

# SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S 76 - 127

## MEMORANDUM

Senate

From Senate Committee on

Undergraduate Studies

Subject Certificate Program for  
Senior Citizens

Date September 23, 1976

### MOTION:

That Senate approve (and recommend approval by the Board of Governors) the establishment of a Certificate Program for Senior Citizens with requirements as set forth in paper S.76-127.

### Note

This paper was amended and approved by Senate Committee on Academic Planning and Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies and sent to Deans of Faculties and to Chairmen of Faculty Undergraduate Curriculum Committees June 17, 1976 for Faculty response. No formal response has been received from any Faculty.

*Clark Birch*

S 76-127  
SCUS 76-15

As amended and approved by SCUS and  
edited to May 18, 1976 (for trans-  
mittal to Faculties and later to  
Senate)

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

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## CERTIFICATE PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

### I. THE PROPOSAL

It is proposed that Simon Fraser University make available to senior citizens (people sixty and over) a stimulating and relevant academic Certificate Program, at times and locations convenient to older adults.

The Certificate Program is offered as a unique approach to dealing with the question of university education for older adults. No other university or college has devised a program especially for senior citizens which would give them recognition for a sequential program of university study.

Although most older persons do not require a degree for the reasons that young people do, many do wish to undertake academic work at a university and have their achievements recognized. A Certificate Program would effectively meet this need.

The Certificate is also seen as a vehicle for those who would like to undertake a degree-completion program but are hesitant for one reason or another. It is devised to help seniors overcome their fears and lack of self-confidence. Participants will have an opportunity to take a quality academic program in an environment that is non-threatening and conducive to learning.

### II. RATIONALE FOR THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Developments in our society and changes within the retired population are making the education of older adults a social issue which can no longer be ignored. Statistics show that the elderly are increasing in number and as a percentage of the population. Canadians over 65 numbered 1.4 million in 1961; they now represent 2 million individuals, or about 10% of the population.

Today, as a result of earlier retirement and better medical care, significant numbers of people are completing their work well before the end of their life span. Within fifteen years most of us may spend one-third of our life in retirement. Retirement, however, often brings a personal crisis with loss of work, identity, and income. In the extreme, older people lose self-confidence because the attitude of society leads them to believe that they have no role or importance. For many, something is needed to replace work as a major source of meaningful life.

Contrary to popular belief, the majority of the elderly are in good health and are capable of functioning well, both mentally and physically. The stereotype of the physically limited older person is a myth. Reuben Baetz, Executive Director of the Canadian Welfare Council, reports that only 10% of the aged are disabled and in need of intensive health care. Roughly half of these occupy institutional beds; the others are cared for elsewhere by their own families. Another 10% to 20% of the people over 65 have some chronic condition but the majority of these remain mobile and active. The remaining 60% to 70% continue to live as they did in middle age and have no single identifying characteristic except old age.

Senior citizens today are looking for retirement opportunities to provide involvement with special meaning. Social and recreational activities have for some time provided satisfaction, but many seniors now seek experiences which contribute to their mental stimulation, enhance their personal fulfilment, and allow them to develop new skills. Education is becoming a part of a new life style for the elderly and Simon Fraser University can play a unique role.

For the retired, education is an option that holds promise of new and socially-valued roles. Education not only provides knowledge but also acts as a catalyst for self-development. Programs for older people provide interesting peer group relationships and an environment within which individuals can explore new interests and discover hidden resources within themselves. The individual who continues to exercise his powers of feeling and intellect remains active and confident and avoids - or at least delays - mental and physical stagnation and decline.

Education for older adults is consistent with the rapidly advancing philosophy of education in which life-long learning replaces compulsory education for the young alone. Emphasis is shifting from the younger student to all learners. Learning in middle and old age is more important today than it was one, two, or three generations ago. Within the population, people over sixty are on the average the most poorly educated, and their education sixty years ago failed to prepare them for the rapid social change that has taken place. For individuals to live effectively their education must now be as continuous as change and programs must be developed so that people, regardless of their age, can take part in learning throughout their lifetime. Older adults can learn and can maintain their ability and intelligence well into old age. Recent research reported by Dr. Lissy Jarvik, a Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, Los Angeles, has found that generally there is little or no decline in either knowledge or reasoning ability into the sixties, seventies, or eighties. People examined after sixty and followed into their seventies and eighties showed no decline in intellectual capacity, although with advancing age intellectual functioning slowed somewhat. Although older people commonly complain of poor memory, laboratory studies show that many of the old can actually learn as well as, and have memories equal to, younger people. Much of what is called memory loss is believed to be due to inadequate learning caused by hearing difficulty, impaired vision, inattention, and personal problems.

### III. PROGRAM DESIGN

The Certificate would be awarded after the successful completion of thirty credit hours of prescribed study, all completed after reaching age 60.

Anyone sixty or over who is seriously interested in pursuing learning may apply to the University for admission with the objective of enrolling in the Certificate Program. While previous university study is not a prerequisite for this particular Program, potential students must talk with an advisor to ensure that they understand the demands of this Program and obtain academic advice in selecting an appropriate sequence of study.

Within the Certificate Program there are recommended core and optional courses:

- (1) five core courses normally offered in community locations<sup>1</sup> and open to persons 60 and over. As indicated above, these specially arranged courses are to assist seniors in developing their skills and confidence as learners.
- (2) electives chosen from courses offered on campus.

Instructors for the core courses will be selected on the basis of their ~~sympathy with~~ <sup>experience with</sup> and understanding of the learning needs of senior citizens. When established, Continuing Studies will provide these instructors with information and seminars concerning the teaching of older adults.<sup>2</sup>

Senior students, after taking three of the five core community courses, will be encouraged to select courses from regular on-campus offerings. Students with the guidance of an advisor can either build on their core courses and develop a small concentration in one area, or pursue a general program comprised of a variety of subjects from different departments. Upon the successful completion of program requirements, students will be awarded a Certificate for Senior Citizens. Some students may then decide to apply their earned credits towards a bachelor's degree.

Some persons aged 60 and over may wish to do all their course work on campus and select a sequence of courses different from the core offerings. In such cases the students will be permitted to enrol for Certificates but cannot have applied to this Certificate more than 12 credit hours of work earned at age 60 or over taken before formal enrolment for this Certificate. Upon application these students will consult the program advisor to plan the remaining part of their program.

Several research studies and the experience of other universities have influenced the design of the Certificate Program. A large body of research shows that fear of failure increasingly becomes a barrier to growth and learning as we become older.<sup>3</sup> Other data shows that older

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix for list of suggested locations.

<sup>2</sup>For a discussion of some of the distinctive characteristics that affect learning and make the older adult a different kind of student from the child or young adult learner, see Samuel E. Hand, "What It Means to Teach Older Adults," in Hendrickson, Andrew (ed.), A Manual on Planning Educational Programs for Older Adults, Department of Adult Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, 1973, pp. 106-123.

<sup>3</sup>George F. Aker, "Learning and the Older Adult." In Hendrickson, *ibid.*, pp. 87-105.

adults learn best in an environment that is non-threatening and comfortable to them.<sup>4</sup> Many senior citizens lack the self-confidence to return to university on an equal footing with younger students, and in fact, very few older adults have automatically taken advantage of an open university policy when it has been available. The Universities of Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont have waived tuition fees for senior citizens but find that the policy is used modestly; a dozen<sup>5</sup> people at the most taking advantage of these learning opportunities. Where universities have devised a special program to make senior citizens feel welcome and comfortable in a university setting, the response has been far greater. At the Universities of British Columbia and Kentucky where courses for senior students only were offered, 500 (non-credit) and 183 (credit) students respectively were enrolled in the first year. After three years of operation there were 429 senior students<sup>6</sup> enrolled in special credit courses at the University of Kentucky.

Segregation of senior citizens into special courses is understandably a controversial issue. Eventually senior citizens will be integrated into regular courses at Simon Fraser University to complete their Certificates. In the long run, integration will be beneficial to both the individuals and the University. However, in the initial part of the program, some special selection of existing courses for seniors only must be provided to help them learn new skills and gain in self-confidence.

#### IV. PROGRAM CONTENT

Students will complete five of the following community-based core courses (some substitution may be made):

- (1) English 101-3 (Introduction to Fiction) or  
English 102-3 (Introduction to Poetry)
- (2) Physics 001-3 (The Nature of Physical Laws) or  
Chemistry 005-3 (Chemistry of Life)

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<sup>4</sup>David L. Arenberg and Elizabeth A. Robertsen, "The Older Individual as a Learner." In Grabowski, Stanley and Mason, W.D. (Eds.), Learning for Aging, Adult Education Association of the U.S.A., Washington, D.C., 1974, pp. 2-39

<sup>5</sup>Earl Kauffman and Patrick Luby, "Non-Traditional Education: New Approaches to a Dynamic Culture." In Grabowski and Mason, *ibid*, pp. 130-159.

<sup>6</sup>See Continuing Studies file, "Educational Opportunities for Seniors," for information on the University of British Columbia's Summer School non-credit program for seniors, the University of Kentucky's Dunovan Senior Citizen Fellowship Program, and programs at Trent University, the University of Winnipeg, and others.

- (3) Psychology 106-3 (Social Issues)
- (4) Philosophy 100-3 (Introduction)
- (5) Political Science 121-3 (The Canadian Policy) or  
Political Science ~~143-3~~ (Introduction to International  
~~141-3~~ Organizations) or  
Canadian Studies 200-3 (Introduction to Canadian Society  
and Culture)

An additional 15 hours of credit will be earned by enrolling in campus or other approved courses, selected by the students in consultation with the Program advisor.

As detailed on page 3, arrangements will be made for senior students wishing to complete all courses, as well as a different program, on campus.

The community-based core courses have been selected from existing offerings in five different areas of study. Available data on programs elsewhere suggest that the subjects chosen are of particular interest to older adults. The courses were selected in consultation with prospective students and the chairmen of the departments involved, who in most cases not only recommended a course but also suggested a particular instructor. In general, the courses are contemporary in focus and issue-oriented. Also, all provide a foundation for further, specialized study, should students elect that option.

At some later date it may be appropriate to add to the selection of core courses as new courses are developed, such as a cross-disciplinary humanities course or a selection from the Arts Centre Program.

#### V. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Program will be advised by a Steering Committee. Recommendations for the award of the Certificate will be made through this Committee.

#### VI. CALENDAR ENTRY - CERTIFICATE PROGRAM FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

The purposes of the program are to provide interested members of the senior citizen population (those aged 60 years and over) with opportunities to participate in university life, to undertake a program of study which is relevant to their life goals, and to gain recognition for their academic achievements.

#### Admission

Current admission regulations will apply. It is expected that most persons will apply either as a secondary school graduate or under the

terms of the "Mature Student Entry." (See Admissions section, Simon Fraser University Calendar.) Also, each applicant shall consult a program advisor concerning the demands of the program and their educational objectives.

Program Requirements

- (1) The successful completion of 30 credit hours of prescribed study.
- (2) At least fifteen of the minimum 30 hours normally from the following courses:
  - (a) English 101-3 or English 102-3
  - (b) Physics 001-3 or Chemistry 005-3
  - (c) Psychology 106-3
  - (d) Philosophy 100-3
  - (e) Political Science 121-3 or Political Science ~~143-3~~<sup>141-3</sup> or Canadian Studies 200-3.
- (3) An additional 15 of the minimum 30 hours selected by the student in consultation with an academic advisor.
- (4) Exception to the above requirements will be made for senior students wishing to complete certificate requirements on campus and/or undertake a different program of study. In such cases, the following will apply:
  - (a) 30 credit hours of approved and prescribed study completed at age 60 or over;
  - (b) enrolment in the Certificate Program prior to the completion of 12 credit hours being applied to the Program;
  - (c) Program advisor approval of requirements to be completed for the Certificate.

NOTES:

- (1) Credits applied toward this Certificate cannot be applied to any other Simon Fraser certificate or diploma, but may be applied also toward major program or minor program requirements or toward a bachelor's degree under the normal regulations governing those programs.
- (2) A maximum of 12 credit hours completed after reaching age 60 or over but prior to formal enrolment in this Certificate program may be applied towards the certificate requirements.



- (3) All courses used toward the Certificate normally must be taken through Simon Fraser University and not more than six semester hours of approved transfer credit for other university/college work may be applied to the Certificate requirements.
- (4) Program requirements normally must be completed within five years.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

H.M. Evans  
Registrar

From Keith L. Gilbert  
Director of Financial Aid  
Date May 5, 1976

APPENDIX

Potential Locations for Community-Based Courses


Diploma Program for Senior Citizens

1. Bonsor House  
6636 Fern Avenue  
Burnaby
2. Burquitlam Senior Citizens Centre  
9887 Cameron Road  
Burnaby
3. Century House  
Moody Park  
New Westminster
4. Confederation House  
4585 Albert Street  
Burnaby
5. Edmonds House  
7282 Kingsway  
Burnaby
6. Heritage Village  
4900 Deer Lake  
Burnaby
7. New Westminster Public Library  
716 - 6th Avenue  
New Westminster
8. Queens Avenue United Church  
529 Queens  
New Westminster
9. Seton Villa  
3755 McGill Street  
Burnaby
10. Sunrise Pavilion  
10341 - 135th Street  
Surrey
11. YMCA-YWCA  
180 - 6th Street  
New Westminster

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM FOR SENIOR  
CITIZENS

Thank you for your memo of April 28, 1976 and your telephone comments.

Upon reflection, and discussions with Dr. Jones I am of the opinion that students registered under this programme will be eligible for all institutional, and government financial aid, providing of course that they meet the various credit hour requirements and other criteria used in evaluating applicants.

  
Keith L. Gilbert  
Director of Financial Aid

KLG/yd  
cc Dr. Colin Jones,  
Chairman S.C.S.A.B.

BRITISH COLUMBIA  
**student a**

835 FRUMHOLDT ST.  
VICTORIA, B.C.  
V8V 2Z6 POST-SECONDARY STUDENT  
COMMUNITY CENTRE, VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

May 20, 1976

RECEIVED

MAY 25 1976

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE  
MAIL DESK

Mr. Keith Gilbert  
Director of Financial Aid  
Simon Fraser University  
Burnaby 2, B. C.  
V5A 1S6

Dear Keith:

Re: CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

Further to our telephone conversation with respect to the proposal outlined in your May 12 correspondence, I would like to provide the following information.

It appears that this proposal complies with the Canada Student Loans regulations. I see no reason why this course of study should not be serviced with provincial student assistance. This approval is granted on the basis that this program of study leads to a recognized degree, certificate or diploma. Furthermore, these courses should be recognized as credit units by your University Senate.

I trust that this response will assist your institution in finalizing its plans. If I can be of further assistance, I may be reached at 387-5696.

Respectfully,

*Deane*

D. L. Clarke  
Coordinator

# SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

## MEMORANDUM

To..... Mr. Harry Evans.....  
..... Registrar.....  
Subject..... Certificate Program in B.C. Studies.....  
..... Steering Committee

From..... Jo Lynne Hoegg, Director.....  
..... Community Education,.....

Date..... March 17, 1977.....

For your records and information, members of the Steering Committee for the Certificate Program in British Columbia Studies are:

Dr. Alan Aberbach, History  
Dr. Jack Blaney, Continuing Studies  
Dr. Roy Carlson, Archaeology  
Mr. Jack Fondren, Vancouver Museums and Planetarium Association  
Mrs. Jo Lynne Hoegg, Continuing Studies  
Dr. George Rheumer, Geography  
Dr. Mary Lee Stearns, Sociology and Anthropology

Dr. Wilson has appointed Dr. Roy Carlson Chairman of the Committee.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
J.L. Hoegg

JLH/cak

RECEIVED

MAR 21 1977

REGISTRAR'S OFFICE  
MAIL DESK