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**MEMORANDUM**

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ATTENTION	Senate	DATE	August 13, 2010
FROM	Bill Krane, Chair	PAGES	1/1
	Senate Committee on		
	Undergraduate Studies		
RE:	Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy (SCUS 10-35)		

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Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting of August 12, 2010, gives rise to the following recommendation:

Motion:

That Senate approve the Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy effective September 2010.



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**MEMORANDUM**

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<b>ATTENTION</b>	SCUS	<b>DATE</b>	July 19, 2010
<b>FROM</b>	William Lindsay Director, Office for Aboriginal Peoples Kate Ross Registrar & Senior Director, Student Enrolment	<b>PAGES</b>	1
<b>RE:</b>	Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy		

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Attached is a proposal for the development of an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy.

**Motion:**

that SCUS approve and recommend to Senate the Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy as outlined in Appendix One. (Effective Sept-2010)



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MEMORANDUM

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ATTENTION	To Whom It May Concern	DATE	July 20, 2010
FROM	<u>William G. Lindsay</u> , Director, Office for Aboriginal Peoples <u>Kate Ross</u> , Registrar and Senior Director, Student Enrolment <u>Louise Legris</u> , Director, Admissions, Student Services <u>Jenna LaFrance</u> , Director, Indigenous Student Centre <u>Jennie Blankinship</u> , Indigenous Recruitment Coordinator <u>Judy Smith</u> , Director, Community Education Program, Continuing Studies <u>Natalie Wood-Weins</u> , Coordinator for Indigenous Programs (including the Aboriginal Pre-University Bridging Programs), Continuing Studies	PAGES	1/8
RE:	Proposal for an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy at Simon Fraser University		

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This proposal is for the implementation of an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy at Simon Fraser University. The idea for this proposal came out of meetings between the following members of the university administration: William G. Lindsay, Director, Office for Aboriginal Peoples; Jon Driver, Vice President, Academic and Provost; Kate Ross, Registrar and Senior Director, Student Enrolment; Louise Legris, Director, Admissions, Student Services; Jenna LaFrance, Director, Indigenous Student Centre; Jennie Blankinship, Indigenous Recruitment Coordinator; Judy Smith, Director, Community Education Program, Continuing Studies; and Natalie Wood-Weins, Coordinator for Indigenous Programs (including the Aboriginal Pre-University Bridging Programs), Continuing Studies.

The persons mentioned above have given their input into this document, as part of an ad hoc committee. All agreed that the implementation of an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy would be a positive and progressive move on the part of Simon Fraser University in its efforts to reach out to the Aboriginal community, to increase Aboriginal student enrolment at SFU, to promote the cross-cultural exchange of knowledge between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal groups, and to increase diversity at SFU.

Regarding terminology, the terms First Nation, Aboriginal, and Indigenous are used interchangeably throughout this document. According to Section 35 (2) of the 1982 Canadian

Constitution, the term Aboriginal refers to Canadian First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples. It should be noted, however, that the term Indigenous has been gaining acceptance and is often used to refer to Indigenous peoples in a global context. However, for purposes of clarification and intent, the terms Aboriginal and Indigenous as used herein shall refer to the three historic groups of Canadian Aboriginal people: First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

This proposal has six key components:

1. History and context
2. What the First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan and the Three Year Academic Plan for 2010-2013 encourage regarding an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy
3. What other British Columbia post secondary institutions are doing
4. Existing SFU entrance policies similar to the proposed Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy
5. Specific components of an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy at SFU
6. The rationale for an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy i.e. Why should SFU do this?

1. History and context:

1. With regards to Aboriginal people and education: the reverberations of the residential school system are still being felt; there has been a lack of relevant cultural content in modern school curriculums; and ignorance and racism are still endemic in many places in modern Canada. As a result, Aboriginal people have had decidedly mixed experiences when it comes to formal education.
2. In some communities, poverty and concomitant social problems hold young ones back from achieving their full potential and from achieving the kinds of grades usually necessary for university admission.
3. Statistics show that high school incompleteness rates are still too high in the Aboriginal community.
4. However, as many young Aboriginal men and woman mature, they establish solid work records, they have families, and they come to realize the value of a formal education. Such ones are ready and motivated for the challenge of post secondary education.
5. In addition, Indigenous-based knowledge systems are now making inroads into Canadian university systems. This is because more and more Aboriginal students have been attending university programs and these students have ended up becoming university staff and faculty. The corollary of this is an atmosphere of diversity, a cross-cultural exchange of knowledge, and an enrichment of the university environment. This process is a direct result of more Aboriginal people being involved in post secondary education.

2. What the First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan and the Three Year Academic Plan for 2010-2013 encourage regarding an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy:

While an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy is not specifically mentioned in the First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan, specific and key components of the plan are certainly related. For example, an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy at SFU would certainly assist in the below goals and processes:

1. Under the heading *Student Recruitment, Support, and Retention* (page twenty-one), a stated goal is to "Improve the recruitment, retention, and successful participation of First Nations

students with a goal to increase First Nations undergraduate enrolment by over 50% and First Nations graduate enrolment by over 25% by the year 2012.”

2. Under the heading *Liaison and Outreach to First Nations Peoples and Communities* (page twenty-two), a stated goal is for SFU to “Strengthen and increase our partnerships, collaborations, and engagement with First Nations peoples and communities.”
3. The Strategic Plan also calls for policy changes that essentially result in the “Indigenization of the academy” in small and large ways. For example, under the heading *Indigenous Knowledge and Resource Development* (page twenty-two), a clear goal states that SFU should “Support the development of Indigenous knowledge systems within the University and an understanding and respect for First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge, languages, traditions, and communities among non-Aboriginal members of the University community to create bridges between cultures.”

The SFU Academic Plan for 2010-2013 makes no specific mention of an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy but states the following as related points of consideration:

1. In the document preamble on page two, the following is noted: “As we move into the second decade of the 21st century the environment is changing. In BC the population of 18 to 24 year olds is stabilizing at a time when many new universities have been founded. We can expect a reduced rate of growth in the traditional student population and more interest in post-secondary education from mid-career students and new immigrants, who may have diverse educational goals.”
2. On page four, under the main theme heading *High Quality Student Experience*, the following is stated: “The University will facilitate admission, support and success for students from diverse backgrounds.”
3. On page five, a major goal heading entitled *Create multiple admission routes to attract a diverse student body*, lists the following as a major objective: “Increase current numbers of First Nations students by 10% by 2013.”

3. What other British Columbia post secondary institutions are doing:

1. The University of Victoria has an Aboriginal Admission Policy that states: “The First Nations, Métis and Inuit special category is designed for all Indigenous peoples of Canada who may not qualify under the usual categories of admission. Reasons for denial of admission might include the lack of a required Grade 11 or 12 subject or a less competitive grade-point average (GPA). The Senate Committee on Admission, Registration and Transfer (SCART) will assess your ability to succeed at university based on educational history, non-educational achievements, application, letters of reference, and a personal letter outlining your academic objectives.”
2. The University of British Columbia has an Aboriginal Admission policy that states: “If you meet the basic and program-specific course requirements, but do not meet your program’s competitive average, UBC has an Aboriginal Admission Policy that allows programs to evaluate your application individually. The Aboriginal Admission Policy takes into consideration your educational history, cultural knowledge, work experience, educational goals, and other achievements. This information will be reviewed by a representative from the First Nations House of Learning and your faculty of choice... Canadian Aboriginal students who do not meet current academic standings set by the individual faculties and schools, but who meet the general university-wide academic minimum of 67% can apply under this policy.”

3. The University of Northern British Columbia has a Northern Advancement Program that has its own admission process. The Northern Advancement Program is a first year transition program that Aboriginal and/or rural students (Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal) can apply to for their first year of studies. In this program, there is a specific admissions committee that consists of the campus First Nations Director, a Registrar officer, an Aboriginal Liaison officer and a Northern Advancement Program instructor that determines and approves the entry into first year studies.
4. Camosun College on Vancouver Island has an "Aboriginal Limited Priority Admissions" process in place. According to this policy, five percent (5%) of seats in certain programs i.e. Nursing, Licensed Practical Nursing, and Early Childhood Care and Education, are set aside for Aboriginal students. Applicants must self-identify as such and provide documented proof of such status.

4. Existing SFU entrance policies similar to the proposed Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy:

1. BC Adult Graduation Diploma:  
This credential is available to adults who take courses to complete graduation through a secondary school, adult education centre or a community college. Applicants who have completed the diploma and who are at least 19 years of age may be admitted if they have completed: (1) Four courses (16 credits) at grade 11 or advanced level to include English, Mathematics, Social Studies or First Nations 12, and an experimental or laboratory science; (2) Four courses (16 credits) at the grade 12 or provincial level to include English and three additional subjects selected from: Biology, Mathematics, Chemistry, English Literature, Languages, Statistics, Geography, History, Physics. All four grade 12 or provincial level subjects must be graded: a minimum average of C+ or 67% is required, based on the Ministry of Education grading scale.
2. Mature Students:  
Applicants aged 23 years or older who have attempted less than one year of post-secondary transferable course work, and who do not meet regular admission requirements, may be given consideration as mature students. In addition to the normal documents, mature students must supply a personal letter outlining why entrance to the Program is being sought. We suggest students admitted in this category take a manageable course load of 9-12 credit hours in their first semester.
3. Special Admission Procedure:  
SFU Kamloops had an additional admission procedure, whereby the SFU Kamloops Academic Coordinator could recommend a student for admission even though the student did not meet normal admission requirements.

5. Specific components of an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy at SFU:

Based upon what other British Columbia post secondary institutions are doing, consideration should be given to the following:

1. Such a policy would only apply to undergraduate applications.
2. Documentation of Aboriginal heritage (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) would be provided with all applications. This could include but is not limited to, Indian or Métis status cards, official Inuit identification, official letters from Aboriginal organizations, or a combination of proofs.

3. In a separate application, an applicant's educational history, non-educational achievements, cultural knowledge and activities, a listing of two references, and a personal letter outlining the applicant's academic objectives will be included.
4. A minimum grade point average or grade point percentage would be required, which an applicant must have attained in previous high school, pre-university bridging program, or in other post secondary experiences.
5. Specific university program prerequisites must be completed.
6. A committee composed of <sup>comprising a single member</sup> members from Aboriginal Student Services, the specific faculty applied to, and University Admissions, respectively, would consider each applicant and give a recommendation concerning their application, based on the above.

**Note: Please see Appendix One for the proposed Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy at SFU.**

6. The rationale for an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy i.e. Why should SFU do this?

1. *The SFU First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan:* This plan calls for the increased enrolment and retention of Aboriginal students at SFU. It also calls for policy changes that will make the university more accepting of Aboriginal ways of knowing in small and large ways. An Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy would assist in all of this.
2. *The SFU Three Year Academic Plan for 2010-2013:* Mentions that SFU will facilitate admission and support for students from diverse backgrounds and especially would like to increase the enrolment of First Nations students.
3. *Recruitment:* An Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy would become an important recruitment tool for attracting Aboriginal applicants to SFU. Such applicants see this policy and it becomes an issue of attraction and understanding i.e. Applicants feel that "this university is reaching out to me; it understands my personal and my people's background regarding education and historic lack of opportunities; it's willing to give me a chance."
4. *Access:* An Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy would allow for Aboriginal people to consider coming to SFU, who otherwise might not consider doing so because of lower GPA's or incomplete high school education. Under this policy, the university would also be giving a chance to applicants that it might have not considered in previous times.
5. *Retention:* Some Aboriginal applicants who apply to SFU under the Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy may not yet be ready for university-level degree programs based on their applications. Applicants who are not admitted under the Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy can be directed to the Aboriginal Pre-University Bridging Programs at SFU to get them ready for this level of study. Such applicants are thus helped to succeed in their studies and are retained by SFU as successful Aboriginal students, first at the bridging program level, then in formal degree programs. Such Aboriginal applicants/students are first recruited and then retained through work done jointly through the Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy and the Aboriginal Pre-University Bridging Programs.
6. *Cost:* At a time of fiscal restraint at SFU and at a time when the university is looking to increase its Aboriginal enrolment, here is a tool of attraction for Aboriginal applicants with little direct cost to the university.
7. *Community relations:* As noted above, a component of the First Nations University-Wide Strategic Plan calls for outreach and liaison from the campus to the Aboriginal community. The implementation of an Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy thus

becomes a positive community relations tool, as SFU shows that it is taking definite and measureable steps to making its campus more accessible to Aboriginal people.

8. *Enrichment of the university climate:* More and more Aboriginal people have been attending university programs and some of these have ended up becoming university staff and faculty. The corollary of this is an atmosphere of diversity, a cross-cultural exchange of knowledge, and an enrichment of the university environment. This will only increase with the inclusion of even more Aboriginal students.



## Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy Simon Fraser University

### Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy – Calendar Entry

The term Aboriginal Peoples refers to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples of Canada.

Aboriginal applicants who do not meet the competitive average set by individual faculties and schools can apply under this policy. Applicants must normally be high school graduates and meet the general university minimum requirements for admission. Aboriginal applicants who meet the competitive average and general university requirements should apply directly to their faculty or program of choice. See <http://students.sfu.ca/admission/index.html> for general university admission requirements.

The Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy takes into consideration an applicant's educational history, cultural knowledge, work experience, educational goals, and other achievements. This information will be reviewed by a three member committee composed of participants from the Indigenous Student Centre, the specific faculty applied to, and University Admissions.

Applicants applying under the Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Policy must meet the following requirements:

1. Provide documentation of Aboriginal heritage (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit). This could include but is not limited to, Indian or Métis status cards, official Inuit identification, official letters from Aboriginal organizations, or a combination of proofs.
2. Complete a separate *Supplemental Aboriginal Undergraduate Admission Form* containing the following information: an applicant's educational history, non-educational achievements, Aboriginal cultural knowledge and activities, two references, and a personal letter outlining the applicant's academic goals.
3. Specific faculty/program prerequisites must be completed before consideration for admission to certain programs.

Applicants who do not qualify for admission under this policy may qualify for the Aboriginal University Prep Programs. For information on this program see <http://www.sfu.ca/cstudies/community/aboriginal.htm>.