



8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC  
Canada V5A 1S6

TEL: 778.782.3925  
FAX: 778.782.5876

vpacad@sfu.ca  
www.sfu.ca/vpacademic

**MEMORANDUM**

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**ATTENTION** Senate **DATE** February 9, 2010  
**FROM** Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and Provost, and Chair, SCUP **PAGES** 1/1  
**RE:** Response to Report of the Advisory Committee on Colleges (SCUP 10-14)

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At its January 27, 2010 meeting SCUP reviewed the attached Response to Report of the Advisory Committee on Colleges. The report is attached for the information of Senate.



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MEMORANDUM

<b>ATTENTION</b>	SCUP	<b>DATE</b>	January 12, 2010
<b>FROM</b>	Jon Driver, Vice-President, Academic and Provost	<b>PAGES</b>	1/2
<b>RE:</b>	Response to Report of the Advisory Committee on Colleges		

The Phase 2 Task Force on Academic Structure reported in December 2007. One of the recommendations was that the University consider the creation of a College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning, an integrative unit that would house much of what is now in Continuing Studies, as well as interdisciplinary credit programs and a support unit for experiential learning. As the first stage in investigating this proposal in more detail, I formed a small advisory committee in fall 2008 to consider the general idea that creation of colleges would facilitate the administration and support of activities that cut across the roles and responsibilities of the Faculties.

The committee provided a report to me over the summer of 2009, and this is attached for SCUP's information. I have taken some time to consider my response to this report, for a number of reasons. The Task Force on Teaching and Learning produced a draft final report in September, and it also included recommendations about the support for various teaching and learning activities, and the organization of support units. We conducted a search for the Dean of Continuing Studies during the fall semester of 2009, and this provided an opportunity to review the activities of that unit, to listen to the advice of Continuing Studies staff members, and to discuss future directions for Continuing Studies with decanal candidates. I also wanted to discuss some of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Colleges with the Deans, especially as they were developing their three-year plans in conjunction with my "Vision, Outcomes and Goals" document that resulted from a consultation process with faculty, staff and students in early 2009.

As I had requested, the Advisory Committee has written a relatively brief report that summarizes their findings and recommendations. I thank the committee members for the research and thought that they brought to this process, and particularly for their summary of concerns about current administrative structures at the University. They have recommended that we consider using a college structure as a way of identifying learning approaches or interdisciplinary themes that cut across the current Faculty structures.

I have decided that I will not support their recommendations at this time, for the following reasons:

1. We have recently undergone significant restructuring of Faculties, and I do not think it would be ideal for the University as a whole to begin another restructuring process.
2. The creation of a college structure is likely to add administrative costs, at a time when we have to cope with a structural deficit in our budget and should be trying to reduce administrative costs.
3. We could create greater permeability between Faculties and greater collaboration across all units by policy revisions, rather than new administrative structures.
4. Having experienced significant growth in student numbers over the last decade, the University will be entering a period of stability in student numbers and the funding associated with those students. Previously, Faculties tended to compete with each other for new student spaces (and

hence new funding) in order to create new programs. We are now entering a period in which new programs can only be funded by reallocation of resources, and this will be an incentive for collaboration between Faculties and greater interdisciplinary activity.

5. Some of our new Faculties, notably FCAT and Environment, are inherently interdisciplinary. We should give all Faculties the opportunity to move towards greater collaboration.

Once again, I would like to thank the committee members for their work. Their report identified and clarified some important issues, and has helped me think through some of the problems of breaking down barriers within the University. As I develop the three-year academic plan and review the recommendations of the Task Force on Teaching and Learning, the committee's comments about the need for greater collaboration and cooperation within the University will be an important consideration.

Attachment (1)

**DRAFT REPORT: 2 JULY 2009**

**REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON COLLEGES**

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON COLLEGES**

**CHAIR: MARK WINSTON, ACADEMIC DIRECTOR, CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE**  
**PAUL BUDRA, ASSOCIATE DEAN, FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**COLLEEN COLLINS, ASSOCIATE DEAN, FACULTY OF BUSINESS**  
**TOM NESBIT, ASSOCIATE DEAN, CONTINUING STUDIES**  
**NANCY JOHNSTON, SENIOR DIRECTOR, LEARNING AND RETENTION, STUDENT SERVICES**  
**JANE FRIESEN, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS**  
**WADE PARKHOUSE, DEAN, GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**KATHY MCKAY, GRADUATE STUDENT**  
**SUSAN RHODES, UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM, OFFICE OF VP ACADEMIC**

**ALTERNATE CONTRIBUTORS:**

**URSULA ARNDT, GRADUATE STUDENT**  
**JOAN COLLINGE, DEAN *PRO TEM*, CONTINUING STUDIES**

## OVERVIEW

In February 2009, the Vice-President, Academic established the Advisory Committee on Colleges (ACC) to consider the feasibility of alternative structures that could house the range of units that lie outside faculties yet support the core academic mission. The impetus for considering a college or alternative as a new academic administrative structure at SFU came as a result of a recommendation made in 2008 by the Phase 2 Faculty Structure Task Force (FSTF) for the creation of a College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning at SFU. The college envisioned within the FSTF recommendation would house two divisions: an Experiential Learning Division and a Lifelong Learning Division.

The mandate of the Advisory Committee on Colleges is as follows:

1. To examine models for administrative structures that facilitate integration of academic services and support across academic units;
2. To evaluate the suggestion that SFU house such services and support units in "colleges" and, if appropriate, recommend alternative structures;
3. To develop principles for the establishment and governance of colleges (or alternative structures), and principles for their relationship with faculties;
4. To evaluate the extent to which interdisciplinary academic units might be housed in colleges (or some other structure), and the principles for the operation of such units;
5. To produce a report that outlines the committee's findings and recommendations;
6. To consult widely within the university during their work.

Goals the VP Academic hopes the committee may reach include broadening the recommendations made by the FSTF regarding interdisciplinarity and proposing ways in which SFU's structures can expand and break through institutionalized barriers to programming that cuts across faculties. In particular, it is hoped consideration will be given to a student-focused college or colleges that have important academic goals but are different in scope from centres and institutes, which could include thematically based colleges, including but not limited to a College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning.

## SFU INITIATIVES

There are a number of initiatives that have been undertaken or are in process, which the ACC has taken into account, both as points of reference and to ensure constructive overlap. The confluence of these initiatives indicates that now may be the most opportune time to address introducing a college structure to the University.

### Faculty Structure Task Force

The Faculty Structure Task Force presented a number of recommendations to the SFU community in February 2008. Of particular interest to the ACC are the recommendations to create a College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning, and recommended changes allowing for greater interdisciplinarity across the university.

#### Recommendations for College of Lifelong and Experiential Learning (CLEL)

- That the CLEL be the locus and home for the encouragement, coordination, interconnection, and development of interdisciplinary, cross-faculty experiential learning programs
  - That the Centre for Dialogue, including the Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue, be classified as a CLEL program
  - That the VPA establish a Committee for Experiential Learning, with a mandate to develop a plan for introducing experiential credit for undergraduates
- That Continuing Studies, including the Centre for Online and Distance Education, be housed in the CLEL

The FSTF envisioned the Experiential Learning Division of the college as having the following responsibilities:

- Develop, incubate, nourish and house credit (but not degree granting) programming of an interdisciplinary, cross-faculty character within college programs;
- Develop a portal to showcase experiential programming and learning opportunities across the university.

The Lifelong Learning Division would:

- Develop programs that provide opportunities for coherent pathways between non-credit and credit learning;
- House continuing studies, distance education, and diverse population outreach activities.

#### Recommendations for Interdisciplinarity

- Academic Policies:
  - Revise Joint Appointments Policy (A11.07) to be more flexible in nature of the relationships permitted; build in appropriate and adequate review mechanisms of interdisciplinarity and multi-unit research and teaching; identify clear and consistent expectations of workload
  - Develop a new policy to allow for internal secondments of tenured research faculty and permanent teaching faculty for two- to five-year terms in centres and institutes
  - Develop a new policy on 'Team Teaching'
  - Develop better provisions for an academic performance review process in relation to interdisciplinary research and teaching
  - Revise the Centres and Institutes Policy to be more flexible (R40.01)
- That the VP Academic, Deans and other VPs

- Develop a series of incentive strategies and position funding arrangements that would substantially increase the number of joint appointments
- Review the current enrollment-based funding allocation formula to identify ways in which funding can effectively support interdisciplinary course credits offered through centres and institutes, and new strategic and interdisciplinary program development

### **Academic Planning**

The Office of the Vice-President, Academic is currently in the process of developing the next Three-Year Academic Plan. This entails meeting with focus groups representing all areas of the university to provide input into a new Academic Vision for SFU. The VP Academic has asked the SFU community to think deeply about the university's academic mission, and about what distinguishes SFU from other BC post-secondary institutions. Informing development of an Academic Vision are statements made by the President in his "President's Agenda", which were highlighted by the VP Academic in his January 2009 VPA Planning Newsletter:

- We will diversify our teaching and research while maintaining our traditional core strengths in liberal arts and sciences
- We will promote and value innovation in both established and new activities
- Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches will add value to our teaching, and strengthen the quality and relevance of our research
- Students will learn in an environment that provides diverse experiences and exposes them to research and researchers

### **Task Force on Teaching and Learning**

After the Learning and Instructional Development Centre underwent an external review in 2008, the TFTL was formed to develop a vision and strategic plan for teaching and learning at SFU. Of particular interest to the ACC are the following TFTL terms of reference, which may inform decisions made around the development of a college structure:

1. Develop a comprehensive vision statement on teaching and learning for SFU that focuses on the aspirations of students, faculty, instructors, teaching assistants, tutor markers, educational staff and the administration [and] recognizes the diversity of pedagogies employed at SFU.
4. Suggest an administrative structure that will foster interaction and collaboration among teaching and learning support units and ensures that their strategic planning activities are coordinated and integrated.

### **Centres and Institutes Policy Revisions**

Revisions are now underway to the Centres and Institutes Policy (R40.01). The report of the FSTF recommended that the policy be clarified, and a review of this policy shows that the current definition of centres is sufficiently broad enough to cover a wide range of research and teaching activities. Revisions to the policy will propose specific definitions for centres and institutes, and will revise reporting processes.



## COLLEGES WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY SETTING

The committee has reviewed a number of examples of university units that provide interdisciplinary programming by faculty members who come from a range of disciplines. Because British Columbia has such a well-developed and recognized community college system, it is important to differentiate between the intent of an SFU college or colleges and the mandates of BC's colleges. This is particularly true now that many of these colleges and university-colleges have been restructured as teaching universities. In committee discussion around the term "college" versus a more enhanced definition of "centre", the term "college" seemed to allow for a stronger influence on teaching and community engagement than the term "centre" at SFU, and so we chose to use that term throughout our discussions.

A review of colleges within the university setting across Canada reveals an array of college types, some more relevant to SFU than others. Some universities still maintain residential or denominational colleges that function like faculties. A few multi-campus universities identify their satellite campuses as colleges, distinct from but linked to the main campus.

More applicable to this committee are those universities that have established specialized colleges that address institution-specific needs and incorporate interdisciplinarity as part of their mission. The term "college" in these settings is generally consistent with the terms "faculty" or "school". These units typically have a specific, thematic focus that is inherently interdisciplinary, and do not function as "umbrella" structures with administrative oversight of loosely related or unrelated programs or other administrative units. Most of these college structures house programs that are problem-/issues-oriented, utilize learning-outcomes pedagogy, and build cohort, experiential and service learning into the academic structure of the curriculum. Many of the programs these colleges are built around have specific champions at the senior administrative level, which was critical to their implementation.

Reporting structures vary, with either Deans or Directors who report directly to VPs Academic. Instructors are typically cross-appointed faculty members from a variety of disciplines, with some specialist core faculty members who work within the program full time. Students may receive baccalaureate and/or graduate degrees directly through these colleges, majoring in the program offered, or as part of a double or joint major with another program elsewhere in the university. Enrollments are generally limited, and selected applicants are often high achieving because the programs are designed to be intensive.

### **College Examples**

#### **Renaissance College, University of New Brunswick (Fredericton)**

Renaissance College opened in Fall 2000 with the primary purpose of offering an intensive leadership studies program. The college is physically located in a Victorian mansion in Fredericton, close to the UNB-F campus. Renaissance offers a Bachelor of Philosophy in Interdisciplinary Leadership Studies; a Master's of Philosophy in Policy Studies (in conjunction with Graduate Studies); partners with UNB's College of Extended Learning to offer mature students a part-time Bachelor of Integrated Studies; and offers a non-credit Student Leadership Program open to all UNB undergrads and graduate students on the Fredericton campus. The college is also home to the Undergraduate Research Lab for Leadership Education.

The B.Phil program is an intensive three-year, two-summer program that combines interdisciplinary experiential curriculum with a Canadian and international internship; graduates also complete a minor in a discipline of their choice. The program is equivalent to a normal four-year program, and the curriculum includes core courses and cross-discipline courses. Annual enrollment is limited to 25 students, and selection is based on students who are academically high achieving and community-minded, who demonstrate leadership potential and diverse interests outside of academics.

Renaissance College functions as a school of UNB, and is a bi-campus interdisciplinary academic unit that reports directly to the two campus VP Academics (Fredericton and St. John), rather than through a faculty. A Dean heads the college, and the prime decision-making body is called the College Council. Startup funding for the college came from an external grant, which provided terms for the type of program to be offered.

The organizational structure originally proposed and approved included no full-time academic appointments; faculty members were seconded from other academic units, with assessment procedures remaining with the member's home academic unit. After the first external review in 2004, both the self-study and external review recommendations called for incorporating a core full-time faculty complement into the organizational structure. Since 2005, the organizational structure includes: the Dean and two full-time associate professors; two jointly appointed faculty members; two seconded faculty members; seven part-time stipend instructors; and four administrative staff.

**College of Extended Learning, University of New Brunswick (Fredericton)**

After 50 years as the Department of Extension and Summer Sessions, this unit went through a restructuring process in 2000-2001 to become the College of Extended Learning. The rationale for the change was to broaden its academic mandate and outreach, improve delivery mechanisms and internal partnerships, and strengthen its programming and community connections. UNB recognized that increasing competition from the private sector for education and training programs required prioritizing restructuring, particularly in light of the potential increased revenue source. A better structure required a new business plan and a new operational plan.

An Executive Director, who reports directly to the VP-F Academic, heads the College of Extended Learning. An Executive Committee oversees the business plan, the financial plan, and the appointment of the Executive Director; members include the VP-F Academic, VP Finance, VP Research, Executive Director, two faculty members and two external organization members.

An Academic Advisory Committee oversees academic programming, learner support services, academic policy issues, review of program proposals, review of existing programs, development of objectives and priorities for academic programming; members include the VP-F Academic, Executive Director, UNB-F Registrar, a Senate appointee, a member from each faculty, a librarian and an IT staff person, two College Program Directors and two students from the Adult and Part-Time Students organization.

Core services of the college include: a Degree Credit Division; a Professional Development Division; a Personal & Cultural Enrichment Division; an English Language Programme Division; and a Conference Centre and Services Division. Programming and services include: for-credit, part-time degree and certificate courses; non-degree certificates and workshops;

English as a Second Language; Distance Education and e-Learning; credit and non-credit Visual Arts and Music programming; writing and math tutoring centres available to all full- and part-time students; and financial aid, advising, prior learning assessment and student advocacy directed toward adult and part-time students.

The college also offers a jointly administered part-time Bachelor of Integrated Studies degree. The College of Extended Learning manages administrative oversight, while academic oversight is provided by Renaissance College.

**College of Sustainability, Dalhousie University**

Dalhousie's College of Sustainability opens in September 2009, and will house the new Environment, Sustainability and Society program, a program proposed and initiated by Dalhousie's Science faculty. It will occupy a dedicated and purpose-built space to allow for both student programming and the ability to host conferences and events, and develop partnerships and research opportunities with external community groups and governmental agencies.

The college will offer a major (ESS) as part of a double major/combined honours undergraduate degree in one of Bachelor of Arts; Bachelor of Community Design; Bachelor of Management; Bachelor of Science; or Bachelor of Computing Science; future degree combinations may include Faculties of Engineering and Health Professions. Master's and PhD programs and classes in ESS are under development.

The organizational structure is focused on team teaching; cross-appointed faculty members come from Science, Arts, Architecture and Planning, Management, Engineering, Health Professions and Law. The college is headed by a Director, with separate Associate Directors of Undergraduate Programs, Research and Graduate Programs (all cross-appointments).

**Global College, University of Winnipeg**

Global College was created in 2005 as a thematic academic unit that "provides students, faculty, staff, visiting scholars, dignitaries, and the community with a place to interact to share their diverse perspectives about issues of global citizenship, human rights, and issues affecting the planet". The college houses seven institutes that make up its foundation of academic learning.

Global College offers a three-stream thematic major in Human Rights and Global Studies (BA). This program incorporates courses from diverse departments and disciplines, as well as core courses developed within the college. Additionally, each institute helps to fulfill the mandate of Global College by offering Summer Institutes, teach-ins, symposia, conferences, and lecture series, as well as by encouraging trans-disciplinary education

A Principal, who reports to the Deputy Provost/AVP International, heads the college. The Institute Directors all have home departments in varying disciplines.

**College of Graduate Studies and Research, University of Saskatchewan**

The College of Graduate Studies and Research was founded in 1946 and renamed in 1971 (to include Research). It is a separate academic unit and functions like a Faculty of Graduate Studies. The Dean of the college reports to the VP Academic/Provost.

The mission of the college is to provide support to graduate students and graduate programs. Faculty members hold membership in the college for the purposes of furthering the education of graduate students and/or the enhancement of research, scholarly or artistic work at University of Saskatchewan. Members must have an academic appointment and are nominated for membership by their academic units. The college can appoint Adjunct Professors at the recommendation of academic units. Any supervisory issues that come between students and their faculty member supervisors are dealt with by the college rather than at the departmental or faculty level.

Graduate students apply first to the department in which they want to pursue studies, but formal graduate admission is through the college. Additionally, the college administers Independent Interdisciplinary Program admissions.

**College for Interdisciplinary Studies, University of BC Vancouver**

UBC's College for Interdisciplinary Studies was created in 2008 through a split of the former (and increasingly unwieldy) dual role of its Faculty of Graduate Studies. The FGS is now solely responsible for the provision and support of graduate students and graduate programs, while the CFIS is a new governance unit for UBC's interdisciplinary centres, institutes and schools formerly housed within the FGS.

The aim of the organizational structure is to foster research and teaching, and enhance interdisciplinary scholarship widely across the university in collaboration with the existing faculties. The college differs from a faculty in that it has a university-wide mandate and responsibility, a university-wide governance committee, and no permanent academic departments. However, some faculty members in centres and institutes who do not have an academic appointment in a faculty or a leader who is a Dean call the CFIS their home and in some cases may be directly appointed by the college. The CFIS has as its academic and administrative head a Principal who is an additional member of Senate, reports to the Provost and is a member of the Committee of Deans. As a cost-saving measure, administrative support and resources were redistributed between the FGS and the CFIS.

At present, the college maintains current graduate academic activities and has yet to develop new ones, but it is designed to encourage creation of new centres and institutes, and eventual expansion into undergraduate programming.

## STRUCTURAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS AT SFU

While the college examples above have arisen to meet specific perceived needs for thematic programming or unit restructuring at each given university, they also attend to some more universal concerns that afflict academia, in terms of flexible faculty cross-appointments and cross-disciplinary curriculum development. None of the examples attempts to provide pan-university programming or house entities that support the academic goals of other structures within those universities.

The committee has identified a number of barriers to more flexible, innovative, university-wide programming at SFU. Many of these issues were previously identified by the Faculty Structure Task Force, were brought forward by the Task Force's working groups and other submissions, and are interrelated:

- **Mobility:** it can be difficult for faculty members to move outside of programs and faculties (tenure and promotion issues)
- **Mobility:** it can be difficult for students to move between and across programs and faculties
- **Resource issues,** both in terms of funding and people, inhibit the development of programs that cross faculty boundaries
- **Geography—**three campuses in different communities
- **Rigid architecture** of the university academic structure results in a silo affect that hinders university-wide programming—programs must be attached to a department or faculty
- **Ambiguous homes** for new cross-faculty programs during incubation
- **Significant population** of transfer students and credit-recognition issues within SFU
- **Pressures** faced by graduate students in multidisciplinary graduate programs who encounter conflicting program requirements

A college structure could provide one solution to these ingrained issues, coupled with policy changes. Still, the Faculty Structure Task Force recommendations left many Senate members and others in the university community concerned that creating yet another administrative structure might produce more problems than resolution. Some in the community believe that policy rather than structural changes could alleviate many of the concerns; others believe a restructuring or full academic recognition of existing units would greatly enhance the student and faculty experience.

Some of the concerns raised by the ACC when contemplating a college structure include:

- **Difficulty** conceptually discussing 'college' as an answer to issues not yet fully articulated
- **The cohesiveness** of a college unit at SFU if it is perceived as simply grouping disparate entities. This was a perception held about the former Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies, accurate or not
- **Investing time and resources** in a thematic college could be wasteful in terms of faculty member time and energy, and financial resources, if the theme was trendy but not long lasting
- **'Theme'** suggests curriculum and topics of investigation, rather than a disciplinary focus, perhaps distracting from SFU's traditional department/faculty structure

- A thematic college structure might not increase enrollment, but rather redistribute existing students and resources. The financial concerns of existing units are heightened by the implications of adding new units
- Depending on the operational structure of a college, any implied equivalency between a teaching-only unit and the teaching-research faculties remains a sticking point for some faculty members, who perceive teaching-only units to hold lesser value than those that include teaching and research
- The evaluation paradigm used to evaluate faculty members seconded to colleges at SFU would need to be expanded
- If sunset clauses were introduced on thematic colleges, stability would be in jeopardy: what would entice students to enroll, and what would happen to those who were part way through a program that was discontinued?

The college structure we propose below for SFU attempts to reconcile the potential for colleges to enhance student and faculty experiences while addressing concerns expressed by the committee and previous reports and discussions.

Overall, the ACC's proposal was guided by:

- The chorus of reports, task forces, focus groups, and our committee discussions that consistently indicated a strong desire at SFU to promote university-wide academic programming and simplify establishment of innovative, highly interdisciplinary learning environments;
- Discomfort with establishing any overly cumbersome or grandiose new academic structures;
- The principle that any new structure should enhance and not detract from department and faculty functions, through collaborative models supported primarily by secondments, teaching buy-outs, joint appointments, and other shifts of teaching and programming responsibilities, rather than new hirings;
- The need to respond proactively to changing student demographics. In particular, to ensure SFU's programs and services are attractive to, and acknowledge the needs of, lifelong learners;
- Consistency with the learning objectives being developed through SFU's upcoming three-year academic plan that will require a wide range of policy and curricular changes, of which colleges are one of many initiatives;
- Recognition that well-conceived colleges could enhance student experiences at SFU.

## PROPOSED SFU COLLEGE STRUCTURE AND POLICIES

### Definition

***A Simon Fraser University college is an academic unit that fosters wide collaboration around an identified learning approach and/or theme among faculty members, staff, students, and/or the external community across disciplinary boundaries that are not addressed by current faculty structures.***

There was considerable committee discussion around the name "college." In the end, we suggest retaining that title, as our proposal is most similar to widely accepted "college" terminology as used at other universities in Canada and internationally. Also, UBC has established a precedent for using the term "college" within a BC university.

Nevertheless, the term "college" has other meanings in the British Columbia post-secondary system. An alternative nomenclature would reallocate the SFU titles of "Centre" and "Institute," so that our proposal becomes the university definition of "Centre," and the term "Institute" be used for the current structures housed under both "Centre" and "Institute" titles.

### Characteristics/Criteria for Colleges

***Colleges at SFU are unique in being learning (process) and/or strongly theme (content) based, generally combining innovative learning approaches with defined themes, and with content that crosses faculty and disciplinary boundaries.***

A new college structure at SFU should provide a learning environment unique and not already represented within departments and faculties. Colleges should provide cohesive academic programming that represents more than simply joint programs between two or three departments, an option already available at SFU. In addition, we hope that colleges will provide novel interactions that may generate opportunities for vibrant research outside of the colleges.

The concept we propose here, focused on theme rather than discipline, presented through an innovative learning approach, with a breadth that goes beyond current disciplinary boundaries as defined by faculties, provides a novel combination of traits that could become an exciting signature element of SFU's institutional brand, and a centrepiece for our upcoming academic plan.

***Colleges may serve as vehicles to incubate new programs, but may grow to permanent components of the university if successful. A college/program may migrate into department status within faculties, remain within the college structure, or be dissolved if appropriate.***

Any adjustments to the structure of a college or program, whether via migration or dissolution, will need to carefully consider the affect on students, staff and faculty members, and accommodations built in to any program changes.

***Colleges will have a 10-year mandate prior to review, with programs within a college undergoing advisory reviews after five years. A program review would recommend that a program:***

- 1) continue;***
- 2) revise its structure and function;***
- 3) move as a department or program to a faculty; or***
- 4) be terminated.***

One rationale for a college structure is to provide an organizational element with greater flexibility and more opportunity for innovation and risk-taking than in more highly defined units. But along with risk comes a higher possibility that a college's programs might need revision, movement into a different structure, or termination. We spent some time wrestling with the issue of what to do with the college programs that did not succeed, and those that were successful. Our suggestions above provide a clear set of options for college programs, with the expectation of rigorous and scheduled review leading to decisions about whether and where programs might continue.

***Colleges may serve as one of many mechanisms for moving university priorities forward.***

Meetings of various university task forces, focus groups, and committees in recent years have consistently heard complaints concerning how administratively difficult it can be to initiate a new program at SFU. The time lag between idea and implementation can discourage and stifle intriguing innovations. Our proposed college structure provides the opportunity to incubate new programs in which new university priorities and directions can quickly establish a beachhead, and be tested before full implementation.

***Colleges will provide students and faculty members with venues to engage in different types of learning processes than are available in their standard home faculties.***

The intent of college programs is to provide unique pedagogical experiences for students, with increased opportunities to engage with the wider community on a for-credit basis, and to provide for a greater array of programs that will foster transference of knowledge between students, instructors and the community. With a proactive renewal of themes, programs will continue to remain topical, current, and relevant, and will offer a range of multidisciplinary perspectives. Faculty members will have opportunities to develop new teaching models that can be brought back to and shared with their home departments and faculties, and broaden their teaching, research, and service opportunities without having to change their permanent appointments.

***College faculty members will be appointed primarily from existing departments/faculties, through long-term secondments (generally two- to five-year terms), teaching buy-outs, and other shifts of teaching and programming responsibilities.***

We considered carefully whether colleges should be populated with faculty members and staff through new appointments, or by reallocating existing resources. A primary motivation for a college structure is to allow students, faculty members, and the community to interact in novel combinations not well covered by existing structures, and so the idea of reallocation rather than new appointments seemed obvious and beneficial.



If so, SFU would need to develop clearer policies and appropriate budgets to encourage secondments and buy-outs. One innovative policy change that would encourage greater faculty member mobility might include reducing required coursework for majors and minors, and thereby demands on faculty member teaching loads within departments, a recommendation that is already being pursued actively through other committees and the upcoming academic plan. Another policy change might involve having FTEs follow a faculty member; for example, a physics professor teaching a college course could have all the FTEs applied to Physics Department.

We also need to examine policies around tenure, promotion, and salary review for faculty members whose primary responsibilities may have shifted from their departments into a college for an extended period of time. College faculty members would still be evaluated by their home departments, but broader guidelines defining performance would encourage faculty members to participate in colleges. Perhaps additional input from experts in the college themes and learning approaches might be appropriate to allow TPCs to better evaluate unconventional activities.

Some concern was expressed within the committee that continuity in colleges might be compromised if there were no dedicated tenure-track faculty members appointed uniquely to colleges, outside of any department or faculty. Such an appointment does not exist at SFU now, and we concluded that establishing a college-only appointment in the current limited hiring environment would stimulate considerable resistance, impeding or even preventing a college structure from being approved. We suggest that this issue be revisited after the first five-year program advisory evaluations have been completed. For now, a few long-term secondments would provide reasonable continuity in college programs.

We use the term "primarily" in the above recommendation to allow for occasional hiring of limited-term assistant professors, and program or executive directors in colleges, budget permitting.

***New colleges and/or college programs will be proposed through the Office of the Vice-President, Academic to Senate through SCUP or SGSC, and if approved will report directly to the VP Academic or designate (e.g. the Associate VP Academic). Colleges comprising solely graduate programming will report through the Dean of Graduate Studies to the VP Academic, and responsibility for all graduate programming regardless of whether it is housed in a faculty or college will be regulated by SGSC.***

***There may be one or a few colleges at SFU, and colleges may include one program or a number of related programs.***

***We recommend that colleges be headed by a Principal, who will be included where appropriate at Chair and/or Deans meetings. There may be one Principal for each college, or one Principal for all colleges, depending on the extent, focus and size of colleges. The Dean of Graduate Studies will serve as the Principal for graduate colleges.***

Since colleges are university-level academic units rather than at a department or faculty level, the VP Academic's office seemed the most appropriate place for college proposals to be developed, proposed to Senate, and to report if approved.

We considered whether to create one SFU college with many programs, or a number of colleges. One concern was that a single college might develop with too many unrelated programs, creating a lack of cohesion. We recognized that different colleges with diverse functions might develop, some with a number of related programs and others with just a single focus. Rather than overly anticipate what might be proposed in the future, we decided to recommend flexibility in the number and style of colleges. We anticipate that there will only be a few colleges at any one time, although we decided not to suggest any particular number as optimal.

We also recognize that colleges would need a strong voice around the Deans' tables once a number of colleges have been established, but the head of colleges would not have the same functions as a Dean. Thus, we recommend that a new category of **Principal** be established, who will direct the first college or colleges, report to the VP Academic or designate, and when appropriate attend high-level administrative meetings. Once colleges reach sufficient scale, it would be useful for the Principal to join the Deans' Council. Colleges will grow slowly, and while it might be useful to revisit the Principal position after the first reviews, the committee felt this structure would function well for the foreseeable future. Further definition of the Principal's roles and responsibilities should accompany the first college proposal submitted to Senate.

***Colleges may offer undergraduate and/or graduate credit or non-credit courses, grouped as a set of courses around related themes and/or learning styles, or as certificates or diplomas. Faculties and departments will retain responsibility for allocating credits towards electives, minors, and degrees.***

Two elements underlie our position on curriculum and credit. First, we felt that departments and faculties should retain decision-making authority on whether coursework could be applied towards minors or majors, although SFU college courses should be universally acceptable as electives. This system has worked well for the 15-credit Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue; departments have been granting anywhere from zero to 15 credits towards students' majors/minors, depending on how appropriate the coursework has been to their disciplines, but have always been willing to allow elective credits.

The second element was our reluctance to have colleges offer degrees, at least during the formative years. SFU has well-defined certificate and diploma designations that would function well to organize college offerings, and theme-related suites of courses such as the Semester in Dialogue would allow additional flexibility.

***Colleges will require: faculty member time through long-term secondments (generally two- to five-year terms), teaching buy-outs, and other shifts of teaching responsibility; limited-term faculty appointments; program and/or executive directors; administrative/clerical resources; space; programming funding; and other costs typically associated with academic programs. College budgets should be included as stable, recurring budget lines in the university's budget, similar to departments and faculties.***

Colleges will not succeed at SFU unless they are viewed as central to the university's mission and don't suffer from insufficient resource allocation, a problem that has plagued interdisciplinary programs at SFU. Colleges will not require huge budgets, and there will not

be many colleges, but resources will not be zero, either. The resource issue is a simple one: colleges should not be approved unless sufficient, and stable, resources are available to conduct quality programs.

Departments and faculties will need to view colleges as being compatible with, and enhancing, their academic missions, not as competing for students or degrees. Thus, themes in college coursework should be attractive for other academic units, as their collaboration and interest in seconding faculty members will be a key element in the success of colleges.

### **Examples of Potential Colleges at SFU**

The ACC's mandate was to consider a generic structure for colleges at SFU rather than any particular college submission. Still, we repeatedly found ourselves testing structural ideas against some of the specific college concepts that have been raised at SFU in recent years, and ideas that emerged during committee discussions. We thought it would be useful to provide examples of possible colleges at SFU, in addition to the examples we provided from other institutions. The list below is not exhaustive, nor does it suggest committee support, but rather is a sample of proposals we might expect:

**College of Experiential and Lifelong Learning:** This college would develop, incubate, nourish and house credit but not degree-granting programming of an interdisciplinary, cross-faculty character; develop a portal to showcase experiential programming and learning opportunities across the university; serve as a reference, resource, and support centre for members of the university community seeking to develop new experiential programming; and coordinate experiential credit administration and adjudication processes where appropriate. Most experiential learning courses, however, would be offered through departments and faculties, through existing courses whose curriculum is modified towards "experiential," or new courses with departmental designations. This type of college would also allow the university to better respond to changing student demographics by focusing on the particular needs of adult learners. It would coordinate and develop SFU's educational provision to adult and other non-traditional and under-represented learners, encourage and support pedagogical and curricular innovations for these groups, and promote and extend the university's community outreach and engagement activities.

Current university programs that might be a part of a College of Experiential and Lifelong Learning include the Centre for Dialogue (including the Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue), co-op, work study, service learning, field schools, exchange programs, research semesters, and practica. For more detail, see the [Phase 2 Faculty Structure Task Force final report](#).

**Dialogue Program:** The Centre for Dialogue (<http://www.sfu.ca/dialogue/study+practice/index.html>) has needed an administrative home since it was founded in 2002, and a Dialogue Program within a College of Experiential and Lifelong Learning would resolve that long-standing concern. The Dialogue Program would offer the Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue (<http://www.sfu.ca/dialogue/undergrad/>) which is a suite of undergraduate courses that explore a different topic of civic importance each semester, using dialogue to focus student attention on public issues and effect positive change through interdisciplinary actions in the community. The program also would convene dialogue events on important public issues, offer a graduate Certificate or Diploma in Dialogue, present non-credit public courses,

provide leadership training, house Fellows from the community conducting research and outreach programs on significant and contentious public issues, and offer facilitation services for university and community groups, among other activities.

College of Graduate Studies: This college might offer a small number of programs focused on graduate education that cannot be accommodated by joint degrees. These programs may have action-oriented research developed in partnership with communities, business, industry and the public sector as a theme. They could also share pedagogy in that the programs could be delivered through a combination of short, on-campus residencies and on-line learning in a cohort model.

Burnaby Mountain College (<http://www.sfu.ca/college/>) A residential or virtual college on the Burnaby campus has been proposed for Canadian and international graduate students, faculty members and visiting scholars. It would serve as a place for dialogue and collegial activities that address international, regional, and local interests, as a centre for multi-disciplinary interaction at the university, as an intellectual and social home for SFU's doctoral students, and as a university-oriented institution with a special welcome for nearby residents of UniverCity.

#### SUMMARY

We have attempted to balance concerns about new administrative structures and budget constraints with the idea that colleges could add appreciably to SFU's learning culture, enhancing the experiences of students, faculty members and staff, and providing increased opportunities for SFU to grow its fine tradition of community engagement. Our intention was not to detract from or diminish the role of departments and faculties, but to probe whether a new university-level college structure would augment the overall mission of SFU while being compatible with current structures.

If implemented, colleges should have substantial positive impact on student experiences at SFU, by providing unique learning environments, the opportunity for broad exposure to interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches, innovate and diverse skills useful for solving today's complex problems, exposure to community perspectives that will support wise career choices, and a sense of civic responsibility that emerges from a strong university-community interaction.

The recommendations above provide a college structure that would allow flexibility and nimbleness while providing administrative oversight, and would encourage colleges to become a high-impact and signature component of learning at SFU.