

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of Senate

From: J. Driver
Dean of Graduate Studies

Subject: Temporary and Permanent Withdrawal
of Graduate Courses

Date: January 25, 2001



Action undertaken by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, acting under delegated authority, gives rise to the following motion:

MOTION:

“that Senate approve the proposed policy for the Temporary and permanent Withdrawal of Graduate Courses”

J. Driver
Dean of Graduate Studies

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attach.

TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL OF GRADUATE COURSES

Intent

In the interest of providing accurate information to prospective and current graduate students, it is desirable to list in the Calendar only those graduate courses offered on a regular basis. This policy provides a two-stage mechanism for removal of courses from the Calendar if they have not been offered regularly.

Procedures

1. In the summer semester the Dean of Graduate Studies, in conjunction with the Registrar, will produce a list of graduate courses (excluding special topics and reading courses) which have not been taught in the previous four academic years (including the year of the review).
2. In the fall semester the Dean will inform all academic units affected that the untaught courses will be withdrawn temporarily from the Calendar, and will offer the opportunity to challenge the temporary withdrawal. SGSC will make a decision on temporary withdrawal of courses following receipt of information from the academic units.
3. The Dean will maintain a list of all temporarily withdrawn courses, noting the date when they were withdrawn.
4. If an academic unit wishes a course to be reinstated in the Calendar, it must inform the Dean prior to the end of January. The memo should state when the course is scheduled to be taught and by whom. The course will be reinstated in the Calendar for the next academic year.
5. Also in the summer semester, the Dean will develop a list of courses which have been temporarily withdrawn from the Calendar for three years (including the year of the review). In the fall semester the Dean will present a summary to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, whose approval will be sought for permanent removal of all such courses. The Dean will offer affected academic units the opportunity to challenge the permanent withdrawal. SGSC will make a decision on permanent withdrawal of courses following receipt of information from the academic units.
6. Once removed permanently, a course cannot be reinstated. A new course may be proposed and approved in the normal manner.

Rationale

The SFU Calendar should be a source of information about programmes and courses which students can expect to be offered on a regular basis. Currently there is a regular review of undergraduate course offerings, and those which have not been taught recently are removed from the Calendar.

These procedures have not been followed for graduate programmes. As a result, some academic units list graduate courses which have either never been taught, or have been taught only rarely. In a recent survey of graduate programmes (Report on the Ideal Department Survey, October 2000) this problem was identified quite frequently as potentially misleading to prospective students. It is therefore desirable that the list of courses in the Calendar be revised regularly to reflect the teaching interests of the department, school or faculty.

It is recognised that graduate courses cannot be scheduled as regularly as undergraduate courses, for a variety of reasons. The procedures outlined below provide graduate programmes with some flexibility and with longer time periods before a course is removed permanently.

Sample time frame

The hypothetical case below provides an example of the procedures

Permanent withdrawal of course

Graduate course ABCD 800 was last taught in 2010-3. It is not taught in academic years 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 or 2014/15.

In 2015-2 the Dean identifies it as a course which has not been taught in the last four academic years.

In 2015-3 the course is approved for temporary withdrawal by SGSC. The course does not appear in the 2016/17 Calendar.

No interest is expressed in teaching the course, and in 2019-2 it is identified as a course which has not been taught in three years following its temporary withdrawal. (i.e. it was withdrawn at the start of the 2016/17 academic year, and was not taught in the following two years). The course is permanently withdrawn.