation 1.2.

III. PROPOSED CALENDAR ENTRY

1.3.4.a Cohort Special Arrangements (to follow current 1.3.4, attached)

These highly structured cohort-based programs are designed to meet the educational needs of specific student groups in fulfilling the requirements for a Masters degree, where these needs cannot be met within existing programs. Each program will integrate studies from across two or more disciplines and will involve a curriculum and requirements recommended by each program's Academic Steering Committee and approved by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. Students may undertake this degree program only through specific admission to the cohort program. The admission criteria, degree requirements and any other special conditions for an individual Cohort Special Arrangements Program must be approved in advance by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee; these may not be below the minimum admission and degree requirements of regular graduate programs. In some instances, tuition fees for these programs may differ from the regular graduate fee schedule published in the University Calendar, and will be announced separately.

IV. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

Any proposal for a Cohort Special Arrangements Program will include:

1. A statement of the field of study and its core areas to be covered by the proposed arrangements and the rationale for the program. This statement will indicate the academic merit and coherence of the program; the expertise necessary to mount the program and evidence that such expertise is present and available within the SFU faculty and that the program cannot be pursued within existing SFU graduate Programs.
2. The names and curricula vitae of all members of the Steering Committee. For each member, a brief statement of research interests and their relevance to the proposed program must be provided. Each member should indicate willingness to participate and each relevant Department Chair should provide explicit assurances that the required teaching and other resources will be made available, in accordance with point #5, below.
3. The criteria for admission into the program, including provision for and scheduling of any qualifying work that may be required of some students.
4. The minimum academic requirements for the degree, e.g. courses, examinations, field work and/or thesis. To the maximum extent possible, the academic requirements should resemble those of graduate programs in relevant areas and should include where possible regular SFU graduate courses.
5. A timetable for the completion of the requirements. This statement should include provision for students who may be unable to complete the requirements in a timely fashion for unexpected reasons.
6. A statement as to what University facilities will be needed with approvals for their use by the appropriate authorities.
7. A budget for the program which specifies any additional direct costs and details the revenue sources through which these will be met, including any unusual fee structure. The budget will be

reviewed by the Dean of Graduate Studies before the program is considered by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, in order to assure that all necessary commitments are in place. The adequacy of library resources must be confirmed by the University Librarian.

V. APPROVAL PROCESS

If the Dean of Graduate Studies is satisfied with the financial arrangements for the program, the Senate Graduate Studies Committee will consider the program on its academic merits. The Committee may decide that recommendations for admission be subject to review by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee or a sub-committee thereof. Approved programs will be forwarded to the Senate Committee on Academic Planning for information. Programs which involve international activities will be forwarded to the Senate Committee on International Activities for relevant approvals. Any exceptional fee structure will be forwarded to the Board of Governors for approval. Following all required approvals, the program may be advertised and implemented.

VII. FINAL REPORT

At the conclusion of the cohort special arrangements program the Steering Committee will submit a final report to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. In addition to detailing the outcome of the program for individual students, the Committee will assess the success of the program and advise on its suitability for repetition with a new group of students. This report will be forwarded to the Senate Committee on Academic Planning for information.

March 25, 1997

Full Special Arrangements Calendar entry:

1.3.4. Admission Under Special Arrangements

Exceptionally able applicants, who wish to work for a Masters or Doctoral degree outside or between existing programs at Simon Fraser University, may apply to work under Special Arrangements. A student applying for Special Arrangements must have a well-developed plan of studies in an area which can be shown to have internal coherence and academic merit, and in which the University has appropriate expertise and interests among its faculty members.

Graduate students applying or working under Special Arrangements are required to conform to Senate regulations for graduate students. However, there are additional regulations which concern only students applying or working under Special Arrangements. Enquiries about these regulations should be directed to the Dean of Graduate Studies by January 1st of each year for admission to the Fall semester.

Students working under Special Arrangements may be required to take a selection of courses from existing programs. Other courses open to Special Arrangements students are:

- SAR 895-3 Special Topics to be selected by the Student and the Supervisory Committee.
- SAR 896-6 Special Topics to be selected by the Student and the Supervisory Committee.
- SAR 897-5 Special Topics to be selected by the Student and the Supervisory Committee.

Special Arrangements Masters and Doctoral thesis work are assigned the following numbers:

- SAR 898: Masters Thesis
- SAR 899: PhD Thesis

1.3.4.a Cohort Special Arrangements

These highly structured cohort-based programs are designed to meet the educational needs of specific student groups in fulfilling the requirements for a Masters degree, where these needs cannot be met within existing programs. Each program will integrate studies from across two or more disciplines and will involve a curriculum and requirements recommended by each program's Academic Steering Committee and approved by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. Students may undertake this degree program only through specific admission to the cohort program. The admission criteria, degree requirements and any other special conditions for an individual Cohort Special Arrangements Program must be approved in advance by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee; these may not be below the minimum admission and degree requirements of regular graduate programs.