

S.76-15

REPORT OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PLANNING
RELATING TO THE QUESTION OF THE PROVISION OF UNIVERSITY
PROGRAMS IN NON-METROPOLITAN AREAS

NOVEMBER 18, 1976

I. At the Committee meetings of November 10th and November 17th 1976, the Senate Committee on Academic Planning considered Dr. Bryan Beirne's Review of Aspects of the Winegard Report. Discussion centered on the implications and desirability of Simon Fraser University becoming involved in the Winegard proposals with a view to formulating a recommendation to be presented to Senate.

Members of the Senate Committee on Academic Planning expressed serious reservations concerning many of the specific recommendations of the Winegard Report. It was the unanimous view of SCAP that if Simon Fraser University assumes responsibility for offering university programs in non-metropolitan areas, Simon Fraser University must not be bound to accept every specific recommendation contained in the Report. Rather, it was agreed that Simon Fraser University must retain complete authority in the determination of priorities regarding the establishment of centres, programs, staffing and all related matters.

At the meeting of November 10th, discussion initially centered on the reasons why Simon Fraser University should not become involved in this undertaking. These included:

- the need for autonomy on the part of an interior university in order that it be able effectively and efficiently to meet the needs as perceived by people in interior locations.
- The possibility of dilution of instructional quality on the Burnaby campus. More specifically, it was felt that human, material and financial resources would be drained from the Burnaby campus, and that accepting the responsibility for university programming in non-metropolitan areas would lead to a diminished role for the Burnaby campus.
- The hidden administrative costs in setting up and administering university programming in the interior.
- the possible conflict of interests among those responsible for preparing and approving operating and capital submissions and allocations for the Burnaby campus and the university/college, even though the latter be separately funded.
- the inability of Simon Fraser University to respond in a comprehensive manner to all of the academic program needs of the interior.

It was also stressed that there are very real educational needs in the interior for which the expertise of coastal universities should be used in assisting the development of university programs. In addition, it was acknowledged that there would be tangible and intangible benefits to the proposed project. Among these are the following:

- Simon Fraser University would demonstrate a positive and outward-looking attitude in meeting a duty and responsibility to participate constructively in the development and improvement of higher education in British Columbia and would avoid becoming introspective and perhaps impoverished.
- it would avoid criticism and blame for not meeting the challenge.
- it would facilitate continuing co-operation of a kind not hitherto conspicuous in this province between different universities for their mutual benefit.
- faculty standards might rise because of the high quality of academics currently available for recruitment to university college posts.
- Simon Fraser University departments could expand the scope of expertise in disciplines that would be represented on the faculty of both the university/college and S.F.U. Burnaby.
- Simon Fraser University could become a recognized centre of expertise in planning and organizing small innovative campuses and in techniques for delivering education to remote locations.
- Simon Fraser University would benefit from the higher levels of effectiveness of some existing services such as library, computing and accounting. While improvements in them may not be possible with S.F.U. Burnaby resources alone, they could be possible with university/college resources and would be to the long term benefit of both.

II. Based on the discussions of the November 10, 1976 meeting, four alternative motions were prepared and submitted to the Committee at its meeting on November 17th. During consideration of the four motions presented, a fifth motion was added. The five motions as finally considered by the Senate Committee on Academic Planning were the following:

ALTERNATIVE MOTIONS

A. Simon Fraser University is willing to accept responsibility for establishing university programs in non-metropolitan areas on the following terms:

1. That government and the Universities Council of British Columbia give assurances that there be adequate funding for university programs in non-metropolitan areas and that this funding be over and above the funding of the three public universities.
2. That Simon Fraser University have complete authority regarding the hiring, assignment of responsibilities and evaluation of faculty and staff; the admission and continuation standards pertaining to students, and the determination of priorities regarding the establishment of centres, programs, staffing and all related matters.

B. Simon Fraser University is willing to accept in principle responsibility for offering university programs in non-metropolitan areas and is prepared to appoint a director and appropriate staff to develop specific plans by December 1977, provided that funds for such development will be made available by the government. Any program implementation by Simon Fraser University would require prior approval by the University's Senate and Board of Governors, together with assurance of an appropriate level of funding.

C. Simon Fraser University is willing to accept responsibility for planning university programs in non-metropolitan areas and is prepared to appoint a director and appropriate staff to develop specific plans by December 1977, provided that funds for such development will be made available by the government. Any implementation of such plans by Simon Fraser University would require prior approval by the University's Senate and Board of Governors, together with assurance of an appropriate level of funding.

D. Simon Fraser University is prepared to co-operate in the development of an independent provincial university which would offer programs in non-metropolitan areas. On a contractual basis Simon Fraser University would provide such academic and administrative resources as may be required.

E. Simon Fraser University is unwilling to accept responsibility for establishing university programs as recommended by the Report on University Programs in Non-Metropolitan Areas (Winegar Report).

III

The first three motions provide for S.F.U. to assume responsibility for planning and potentially implementing university programs at one or more non-metropolitan centres under the academic control of S.F.U. Senate and financial control of the S.F.U. Board of Governors.

Motion A makes this commitment definite subject to individual program approvals by Senate and the Board of Governors, provided that suitable funding is made available. Motion B accepts the commitment in principle but introduces a clear opportunity for S.F.U. to terminate its involvement after Senate and the Board of Governors review detailed planning proposals (rather than adhering to consideration of the specific proposals of the Winegard Report). Motion C reduces the initial S.F.U. commitment to one of planning with a later explicit decision to be taken as to subsequent involvement in the implementation of the plan.

Motion D rejects the position that S.F.U. should assume direction of the new university operation in non-metropolitan areas but offer its assistance on the initial setting up of an independent university, on a contractual basis.

Motion E provides for no S.F.U. involvement in the planning or implementation process.

IV

A straw vote was then taken on each of the five motions with members of the Committee allowed to vote on each motion. The votes were as follows:

<u>PROPOSAL</u>	<u>FOR</u>	<u>AGAINST</u>	<u>ABSTAIN</u>
A	10	7	0
B	8	6	3
C	2	10	4
D	12	1	4
E	3	11	3

It was noted that three of the five motions had majority support but it was unclear as to whether that which had the most support was simply the least objectionable. Consequently a decision tree was devised through which a majority opinion could be determined. Questions were formulated for decision in which motions related to the degree and timing of university involvement were separated out. Each decision would lead either to a further question or else terminate the discussion. The process and voting are shown below.

SCAP DECISION TREE

1. Question: Should there be any formal S.F.U. participation in the projected university development in non-metropolitan areas?

Motions: Yes (A,B,C,D) No (E)

Vote: 15 2

2. Question: Should S.F.U. participation be limited to support of an independent university?

Motions: Yes (D) No (A,B,C)

Vote: 7 10

3. Question: Should S.F.U. commit itself at this time to accept total responsibility ?

Motions: Yes (A) No (B,C)

Vote: 2 15

4. Question: Should any decision on implementation be deferred until a detailed planning report be available?

Motions: Yes (C) No (B)

Vote: 7 10

In summary, then, taking into consideration the spectrum of options ranging from an unconditional no to an acceptance with qualifications, SCAP approved by a vote of 10 to 7, Motion B:

Simon Fraser University is willing to accept in principle responsibility for offering university programs in non-metropolitan areas and is prepared to appoint a director and appropriate staff to develop specific plans by December 1977, provided that funds for such development will be made available by the government. Any program implementation by Simon Fraser University would require prior approval by the University's Senate and Board of Governors, together with assurance of an appropriate level of funding.

- V. The Senate Committee on Academic Planning agreed that this report including the five motions be transmitted to Senate for consideration, and that Senate be encouraged to adopt the decision tree process utilized by the Senate Committee on Academic Planning in arriving at its decision on the question of the provision of university programs in non-metropolitan areas.