

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Vice-President Academic

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate
From: J. Munro, Chair
Senate Committee on
Academic Planning
Subject: Department of English:
Change to M.A. Option
Date: March 12, 1991

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

MOTION: "that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.91-20 , the replacement of the extended essay option for a M.A. degree in the Department of English."

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Alison Watt., Secretary
Senate Committee on Academic
Planning

From: B.P. Clayman
Dean of Graduate Studies

Subject: Graduate Calendar Change- Date: November 27, 1990
Department of English

replacement of
The attached ~~change to~~ the extended essay option for a M.A. degree in the Department of English was approved by the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, at its Meeting on November 26, 1990, and is now being forwarded to the Senate Committee on Academic Planning for approval.

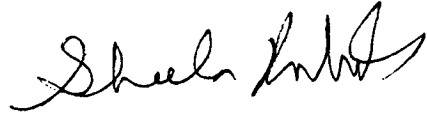


B.P. Clayman
Dean of Graduate Studies

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attach

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE DEAN
FACULTY OF ARTS
MEMORANDUM



To: Marian McGinn
Secretary, Senate Graduate
Studies Committee

From: Sheila Roberts
Secretary, Faculty of Arts
Graduate Studies Committee

Subject: Changes to MA Options
English Department

Date: October 23, 1990

The Faculty of Arts Graduate Studies Committee, at its meeting of 17 October 1990, approved the attached changes to the MA options in the English Department.

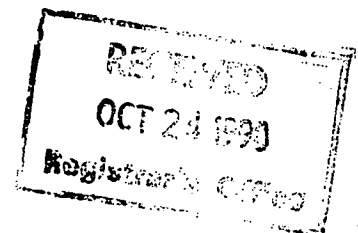
Would you please place this item on the agenda of the next meeting of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee.

Sheila Roberts
Administrative Assistant
Faculty of Arts

/ca

Attachment

pc: B. Clayman, Dean of Graduate Studies
K. Mezei, English Department



GRADUATE PROGRAMME IN ENGLISH

Proposed Changes to MA Options

Currently the MA programme offers two options to students:

1. thesis option which consists of four courses, thesis, oral defence
2. extended essays option which consists of six courses, two extended essays, oral defence

The Graduate Programme Committee proposes to revise the Master's programme in the following way:

We would continue to offer the thesis option as it exists without change. However, instead of the extended essays option, we propose a course and field examination option. This option would take the form of six courses plus the field examination, followed by an oral defence. This option would give the prospective Ph.D. student a greater breadth of preparation than given by the thesis option.

The field examination, under the rubric of English 998 (the current course number for the Extended Essays), would be undertaken when all the course work is completed. It would normally take place within the semester following the completion of course work. Three assigned examination questions would be set by professors from three of the six courses taken by the student. The student may choose either to:

- a) sit three - two hour exams within a week, representing the three chosen courses
- b) take the questions home and complete them within seven days

If the latter option is chosen the written examination should be no more than 30 pages (10 pages per question) and should include a bibliography and citations.

Graduate Programme - proposed MA Options changes, continued

In consultation with the Graduate Committee, a student would nominate three courses for the field examination. The three selected courses should cover a range of historical periods and genres (ie - not all three areas in the modern novel). Either the professor who taught the course, or a professor in the field would set a question. The assigned questions should be of a type that allows the student to demonstrate a broad knowledge of the subject matter of the course (ie - the student should not simply reproduce his/her research paper for the course in question). The examination questions would then be approved by the Graduate Committee.

This exam would be marked by the three professors. Then a one-hour oral exam, based upon the written exam and chaired by the Graduate Chair, will be scheduled within two weeks. A student who fails either the written or oral exam, may, at the discretion of the Graduate Committee, be given a second chance. Written and oral exams will be graded Pass/Fail.

RATIONALE:

1. The Graduate Programme Committee feels that our programme needs a real and equal alternative to the thesis option with its emphasis on specialized research. We are responding to the current attitude to the M.A thesis in Graduate Studies across North America and reflecting the practice of other Graduate Programmes in English. The current extended essay option does not present a sufficiently different alternative to the thesis option.
2. From 1985 to 1989, 33 theses and seven extended essays were completed. Relatively few students choose the extended essays option; only three students are currently doing it. It is unwieldy, generally takes the student as long as a thesis to complete, and creates problems of supervision. It is also difficult to compose a suitable supervisory committee, and most serious of all, to find an appropriate external examiner for two often very divergent essay topics. The amount of work and supervision required can equal that of the thesis, yet the end result is not a thesis.

Graduate Programme - proposed MA Options changes, continued

3. The combined written and oral examination would enable students to demonstrate formally their ability to articulate, synthesize, and discuss literary texts across a range of periods and genres.
4. We have a growing constituency of secondary school and community college teachers whose needs and interests would be best served by the breadth and flexibility of this option.
5. All our graduate courses are oriented towards the production of a research paper. The students thoroughly survey the critical and bibliographical material in the field, develop an original perspective, which they then prove through their readings of criticism, theory and primary texts. The expectation in all courses is a publishable research paper .
6. All graduate students are eligible for Graduate Fellowships. They may be granted a fellowship while writing a thesis or while choosing to take more than one course a semester.
7. With a greater number of students requiring courses, we could increase course offerings; this would, of course, benefit all the students in the programme and help us respond to the continual demand for more, and more varied, courses.
8. This change would bring us into line with other Canadian universities who offer a similar course option culminating in an examination.

11 CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

<u>Thesis only</u>	<u>No thesis</u>	<u>Course & project</u>	<u>Course & exam</u>	<u>Course only</u>
Saskatoon		Alberta	U Vic.	Guelph
Dalhousie		UNB	UBC	UWO
		York	Calgary	York
		UBC		U of T

- 2 Thesis only
- 4 Course & project
- 3 Course & exam
- 4 Course only--no exam