

FOR INFORMATION

Dean of Graduate Studies

Report to Senate

June 1986

The Dean of Graduate Studies is responsible for the general supervision of graduate work at the University and is Chairman of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. This report outlines the position of graduate studies at Simon Fraser University, describes some changes made in the 1985/86 year and makes recommendations for future directions.

I. Enrollments and Degrees

Table I shows the recent history of graduate enrollments and degrees granted. It is taken from the 1985 S.F.U. Fact Book which contains more detailed breakdowns by department and Faculty.

The FTE enrollment figures must be treated with caution. The process for determining them is subject to considerable variation among departments and is often based on incomplete information on a student's activities. In consultation with the Director of Analytical Studies, Walter Wattamaniuk, I am working on a more consistent and logical scheme for determining FTE enrollments.

II Degree Completion

Table II is an historical survey of the times required by S.F.U. students to earn their graduate degrees. It is taken mostly from a survey done last summer by Dr. M. L. Bowman, former Associate Dean of Graduate Studies. The 86-1 data are from the new Graduate Studies Database.

I am concerned by what appear in many cases to be excessive times for degree completion. When resources are limited, it is especially important that they be used effectively. I am actively encouraging departments to ensure both that their degree requirements are realistic and that their students make satisfactory progress, as required by Senate regulations, toward meeting those requirements. I am also pressing for timely appointments of supervisory committees. In establishing the Graduate Studies Database, I encountered many students who had been here for several years, yet apparently had no supervisory committees.

III Grades

Table III gives information on the S.F.U. graduate grades of all students enrolled in the Fall 85 semester; it includes courses taken in that semester and excludes students who had not yet taken an S.F.U. graduate course. Data were taken from the Registrar's data files and incorporated into and processed within the Graduate Studies Database.

For each department, a number of measures of the grade distribution are presented. The weighted CGPA ("Wted") weights each student's CGPA by the number of semester hours completed. The average CGPA ("Aver.") does no weighting, but counts all students equivalently. The median ("Med.") CGPA and the N% CGPA give the CGPA at the median of the distribution and at the Nth percentile. For example, in the third entry - Business, the top 10% of the students have CGPA of 3.86 or higher, the top 20% have CGPA of 3.60 or higher and so on.

The tremendous range in the nature of the grade distributions among departments may stem from two causes: (1) differences in grading practices and (2) differences in the abilities of students. I believe that, most likely, it is a mixture of these with the former a larger contributor than the latter. This range is one of the reasons that I have proposed moving away from interdepartmental comparisons of CGPA in the ranking of applicants for S.F.U. graduate scholarships.

IV Grading System

One other possible reason for the variations noted in Table III is the coarseness of the grading system. With only A, B, P, and F to choose from, and B = 3.0 minimum CGPA continuation, it is likely that some instructors were reluctant to assign B's. This situation is modified by the introduction of A-, B+ and B- grades, effective 86-3. It will be interesting to observe whether significant changes in the "Grades Awarded Average" occur in 86-3.

V Special Arrangements

Table IV is a summary of the status of students enrolled under Special Arrangements. The Senate Graduate Studies Committee serves as their Graduate Program Committee. As its chairman, I have given special attention to these students. With the goal of ensuring their satisfactory progress, I have brought all their supervisory committees into compliance with Senate's regulations and, as of 86-3, will require up-to-date progress reports as a condition of registration. To date, the response of students and supervisors has been excellent.

I am pleased to report that the defences of theses completed under Special Arrangements, which I chair, have all been quite successful. Historically, Special Arrangements have been a high risk area; students either succeed or fail spectacularly. Numbers of students enrolled have remained roughly constant around 30. Degree completion has been highly variable: 2 in 1985, 6 in 1984, 1 in 1983, 2 in 1982, and 4 in 1981. Roughly equal numbers of students have dropped out. By the steps outlined above and by rigorous enforcement of the criteria for entrance into Special Arrangements, I hope to improve the success rate.

VI Future

I remain optimistic about the future of graduate studies at S.F.U. The quality of most of the thesis defences which I have attended has been high. With rare exception, applicants recommended by departments for entry into Ph.D. programs have been very strong. Through more aggressive recruiting of excellent applicants with the aid of entrance scholarships, more rigorous enforcement of the present requirements for satisfactory progress, and more careful monitoring of student supervision, it should be possible to improve the quality of graduate programs and decrease times for degree completion, thus making more effective use of our limited resources.

Bruce P. Clayman

TABLE I

	<u>1981</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1985</u>
Total Graduate Enrollment					
Head Count	1138	1243	1355	1414	1419
FTE	886	937	1054	1137	1153
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Master's Degrees Awarded	154	121	191	208	218
Ph.D. Degrees Awarded	21	25	22	30	37
TOTAL	175	146	213	238	255

TABLE II

Average Semesters Required for Degree Completion

<u>Dept.</u>	<u>Ave. Time for Master's Degree</u>		<u>Ave. Time for Doctoral Degree</u>	
	<u>Historical</u> <u>1974-80</u>	<u>86-1</u>	<u>Historical*</u> <u>1974-80</u>	<u>86-1</u>
ARCH	12.09	11.00		25.00
BISC	11.77	10.63		14.80
BUS	8.96	9.76		-----
CHEM	10.06	9.50		18.50
CMNS	12.74	17.00		-----
CMPT	9.00	7.50		-----
CRIM	10.60	9.00		-----
DLLL	9.33	16.80		-----
ECON	9.33	8.09		17.00
EDUC	9.75	10.96		-----
ENGL	11.67	8.00		-----
GEOG	10.86	11.00		26.00
HIST	11.08	17.00		14.00
KINES	9.26	11.00		-----
MASTA	9.96	10.00		20.00
MRM	-----	10.75		-----
PHYS	9.06	17.00		11.00
POL	10.06	4.00		-----
PSYC	10.62	7.50		20.00
SAR	12.33	8.00		-----

* Average = 13.4 for 117 SFU Doctoral graduates.

TABLE III

SUMMARY DATA ON SFU GRADUATE GRADE POINT AVERAGES OF MASTER'S & PHD STUDENTS WHO HAVE TAKEN SFU GRADUATE COURSES

Dept	# of Stu.	CGPA 25%	CGPA 20%	CGPA 10%	CGPA Aver.	CGPA Med.	CGPA Wted.	Grades Awarded Aver.
ARCH	32	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.73	3.75	3.72	3.47
BISC	124	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.66	3.71	3.65	3.58
BUS	135	3.50	3.60	3.86	3.37	3.33	3.37	3.32
CHEM	47	3.85	4.00	4.00	3.54	3.50	3.56	3.53
CMNS	36	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.61	3.67	3.66	3.35
CMPT	69	3.83	4.00	4.00	3.53	3.66	3.59	3.41
CRIM	50	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.55	3.62	3.53	3.32
DLLL	18	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.78	3.89	3.78	3.91
ECON	77	3.62	3.67	3.83	3.43	3.43	3.46	3.17
EDUC	287	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.67	3.80	3.69	3.65
ENGL	60	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.82	4.00	3.82	3.72
GEOG	35	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.67	3.71	3.69	3.43
HIST	29	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.53	3.74	3.59	3.26
KINES	34	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.63	3.80	3.65	3.17
MASTA	46	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.53	3.67	3.63	3.76
MRM	52	3.78	3.86	4.00	3.53	3.64	3.50	3.52
PHIL	3	3.50	3.50	3.60	3.26	3.50	3.33	2.85
PHYS	42	3.88	4.00	4.00	3.40	3.50	3.56	3.32
POL	11	3.83	4.00	4.00	3.71	3.67	3.71	3.47
PSYC	76	3.87	3.91	4.00	3.67	3.71	3.69	3.57
SA	25	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.78	4.00	3.83	3.62
SAR	26	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.77	3.88	3.77	
WS	3	2.50	2.50	4.00	2.83	2.50	2.71	

Table IV

In SAR Department, all current students as of (mm/dd/yy = 05/15/86):

Student	Program	Sr. Supr (entry)	Other Supervisors		
C. BAILEY	MA	GATES	BOYER	COHN	
R. EIGENFELDT	MA	BARTLETT	TRUAX	UNDERHILL	
M. LEE	MA	KIRSCHNER	BOYER	GARCIA	
S. MCLARDY	MA	GATES	WAGNER	GARCIA	
M. TREVIN	MA	GARCIA	KIRSCHNER	GATES	
D. WOLF	MA	DIAMOND	STELLA	ALDERSON	
S. WRIGHT	MSC	85-3			
E. BRISTOWE	PHD	GUTMAN	MALLINSON	HILL	VERDUN-JON
J. DEBO	PHD	VERDUN-JONES	GAVIGAN	PALYS	GUTH
M. ELLIOTT	PHD	AMES	KOOPMAN	BARNARD	
P. GADGIL	PHD	MORRISON	FUNT, BL	COLBOW	
E. GALLAGHER	PHD	85-3			
D. GODFREY-SMITH	PHD	HUNTLEY	RIECKHOFF	HICKIN	
P. HOWARD	PHD	ANDERSON	JOHNSON	LEISS	
P. JAIN	PHD	BERGGREN	GAY	CLEVELAND	
J. JESSUP	PHD	CHAPPELL	VAR	HORSFALL	
A. LUKE	PHD	DE CASTELL	TUINMAN	MCLAREN	
D. MCCABE	PHD	COLEMAN	DOERR	MANLEY-CASI	
T. MCGUIRE	PHD	BRANTINGHAM, PL	BRANTINGHAM,	FATTAH	
N. MCNULTY	PHD	LEISS	SALTER	SHAPIRO	BUITENHUIS
E. PETERSEN	PHD	HIEBERT	HORVATH	DAVIS	
A. RAHMAN	PHD	ANDERSON	HEYER	GATES	
M. REYES	PHD	POIKER	BRANTINGHAM,	BHATTACHARYEAVES	
R. SEPT	PHD	MALLINSON	WIDEEN	WEXLER	BUSHE
M. SMITH	PHD	MARCIA	HIEBERT	CONROY	SHEPPS
J. WINTERDYK	PHD	ROESCH	CORRADO	JACKSON, MA	
C. WRIGHT	PHD	COPEs	GEEN	MAKI	HEAPS

Number of records in SAR: 27