

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

S.76-190

To..... SENATE	From..... SENATE UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS
BRITISH COLUMBIA COLLEGE -	BOARD
UNIVERSITY CREDIT TRANSFER	
Subject..... GUIDELINES	Date..... DECEMBER 15, 1976

MOTION:

"That Senate approve in principle the report on transfer credit guidelines, as set forth in S76-190, together with the attached footnotes that are necessary for clarification of current policies at Simon Fraser University and are considered to be appropriate to the document."

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To	SENATE	From	SENATE UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS
			BOARD
Subject	POST-SECONDARY COORDINATING COMMITTEE	Date	15TH DECEMBER, 1976

"UNIVERSITY CREDIT TRANSFER GUIDELINES"

The Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board at its meeting of 14th December, 1976, considered the attached report of the Post-Secondary Coordinating Committee of the Universities Council of B.C. on "University Credit Transfer Guidelines". Each public University and College has been asked to consider the proposal in principle and respond to the Committee with its comments.

After thorough examination and discussion of the proposal, the S.U.A.B. has approved the proposal in principle and present the attached footnotes (in italics) as an appropriate response for approval by the Senate.

As a result, the S.U.A.B. passed the following -

MOTION: " That the Senate approve in principle the report on Transfer Credit Guidelines together with the attached footnotes which are necessary for clarification of current policies at Simon Fraser University and are considered to be appropriate to the document. "

Solita Wilson

Attach.
ACM:bc

TO: THE SENATE UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS BOARD

The attached report of the Post-Secondary Coordinating Committee of the Universities Council of B.C. has been forwarded to the Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board for approval. This approval will be in principle, as each institution has been asked to respond separately. The report has been discussed informally by Dr. D. Birch, Prof. L. Wilson, H. Evans and myself, the result of which is the following motion and footnotes (in italics).

MOTION: " That the Senate Undergraduate Admissions Board recommend to Senate approval in principle of the report on Transfer Credit Guidelines, together with the attached footnotes which are necessary for clarification of current policies at Simon Fraser University and are considered to be appropriate to the document. "

Attach.
ACM:bc

June 21, 1976

BRITISH COLUMBIA COLLEGE-UNIVERSITY CREDIT TRANSFER GUIDELINES

PREAMBLE

1. For the purposes of these guidelines, credit transfer is defined as the awarding of academic credit by a College Council, or University Senate, for academic achievements at another institution. Students who are awarded academic credit by one institution for work carried out at another are referred to as "transfer students".

NOTE: In the case of Simon Fraser University, this would not include "visiting students" or other similar special cases.

2. The ultimate aim of the British Columbia Credit Transfer Policy is to provide a service to students by facilitating their obtaining the best possible education in the most economical and efficient manner. This principle of economy and efficiency implies minimum repetition or recapitulation of studies, and maximum recognition of demonstrated knowledge and skills. Thus, claims on students and faculty time and effort are minimized.

NOTE: Simon Fraser University recommends the substitution of "courses" for "studies".

3. The transfer of students between colleges and universities in British Columbia should be carried out in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, based on full and free exchange of information between these institutions. To this end, the major requirement for transfer policy implementation is the establishment of active subject-discipline articulation committees, with equal representation by all colleges and universities offering courses and programmes in the subject areas. An Articulation Committee shall provide the major forum for the discussion of all matters relevant to the transfer of credit within or associated with the discipline.

GUIDELINES

1. Discussions concerning individual courses or programmes of study at public colleges and universities in British Columbia should, in general, be initiated with the relevant Articulation Committees, so that questions of suitability of course content, adequacy of supporting facilities and related matters, may be discussed at an early stage of negotiations between institutions.

To this end, both colleges and universities should be prepared to provide the following information: course name, course number, hours per week (lecture, lab, seminar), objective of course, outline of topics covered, texts and required readings; and, although subject to change without notice, the initial proposals for method of instruction, method of evaluation, and the names and qualifications of instructors. A standard form might be used by all colleges and universities to exchange this information.

NOTE: Simon Fraser University recommends adding the following statement as the second sentence in Guideline 1:-- "Prior discussion by the appropriate departments should be encouraged." In addition, for Simon Fraser University, the qualifications of instructors would not include a curriculum vitae but a statement indicating the nature of degrees or similar qualifications and areas of competency.

2. The final decision on the awarding of transfer credit rests with the College Council or University Senate concerned.
3. A college or university which denies the transfer of credit requested by another institution shall state the reasons for this refusal.
4. Agreements on transfer credit must be made between specified authorities in the respective institutions, in order that contracts once made would be duly recorded and recognized.

5. Once an agreement has been reached on the conditions of credit transfer of an individual course or programme of study, it shall not be abrogated without reference to the specified authorities in the institutions affected, and the relevant articulation committee.
6. A university planning changes to its curriculum which will affect the requirements for credit transfer must inform the members of the relevant articulation committees as soon as possible, preferably a year in advance of its implementation, so that other institutions can consider the desirability of alterations to their courses and programmes.

NOTE: Simon Fraser University recommends deletion of the following:-- ". . . preferably a year in advance of its implementation, . . .". In addition, for Simon Fraser University, the Registrar will normally communicate curriculum changes to the Chairman of the British Columbia Post-Secondary Coordinating Committee immediately following approval by Senate, and in certain circumstances, may also provide data to the relevant committee.

7. The colleges and universities have a responsibility to fulfill the commitments in the course descriptions, and to notify the other institutions in the system should any major change in the course content or level occur.

NOTE: For Simon Fraser University the Registrar would normally inform the Chairman of the British Columbia Post-Secondary Coordinating Committee.

8. Institutions should consider transfer students on the same basis as their continuing students except that admission of college students to university should normally be subject to a minimum overall average of "C". Colleges must accept the responsibility of ensuring that "C" represents an acceptable level of achievement relative to further studies; maintenance of relative standards should be one of the functions of the Articulation Committees. Notwithstanding this general provision, a university, while recognizing the right of a college student to transfer, may require a higher level of achievement on transfer to match the level required of its own students for admission to programmes of study to which access is

subject to limitations. Universities must make provision, whilst maintaining confidentiality of the records of individual students, for reporting the progress of transfer students to the colleges from which they had transferred.

NOTE: For Simon Fraser University, the confidentiality of the records of individual students must be maintained, but must not unduly inhibit appropriate institutional and non-institutional research. Studies requiring review of individual student records may be undertaken provided overall confidentiality is maintained. The Registrar will have authority in these matters.

9. Transfer arrangements between colleges and universities are assumed to be based on "lower division" (ie; first and second year) studies. It is recognized that the assignment of "year level" to any individual course might vary at different institutions, and therefore, specific exceptions to this rule might occur under inter-institutional agreements.
10. Transfer of credit would be identified in the following categories by the universities:--
 - (i) specific equivalent of a given course
 - (ii) unspecified (elective) credit in a discipline or department
 - (iii) unspecified (elective) credit in a Faculty
 - (iv) unspecified (elective) credit up to 9 semester hours (4.5 units) for college courses not identifiable with university course offerings but which the colleges evaluate as being appropriate for academic credit on transfer.

NOTE: Simon Fraser University at present does not grant Faculty credit (iii above) but does grant (Type III) General Elective Credit (iv above) well beyond the above maximum; but only on courses recognized for academic transfer credit. Simon Fraser University proposes to continue this policy.

11. Provision should be made for a forum (such as the Post-

Secondary Coordinating Committee) where questions of transfer of students among institutions in British Columbia can be discussed by representatives of all the public colleges and universities of the Province and where, if necessary, recommendations can be formulated for submission to College Councils and University Senates. Appeals on any aspect of transfer policy, unresolvable at other levels, may be made to this body.

NOTE: For Simon Fraser University, this is interpreted as being appeals by a department, a faculty, or an articulation committee only, with the understanding that the committee would perform an ameliorating function and that Guideline II would remain in effect.

PROCEDURE MANUAL

1. Colleges seeking transfer credit for new or revised courses shall make a formal submission to the relevant university official (see Appendix 1) with copies or abridged statements to all members of the pertinent Articulation Committee(s). However, it would be desirable for all proposals to have had preliminary screening in the Articulation Committees prior to their formal submission. Although submissions may be made at any time, each university will establish a deadline in terms of inclusion of proposals in its published list of college-university course equivalencies.
2. Information should be provided in Guideline 1.
3. The responsible university official who receives a proposal will be expected to respond as promptly as reasonable to the initiating college with a copy to the office at the university that is responsible for the publication of a list of course equivalencies and a copy to the chairman of the relevant Articulation Committee(s).

Appx - 1.
This paper was
distributed before Jan 10th
meeting - by E. Fattah.

COMMENTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY ON THE REPORT OF THE POST-SECONDARY
COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF THE UNIVERSITIES COUNCIL OF B.C. ON "UNIVERSITY
CREDIT TRANSFER GUIDELINES"

The Department of Criminology wishes to express its profound misgivings about the proposed "University Credit Transfer Guidelines". The Department feels that the proposed guidelines have the potential to jeopardize the high academic standards presently considered appropriate to post-secondary education in the Province of British Columbia. In the Department's view, the proposed guidelines are drafted in a vague and ambiguous form which clearly invites future difficulties in interpretation. Furthermore, it must be recognized that the proposed guidelines effect a radical change in the nature of the credit transfer process as it now exists; the Department feels strongly that the direction of this change may well be detrimental to the academic quality of its program.

The specific comments of the Department in relation to the individual provisions of the Report are set out below.

Preamble

3. This provision refers to transfer "between colleges and universities". It would seem realistic to assume that transfer from a university to a college is a relatively rare occurrence and therefore it must be fair to conclude that the credit transfer process normally involves a decision by the university as to whether or not a college course is of comparable academic quality to courses offered at the university. In the light of this assumption, it is difficult to determine why the major policy body in the area of transfer credit within any particular discipline should be an "Articulation Committee" constituted on the basis of "equal representation by all colleges and universities offering courses and programmes in the subject areas". If we take the case of the Criminology Department as an example of the practical effects of such a policy, it may

readily be understood that grave threats are posed to individual University departments by the implementation of such a policy.

Simon Fraser University is the only university to which Criminology courses may be transferred in B.C. It has been the bitter experience of the Departmental Articulation Committee that in a discipline which has a quasi-professional orientation there is a compelling need to ensure that college courses considered for credit transfer should not be "career" courses, oriented towards the purely practical needs of practitioners working within the criminal justice system. The Department feels that "career" courses are a legitimate offering of the community college and perform a valuable function within the justice system; however, it is convinced that courses designed exclusively for career students are not (exception in exceptional circumstances) suitable for academic credit transfer. Some colleges are (understandably) most anxious to combine their career and transfer programmes and to argue that their courses are quite capable of serving two masters; the Department of Criminology feels that there is a fundamental incompatibility between career and academic courses. It is felt that college students who transferred into Upper Division Criminology courses on the basis of career-oriented programs at the college level would constitute a serious threat to the academic integrity of those Upper Division courses. The Department is not arguing that career programs are in any way "inferior" to academic programs - merely that they are different.

Since there is no permanent transfer agreement between the youthful Criminology Department and the five or six colleges offering criminology courses, it would seem inappropriate for the major policy-making body on transfer credit to be based upon the principle of equal representation. In the case of criminology, Simon Fraser University would always be in a minority position as the only university on the Articulation Committee. Since the "reality" of the transfer process is that the colleges are asking that their courses

should be transferable to Simon Fraser University's Criminology Programme it does indeed seem strange that the university should have so little a say in the formulation of policy which it regards as a critical influence upon the future development of its Criminology Programme.

This proposed principle also suffers from an ubiquitous vagueness which will surely provoke a variety of problems of interpretation in the not too distant future. The present formulation makes no mention of the precise nature, powers and functions of the proposed Articulation Committees. What is the concrete effect of their decisions? How are decisions to be made?

Finally, it should be noted that the principle refers to "policy implementation" rather than "policy formulation". Is this wording intentional? If so, it would appear to contradict Guideline 2. On the other hand, is it the intention of the proposed guidelines to permit the University Senate to ignore policy formulated by an Articulation Committee? Should not these issues be dealt with before such changes are effected in the transfer process?

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Yes

Guidelines

1. If the situation in which a university course is to be credited by a college is exceptional, it is wondered why the university should provide information such as the "qualifications of instructors"?

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From the point of view of the university seeking whether or not to credit college courses, it must be stated that the information to be provided is purely "formal" in nature. It is suggested that the provision of sample essay or paper assignments and examination papers might provide a more realistic picture of the substantive nature of a course.

2. It is not entirely clear what the decision-making process involves in relation to credit transfer. Will each university department maintain its own articulation committee and make recommendations to Senate? To what extent

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must the Senate defer to policies formulated by the Articulation Committees mentioned in Preamble 3? What arguments are there for abolishing the present practice of decisions being made by the Registrar in cooperation with departmental committees?

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4. The Department wonders whether decisions made by the university as to credit transfer should be described as "contracts"? On legal and other grounds, such a description would appear to be entirely inappropriate.

8. Without questioning the principle that colleges may set the level of achievement upon which transfer is based, it is suggested that the powers of Articulation Committees in relation to the maintenance of relative standards should be clearly stated in this proposed guideline. To leave such a critical matter for future determination would be most unwise.

10. The Department feels strongly that the presently existing categories of transfer credit should not be altered. In particular, the policy that courses should not be transferable unless they are of acceptable quality should not be altered. While college courses may not be "identifiable" with particular course offerings they may be of university quality nevertheless: there is no justification for the university to abandon its right to examine academic standards in relation to all college courses as it will do if type (iv) credit is accepted. It is suggested that proposal 10 (iv) be amended so as to read "which the University evaluates as being appropriate for academic credit on transfer". No justification is provided for the proposed type (iv) credit but it does appear arguable that university students would be in a less favorable position than transfer students if such a change were introduced: Why should university students not receive similar credit for course offerings which are not identifiable as university course offerings in the strict sense?

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11. Guideline 11 is obviously open to the same criticism as that levelled against Preamble 3. If the forum proposed in Guideline 11 was based upon the principle of equal representation, community colleges would far outnumber universities when questions involving appeals came before it. Without in any way questioning the integrity of the representatives from community colleges, it would appear to be somewhat likely that when there is a direct conflict in philosophy between universities and community colleges that the latter would have the decisive say in any situation in which such conflict arose. Of course, it is recognized that any recommendation by such a forum would have only advisory status. However, it is still the view of the Department that some different method of constituting any such appeal body should be developed.

7 January, 1977

/djm