

## For Information

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**  
Office of the Registrar  
**Memorandum**

To: Senate  
From: Nick Heath, Secretary  
Senate Appeals Board

Subject: Senate Appeals Board  
Annual Report for 1999  
Date: March 16, 2000

---

The Board considers cases wherein a student or former student feels aggrieved by the decision of a faculty, department or other administrative unit relating to a registration in courses, withdrawal from the University, eligibility for graduation, approval to a program or matter relating to academic standing, when special circumstances are present.

The Senate Appeals Board met eight times in 1999 reviewing a total of 18 appeal cases, of which 2 were not resolved by the end of the year. There were 16 appeal cases reviewed in 1998; 19 appeal cases in 1997; and 16 appeal cases in 1996.



Thomas du Payrat, Chair, SAB



Nick Heath, Secretary, SAB

**Dates of Meeting in 1999:**

January 11, 1999	July 23, 1999
February 17, 1999	September 13, 1999
March 24, 1999	October 26, 1999
May 7, 1999	December 6, 1999

SAB agreed to meet monthly, or when there is sufficient business to warrant a meeting.

**Membership:**

**Chair – Elected by Senate Appeals Board:**

Thomas du Payrat, Chair, July, 1999 - present  
Jason Reader, Chair, January, 1999 – May, 1999

**Vice-Chair – Elected by Senate Appeals Board:**

Lee Hanlan – July, 1999

**Faculty Members Elected by Senate:**

Rolf Mathewes  
Rina Zazkis  
Martin Hahn (Alternate)  
Lee Hanlan (Alternate)

**Student Members Elected by Senate**

Sameh Al-Natour  
Leanne Sersun  
Graham, Percival (Alternate)  
Dan Preece (Alternate)  
James Fletcher \*  
Michelle McGinn \*  
Harry Nip \*  
Thomas du Payrat (Alternate) \*\*

\* Until May 31, 1999

\*\* Until July 23, 1999

/...2

**General**

**Procedure**

Each appeal is first screened to determine whether special circumstances are present. All appeals are first heard in-camera (written form only - Stage 1) and some are resolved at that Stage. If the SAB is unable to give a positive judgment at Stage 1, and if the student has requested an in-person hearing, the case is decided at a hearing at which the student or a representative is able to present evidence and answer questions (Stage 2). Each hearing lasts about 20 - 30 minutes.

This process resulted in the following action in 1999:

<i>Appeal Type</i>	Insufficient Grounds for Appeal or Re-opening Appeal	Resolved at Stage 1	Resolved at Stage 2	Unresolved
Complete course w/d during semester		1		
Retroactive Withdrawal	1	1	3	
Selective w/d during semester	4	2	2	
Selective retroactive withdrawal				
Change academic standing		1		
Other		1		
Unresolved by end of 1999				2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>Summary:</b>	
Appeals Sustained	8
Appeals Denied or Insufficient Grounds	8
Unresolved	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>

Senate Appeals Board Annual Report - 1999

Date	Case No.	Type of Appeal	Explanation	Decision
Jan 11	1	SWD 98-2	Undergraduate student's request to drop course was denied by the Department of Economics. Request did not have departmental support. Grounds for appeal were medical (stress related). When SAB reviewed the appeal at a Stage 1 hearing on October 20, 1998, more information was requested to be submitted at the Stage 2 hearing. Appeal hearing was rescheduled.	Deferred at Stage 2 Student unable to attend hearing
Jan 11	2	RWD 98-1	Undergraduate student's request to drop courses was denied by the Faculty of Education. There were mixed recommendations from department. Grounds for appeal were medical (various medical conditions and stress); death of relative; financial; alleged administrative error by Financial Assistance. SAB requested more information.	Deferred at Stage 1 More information required
Jan 11	3	SWD 98-3	Undergraduate student's request to drop course was denied by the Department of Philosophy. Request did not have departmental support. Grounds for appeal were medical (stress). SAB requested more information.	Deferred at Stage 1 More information required
Jan 11	4	STDG 98-3	Undergraduate student requested a change in academic standing from ING to CAP. Courses taken 10 years previous affected chance of continuing at SFU and improving gpa. N. Heath, Secretary of SAB sustained this appeal for technical reasons, prior to SAB meeting. SAB members unanimously supported this decision.	Sustained at Stage 1
Feb 17	1	SWD 98-2	This was a rescheduled Stage 2 in-person appeal (see #1, January 11). Student again did not attend, nor notify SAB that she/he would not be attending. SAB voted to deny the appeal on the basis of the written information submitted. The appeal may be re-opened at Stage 2 if student submits a strong valid reason for not attending hearing.	Denied at Stage 2 - appellant did not attend. Denial based on written information
Feb 17	2	RWD 98-1	Some additional information was obtained regarding undergraduate student's appeal to drop courses (see #2, January 11) and this was reviewed by SAB. SAB voted to move this appeal to a Stage 2 hearing.	Deferred to Stage 2
Feb 17	3	SWD 98-3	Undergraduate student's appeal to drop course (see #3, January 11) was denied by the SAB at a Stage 1 hearing. After receiving an 'F' on first paper submitted for course (authorship of paper was questioned), student chose not to attend any further tutorials or turn in any further assignments. Student did well in other courses taken that semester.	Denied at Stage 1

Senate Appeals Board Annual Report - 1999

March 24	2	RWD 98-1	Undergraduate student's appeal to drop courses (see #2, February 17) was sustained by SAB at a Stage 2 hearing. It appeared there may have been an administrative error by Financial Assistance which led to the stress that student experienced. An inquiry had been made to Financial Assistance, but SAB did not receive a reply. Supporting medical documentation had been submitted. The student was strongly advised to seek advice from Academic Advising.	Sustained at Stage 2
March 24	1	SWD 98-2	SAB reviewed explanation from student (see #1, January 11) regarding why she/he did not attend in-person hearing. SAB determined that there were insufficient reasons to re-open appeal.	Insufficient reasons to re-open appeal
May 7	5	OTHER 99-1	Undergraduate student's request for a Letter of Permission to take courses at a community college for credit at SFU was sustained. The Faculty of Business originally denied this request. SAB voted to sustain the appeal because the student's current program is in the Faculty of Arts and the request would most likely be acceptable to Arts. There was written documentation submitted supporting the appeal.	Sustained at Stage 1
May 7	6	CWD 98-3	Undergraduate student's request to drop course was denied by the Department of Psychology. There were mixed recommendations from department. Grounds for appeal were medical. SAB requested more information.	Deferred at Stage 1 More information required
May 7	7	SWD 98-2	Undergraduate student's request to drop one course was denied by Department of History. The request did not have departmental support. Grounds for appeal were medical (ear/eye infections). SAB voted to move this appeal to a Stage 2 in-person hearing.	Deferred to Stage 2
May 7	8	SWD 99-1	Undergraduate student's request to drop one course was denied by Department of Psychology. There were mixed departmental recommendations. Grounds for appeal were medical (anemia/injuries due to MVA). SAB judged that there was sufficient medical documentation and supporting explanation, and voted to sustain the appeal.	Sustained at Stage 1
July 23	7	SWD 98-2	Undergraduate student's appeal to drop a course (see #7, May 7) was sustained by SAB at a Stage 2 in-person hearing based on additional medical supporting documentation submitted and explanation given by student at the in-person hearing.	Sustained at Stage 2
July 23	9	SWD 99-1	Undergraduate student's request to drop a course was denied by Department of Psychology. Grounds for appeal were that she/he did not realize until studying for midterm that she/he had taken the course previously and received transfer credit from a community college. SAB ruled that the appeal did not meet 'extenuating circumstance' as defined in SAB's Terms of Reference.	Insufficient Grounds for Appeal

Senate Appeals Board Annual Report - 1999

July 23	10	RWD 98-1	Undergraduate student's request to retroactively drop courses without departmental support was denied by the Faculty of Arts Review Committee. Grounds for the appeal were medical (illness, depression/anxiety/stress due to family problems-parent's divorce). SAB requested more information.	Deferred to Stage 2
July 23	10	RWD 98-2	Same undergraduate student's request to retroactively drop course was denied by the Faculty of Arts Review Committee. Request did not have departmental support. Grounds for the appeal were medical (depression/anxiety/stress due to family problems-parent's divorce). SAB requested more information.	Deferred to Stage 2
July 23	11	SWD 98-2	Undergraduate student's appeal was denied originally at the September 1, 1998 SAB hearing. The original appeal was to selectively drop one course. Grounds for appeal were medical (anxiety/panic attacks). Student did well in other course taken in semester. SAB judged that the course selected for dropping was not sufficiently differentiated by extenuating circumstances from the other course taken that semester. Student has now submitted information regarding re-opening the appeal. After reviewing this information, SAB ruled that there was not significant new information to warrant re-opening the appeal.	Insufficient grounds for re-opening appeal
July 23	6	CWD 98-3	Undergraduate student's appeal (see #6, May 7) to drop course during the semester was sustained by SAB based on medical documentation provided and on procedural grounds - length of time it took to process departmental request and inform student of the decision to deny request.	Sustained at Stage 1
Sept 13	10	RWD 98-1	Undergraduate student's appeal (see #10, July 23) to retroactively drop courses was sustained by SAB. Student submitted additional medical documentation supporting appeal that had not been seen by Faculty of Arts Review Committee. Student was also advised to seek academic counselling in the future.	Sustained at Stage 2
Sept 13	10	RWD 98-2	Same undergraduate student's appeal (see #10, July 23) to retroactively drop courses was denied by SAB. SAB judged that student should have taken responsibility and withdrawn from the semester within the timeframe allowed if experiencing the same difficulties as the previous semester.	Denied at Stage 2
Sept 13	11	SWD 98-2	Undergraduate student's appeal was denied originally at the September 1, 1998 SAB hearing. Student subsequently submitted some information for the SAB to review at their July 23, 1999 (see #11, July 23) meeting to determine if there was sufficient new information to warrant re-opening the appeal. At the July 23, 1999 meeting, SAB reviewed this new material and judged that there was not sufficient new information to re-open the appeal. The student did not agree with this decision and requested that SAB again review the material. SAB ruled again that no significant new information was received.	Insufficient grounds for re-opening appeal

Senate Appeals Board Annual Report - 1999

Date	Case No.	Description	Outcome
Oct 26	12	RWD 98-1	Sustained at Stage 1
		Undergraduate student's request to drop courses in the 98-1 semester with support recommendations from instructors and chairs, was denied by Faculty of Business Academic Appeals Committee. Grounds for the appeal were medical (depression), a relative's death and parent's medical problems which also caused financial problems. Student submitted additional medical documentation supporting appeal that had not been seen by Academic Appeals Committee of the Faculty of Business. SAB voted to sustain the appeal.	
Oct 26	13	RWD 96-3	Insufficient grounds for appeal
		Undergraduate student's request to drop courses in the 96-3 semester with mixed recommendations from instructors and chairs, was denied by the Faculty of Arts Review Committee. Grounds for appeal were change in student's working environment. SAB ruled that the appeal did not meet 'extenuating circumstance' as defined in SAB's Terms of Reference.	
Dec 6	14	RWD 99-1	Deferred More information required
		Undergraduate student's request to drop courses in 99-1 semester with support recommendations from instructors and chairs, was denied by the Faculty of Applied Science. Grounds for appeal were medical. SAB requested further information.	
Dec 6	14	RWD 99-2	Deferred More information required
		Same undergraduate student's request to drop courses in 99-2 semester with support recommendations from instructors and chairs, was denied by the Faculty of Applied Science. Grounds for appeal were medical. SAB requested further information.	

- CWD = Complete course withdrawal during semester
- RWD = Retroactive withdrawal
- SRWD = Selective retroactive course withdrawal
- STDG = Change academic standing
- SWD = Selective course withdrawal during semester
- OTHER = Other appeals, e.g. 'Letter of Permission' to take course at another institution