

RECOMMENDATION: that a Program of Continuing Education be introduced under the direction of an individual responsible to the Vice-President, Academic. The initial emphasis of this program should be on the offering of late afternoon and evening academic degree credit courses and programs at the upper division level, which complement the regional college lower division offerings. Emphasis should also be placed on the undertaking of feasibility studies and pilot projects relating to the offering of such courses and programs at locations other than the current locations, at times other than the current times and in ways other than the current ways.

REASONS FOR THIS RECOMMENDATION:

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

At the Senate Meeting of September 14, 1970, a proposal by the Faculty of Education to partially implement a split-summer semester was approved by a considerable majority. While there were several objections made to the specific proposal, many of the statements made at that meeting appeared to reflect an interest in moving in a more effective manner into the area of continuing education. Most universities consider that education is a continuing objective for all reasonable men and women and that the three or four years of concentrated study in the environs of a university does not provide an individual with a total educational experience for the rest of his life; rather, additional courses, refresher courses and general interest courses lead to the broadening of interest of the individual and, hopefully, contribute to a better standard of living either through enhanced earning opportunities as a result of the learning of new skills or by his ability to extract the maximum enjoyment and value from available sources.

At Simon Fraser University a decision was made at an early stage not to duplicate programs at the University of British Columbia and consequently the three original faculties have not been augmented since the initial stages of university development. To differentiate programs within Simon Fraser from those ongoing at the University of British Columbia in Arts, Science and Education, "bold innovative approaches" to education in the liberal arts were to be encouraged so that a different type of education would be available at Simon Fraser. While considerable innovation in teaching techniques took place, particularly in the early years, a fairly cursory examination of present university offerings indicates that the detailed programs are not significantly different from similar programs provided at other institutions in Canada and the United States. Perhaps it is time to reassess the rather negative goals expressed

earlier in this statement, i. e. "of not duplicating programs and facilities offered at the University of British Columbia" and to look at the position of Simon Fraser University in the community of the 70's. Such a total review is not the subject of the present paper which is directed solely to one aspect of such a review: the topic of continuing education.

In a recent survey of the continuing education opportunities provided by the public colleges and universities in the Province, several facts emerge. First, a large diversity of course offerings are provided by The University of British Columbia to people in the Lower Mainland area. Second, the regional colleges undertake to provide a number of academic transfer courses at the first and second year level for students in the evening. The supply of such offerings by the regional colleges is much heavier in the Lower Mainland area than it is in the outlying areas of the Province. Third, with the exceptions of the fields of Psychology, Sociology, Anthropology and English, no individual can obtain in this Province a Bachelor's degree by taking evening courses alone. It should be noted here that Vancouver is the only metropolitan centre of its size in the whole of the North American continent that does not provide such an opportunity. While UBC is considering such a step and has formed a Senate committee to examine this possibility, any recommendations appear to be at least a year away. Thus, by taking such a step now, Simon Fraser University has an opportunity to lead the educational community of British Columbia in meeting a real educational need. Finally, there are large areas of the Province that are not reached by any institution offering post secondary education.

It should be noted that, with the exception of this past year, there has been a significant rise in the number of individuals taking advantage of the opportunities for continuing education offered by the colleges and universities in the Province. The downtrend of last year appears largely attributable to the economic situation with the accompanying inability of individuals to find the money necessary to take the courses offered. The increasing enrolment figures in continuing education activities also suggest that there is a significant proportion of the population who are desirous of continuing their education but who are unable to accommodate their work schedules to the demands of a normal semester or trimester operation. Given economies of scale, the establishment of new regional colleges and/or universities in the outlying parts of the Province would be extremely difficult to justify. This lack of direct access to a higher education facility, however, does not justify the denial of educational opportunities for the people residing

in these areas. What it does require is that existing institutions, and here we think particularly of Simon Fraser, must, as public universities, devise means of bringing educational opportunities to these individuals.

With the increasing difficulty of obtaining funds to pursue traditional topics of scholarship for universities across the country and, indeed, around the world, we are faced with a situation, for 1971/72 at least, that new programs introduced must almost necessarily be of a revenue generating type; indeed, self-supporting programs would offer the most attraction. In the long term our financial situation may improve but one would be optimistic to predict a return to the relatively free spending days of the middle 60's. Compared with other provincial universities, Simon Fraser is in the odd position that, apart from part of its teacher training program in the Faculty of Education and the M. B. A. program in the Department of Economics and Commerce, together with a contribution from the orientation of the Theatre to the community and certain rather smaller interactions, the University community relates rather specifically to the community resident for a day time program within the present campus buildings.

A proposed eight week summer course, which may be offered to a clientele consisting almost entirely of school teachers within the Province, is an example of a program which might well become largely self-supporting. By restricting the minimum size of classes, such summer session programs can be self-supporting and indeed are money makers at several universities in Canada.

Many Simon Fraser faculty do in fact participate in the U. B. C. continuing education program but Simon Fraser University gains no recognition in the broader public sphere for such work. The proposal which follows is designed to remedy this situation and recommends the establishment of a pilot program in continuing education.

2. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Continuing education programs are of several types. At one extreme we find the enrolment of part-time students in regular day-time classes in the University. Late afternoon courses and evening courses provided on campus would facilitate those students from the surrounding community who wish to complete degree programs, enter new degree programs or partake in extension courses during part of what is normally considered their leisure time. This kind of program,

which might utilize some of the large amount of talent available at Simon Fraser together with rather excellent instructional facilities can also be duplicated off campus, particularly where the need for laboratories is minimal. This would mean that, at certain hours of the day, individuals might attend different centres, at their convenience, to continue their education, whether formal or informal.

Another type of continuing education involves those who are unable to attend at specific locations for learning and instruction. In at least two provinces in Canada correspondence courses are available for credit or without credit to students who meet admission standards in whatever part of Canada. Here the interaction with the instructor is less frequent than in the former instances, usually consisting of written communications on an approximate two-week frequency basis.

More recently moves into education through television and through radio have been initiated and a large scale experiment is being conducted in England through the "Open University". In each of these programs it is usual to have follow-up sessions with tutors or by essay or by telephone to provide interaction between students and faculty. However, such programs still require that an individual be available at specific hours of the day or evening and citizens who work on a split shift operation may find it impossible to make such appointments on a continuing basis. An entirely new suggestion has come from the Alumni Association, and represents perhaps the other end of the spectrum of continuing education programs. In this an individual would attend an institution for a rather short time, a few days to a week, and would subsequently complete his own education in his own time at home. While he would have access to libraries and other facilities in his vicinity or in university, and might, of his own volition, interact with faculty or students, his program of learning would be self directed. Evaluation of his performance, for courses taken for credit, would be done at his request and standards of performance would be maintained by requiring examinations, written and oral, at least as searching as in the general university program. Such a program has not, to our knowledge, been initiated at any university and perhaps Simon Fraser with its reputation for innovation should consider the merits of such a program.

It is quite clear that it would be impossible to move from the present system of almost zero formal participation in continuing education programs under an S.F.U. administrative unit to complete implementation of all the possibilities set out in this paper, which may not even be a comprehensive list. Rather it would seem appropriate to utilize the

excess capacity of the University during the late afternoon and evening to provide extended offerings for students. Simultaneously it might be appropriate for an investigation of the viabilities of other programs to take place with a view to implementing those which would reflect credit on Simon Fraser University without compromising its standards of performance.