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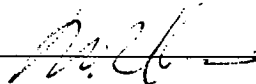
FACILITIES SCANNING/SENATE ARCHIVE 001

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OFFICE OF THE  
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC AND ASSOCIATE PROVOST

MEMO

|           |  |   |
|-----------|--|---|
| ATTENTION | Senate   |   |
| FROM      | Bill Krane, Chair<br>Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies   |  |
| RE        | Student Success Program – Request for Amendment to the Undergraduate Academic and Standing Continuance Policy (SCUS 09-09) |   |
| DATE      | February 12, 2009  |   |

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting of February 5, 2009, gives rise to the following recommendation:

**Motion:**

“that Senate approve changes to the Undergraduate Academic and Standing Continuance calendar entry that include options for Required to Withdraw students to enter the Student Success Program.”

Calendar text to be inserted:

**Options for Required to Withdraw Students**

- Apply for entry to the Student Success Program and an extension to the academic probation period (refer to 'Extended Academic Probation for First Time RTW Students' section below)
- Apply for readmission based on subsequent completion of transferable courses from another institution (refer to 'Readmission after Required to Withdraw' section below)

Note: Students who choose to attend another institution subsequent to being Required to Withdraw for purposes of applying for readmission are not eligible for entry to the Student Success Program

Extended Academic Probation for First Time RTW Students

A student who is required to withdraw for the first time may be eligible for entry to the Student Success Program, a two-term academic success program focusing on academic and learning skill development with concurrent enrollment in credit courses. Students cannot exceed nine units (unless special permission is received in advance from the Program), and may not receive a 'letter of permission' to attend another post-secondary institution while in the Program. Entry requirements are set out by the Program and details are available through the Student Success Program Office. Acceptance and participation in the Program provides students an extended academic probation period. A student can only attempt the Program once in their academic

career; normally, withdrawal and/or unsuccessful completion of the Program constitutes one attempt.

Evaluation and Continuance Requirements during Extended Academic Probation

To participate and continue in the Program, students are required to fulfill all required components of the Program in each of the two terms. Evaluation of a student's progress occurs throughout the duration of the Program and at the end of each term. Students deemed not to be meeting the requirements at any time during the Program, academic and/or non-academic, will be withdrawn from the Program, dropped from enrolled courses, and will be Required to Withdraw from the University.

Outcomes for a Student on Extended Academic Probation

End of Term One

- the SGPA and the CGPA are each 2.00 or higher, the student shall be in good academic standing
- the SGPA is 2.00 or higher, but the CGPA is less than 2.00, the student shall continue on academic probation
- the SGPA is less than 2.00, but the CGPA is 2.00 or higher, the student shall continue on academic probation. (This could occur if a student repeats a course.)
- both the SGPA and the CGPA are less than 2.00, the student shall be required to withdraw (RTW) from the university unless student has satisfactory participation in the Program.

End of Term Two

Evaluation of academic standing reverts to the academic standing and continuance policy that applies to students not on extended academic probation.



MEMO

Student Services  
MBC 3000  
8888 University Drive  
Burnaby, BC V5A1S6  
Canada

ATTENTION SCUS

FROM Rummana Khan Hemani  
Director, Academic Advising and Student Success

RE Student Success Program - Request for Amendment to the  
Undergraduate Academic Standing & Continuance Policy

DATE January 23, 2009

At its meeting in May 2008, SCUS approved a two year extension of exemptions to the Undergraduate Academic Standing & Continuance Policy for International and Faculty of Applied Sciences students who enrolled in the pilot Student Success Program after being 'Required to Withdraw' from the University (see Appendix A.1, A.2). In addition, they approved expansion of the target group to include Faculty of Science students. Essentially, these exemptions allowed eligible students in these target groups to 'Continue on Academic Probation' at the University, if they participated in the RTW Student Success Program (refer to Appendix B for program overview).

Based on the results of the first two cohorts (157 students) that completed the pilot program, a program evaluation was undertaken. Both the academic outcomes (see Appendix C) and the findings of the program evaluation (see Appendix D) show that the RTW Student Success Program has a positive impact on student academic success. In fact, approximately 70% of students who have completed the program so far have been successful in meeting the academic continuance requirements. More importantly almost 100% of these students have returned to enroll in subsequent terms.

From its inception there has been strong support for inclusion of students from all faculties in this major retention initiative. However, this was conditional upon, first, a program evaluation report supporting a full scale roll out was required, and, second, developing a business model that was fiscally viable. As indicated above, the program evaluation report and pilot program results provide strong evidence of the effectiveness of the program. In addition, the proposed budget model will facilitate a full scale roll out at significantly reduced cost to the University (see Appendix E). Given the growing need for this program in the remaining faculties, we are recommending that undergraduate students in all faculties be eligible to apply for the Program. As such, a permanent amendment to the undergraduate Academic Standing & Continuance policy, which follows on the next page, is proposed for SCUS approval with a recommended implementation term of Summer 2009.

In addition to the RTW Student Success Program, a similar program, 'Back on Track' has been developed and delivered as a pilot in the Fall 2008 term to students 'On Academic Probation' in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (refer to Appendix B for program overview). This program will be continued and offered to students in all faculties starting May 2009. We hope this type of earlier intervention will diminish the number of students in the 'Required to Withdraw' category. This group of students has been rapidly increasing in the past two years, both in absolute numbers and proportion of enrolled students; SFU's RTW rate reported in the CUSC 2008 survey is twice as high as our comparator institutions. To provide a greater incentive for participation in this non-mandatory program, students who complete 'Back on Track' but are still 'Required to Withdraw' will have the option of applying directly to the RTW Student Success Program, and applying the program fee towards the overall cost. Details on the fee structure of the Student Success Programs are provided in Appendix E.

- c. Nello Angerilli, Associate VP, Students and International
- Nancy Johnston, Senior Director, Student Learning and Retention
- Kate Ross, Registrar & Senior Director, Student Enrollment
- Mehran Kiai, Director, Enrollment Services
- Jenny Fiorini, Acting Director, Records & Registration

## **UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC STANDING & CONTINUANCE POLICY**

### **Standing Required for Continuance**

Every student is expected to maintain an acceptable standard of scholarship. Specifically, a student must maintain a minimum CGPA of 2.00. A student who does not do so shall be considered to be performing unsatisfactorily in his/her studies.

- upon first admission to Simon Fraser University, a student shall be placed in good academic standing
- academic performance shall be evaluated on Simon Fraser University courses that have assigned grades ('assigned grade' include grades A+ through to D, F, and N, but exclude P, W, CR, AE, CC, DE, GN, FX, IP and AU)

### **Academic Alert**

A student whose semester grade point average (SGPA) falls below 2.00, but who is not placed on any of the academic standings given below, shall receive an 'academic alert' notification and shall be advised to seek guidance at Academic Advising and Student Success in Student Services.

### Academic Probation

A student who has a CGPA of less than 2.00 shall be placed on academic probation (OAP). A student on academic probation may not register in a course overload. A student on OAP standing may not receive a 'letter or permission' to attend another university or college.

### Required to Withdraw

A student may be required to withdraw (RTW) after one or more semesters on academic probation (see 'outcomes for a student on academic probation' below). A student on RTW standing may not receive a 'letter or permission' to attend another university or college.

### Extended Withdrawal

A student may be placed on extended withdrawal (EW) after she/he is required to withdraw (RTW), is readmitted and subsequently is on academic probation for one or more semesters (see Outcomes for a Student on Academic Probation below). A student on EW standing may not receive a 'letter of permission' to attend another university or college.

### Outcomes for a Student on Academic Probation

A student on academic probation shall be evaluated at the end of each semester. If at the end of the semester

- the SGPA and the CGPA are each 2.00 or higher, the student shall be in good academic standing
- the SGPA is 2.00 or higher, but the CGPA is less than 2.00, the student shall continue on academic probation
- the SGPA is less than 2.00, but the CGPA is 2.00 or higher, the student shall continue on academic probation. (This could occur if a student repeats a course.)
- both the SGPA and the CGPA are less than 2.00, the student shall be required to withdraw (RTW) from the university or, if previously required to withdraw (RTW), shall be placed on extended withdrawal (EW)

## **AMENDMENT**

### **Options for Required to Withdraw Students**

- Apply for entry to the Student Success Program and an extension to the academic probation period (refer to 'Extended Academic Probation for First Time RTW Students' section below)
- Apply for readmission based on subsequent completion of transferable courses from another institution (refer to 'Readmission after Required to Withdraw' section below)

Note: Students who choose to attend another institution subsequent to being Required to Withdraw for purposes of applying for readmission are not eligible for entry to the Student Success Program

### Extended Academic Probation for First Time RTW Students

A student who is required to withdraw for the first time may be eligible for entry to the Student Success Program, a two-term academic success program focusing on academic and learning skill development with concurrent enrollment in credit courses. Students cannot exceed nine units (unless special permission is received in advance from the Program), and may not receive a 'letter of permission' to attend another post-secondary institution while in the Program. Entry requirements are set out by the Program and details are available through the Student Success Program Office. Acceptance and participation in the Program provides students an extended academic probation period. A student can only attempt the Program once in their academic career; normally, withdrawal and/or unsuccessful completion of the Program constitutes one attempt.

### Evaluation and Continuance Requirements during Extended Academic Probation

To participate and continue in the Program, students are required to fulfill all required components of the Program in each of the two terms. Evaluation of a student's progress occurs throughout the duration of the Program and at the end of each term. Students deemed not to be meeting the requirements at any time during the Program, academic and/or non-academic, will be withdrawn from the Program, dropped from enrolled courses, and will be Required to Withdraw from the University.

### Outcomes for a Student on Extended Academic Probation

#### End of Term One

- the SGPA and the CGPA are each 2.00 or higher, the student shall be in good academic standing
- the SGPA is 2.00 or higher, but the CGPA is less than 2.00, the student shall continue on academic probation
- the SGPA is less than 2.00, but the CGPA is 2.00 or higher, the student shall continue on academic probation. (This could occur if a student repeats a course.)
- both the SGPA and the CGPA are less than 2.00, the student shall be required to withdraw (RTW) from the university unless student has satisfactory participation in the Program.

#### End of Term Two

Evaluation of academic standing reverts to the academic standing and continuance policy that applies to students not on extended academic probation.

### **Readmission of Involuntarily Withdrawn Students**

A former student who is involuntarily withdrawn from the University (required to withdraw or placed on extended withdrawal) may apply for readmission based on performance achieved in external academic course work completed after she/he last registered at Simon Fraser University (see below for details).

#### ***Readmission after Required to Withdraw***

A former student who is required to withdraw (RTW) shall be eligible for readmission if she/he completes externally further transferable academic work according to the following schedule (any of the following five options):

- 12-17 credit hours with a minimum 3.50 GPA
- 18-23 credit hours with a minimum 3.00 GPA
- 24-29 credit hours with a minimum 2.75 GPA or with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below) whichever is higher
- 30 or more credit hours with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below)
- a completed 2 year technical diploma with a 70% minimum average and at least 12 credit hours of transferable course work with a minimum 2.75 GPA. (The transferable work may be within the diploma program or supplementary to it.)

#### ***Readmission of Students on Extended Withdrawal***

A former student on extended withdrawal (EW) shall be eligible for readmission if she/he completes further transferable academic work according to the following schedule (any of the following five options):

- 24-35 credit hours with a minimum 3.50 GPA
- 36-47 credit hours with a minimum 3.00 GPA

- 48-59 credit hours with a minimum 2.75 GPA or with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below), whichever is higher
- 60 or more credit hours with the acceptance GPA
- a completed two year technical diploma with a 70% minimum average and at least 24 credit hours of transferable course work with a minimum 2.75 GPA. (The transferable work may be within the diploma program or supplementary to it.)

***Acceptance GPA***

The acceptance GPA refers to the minimum admission GPA in effect for that semester for British Columbia college transfer students, according to enrolment limitation measures. The acceptance GPA may vary.

MEMO

Student Services  
MBC 3000  
8888 University Drive  
Burnaby, BC V5A1S6  
Canada

ATTENTION SCUS

FROM Rummana Khan Hemani  
Director, Academic Advising and Student Success

RE Student Success Program - Special Exemptions from Undergraduate  
Academic Standing & Continuance Policy

DATE May 30, 2007

Further to my memo of April 25, 2007, I am providing clarification and additional detail regarding the "Student Success" program and proposed changes to the Academic Standing and Continuance policy. The attached document seeks to address concerns and questions raised by SCUS at its meeting on May 1, 2007. Also, previously three amendments to the Academic Standing and Continuance policy had been proposed. These are now put forth as a request for 'exemptions' to the current policy. The 'exemptions' that will be required for the students who are selected and enroll in the pilot program are as follows:

1. *Current:* An undergraduate student's academic standing is evaluated upon completion of 9 credit hours. If a student's CGPA is below 2.00, they are placed on Academic Probation (OAP). Upon completion of a subsequent semester, regardless of the number of credits completed, a student is RTW if both their SGPA (semester grade point average) and CGPA (cumulative grade point average) are below 2.00. If their SGPA is  $\geq 2.00$  and CGPA is  $\leq 2.00$ , then the student's standing is Continued on Academic Probation (CAP).

*Proposed:* At the end of the first enrolled semester subsequent to being placed on Academic Probation, international and Faculty of Applied Sciences students with both a SGPA and CGPA below 2.00, rather than being RTW, will be invited to enroll in the "Student Success" program. If they choose this option, then their academic standing will be changed to CAP. Students who do not take up the program will remain RTW, and will be required to meet the normal readmission requirements.

2. *Current:* A student whose academic standing is CAP will be RTW if both their SGPA and CGPA are below 2.00 in a subsequent semester. If their SGPA is  $\geq 2.00$  and CGPA is  $\leq 2.00$ , then the student's standing remains CAP.

*Proposed:* At the end of Semester One of the "Student Success" program, if both the SGPA and CGPA are below 2.00, a student will only be RTW if they have not completed the prescribed non-credit modules. This is the only exception to the current evaluation policy for students enrolled in the program. At the end of Semester Two, the current evaluation policy will apply to all students.

3. *Current:* A student whose academic standing is OAP or CAP will not be permitted to enroll in a course overload.

*Proposed:* A student enrolled in the "Student Success" program will not be permitted to exceed 9 credit hours of regular course enrollment, with the exception of students whose CGPA  $\geq 2.00$  at the end of Semester One. These students will be in Good Academic Standing.

If approved, the above policy exemptions, in conjunction with the "Student Success" program, should be reviewed at the end of the Spring 2008 semester. At that point the program will have been in place for two semesters, which should provide an adequate review period. Using both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods, the program's affect on student success will be measured, and a recommendation will be brought forward regarding the program's future.



- c. Nello Angerilli, Associate VP, Students and International  
Nancy Johnston, Senior Director, Student Learning and Retention  
Kate Ross, Registrar & Senior Director, Student Enrollment  
Richard MacLeod, Director (Acting), Records & Registration

## UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC STANDING & CONTINUANCE POLICY

### Standing Required for Continuance

Every student is expected to maintain an acceptable standard of scholarship. Specifically, a student must maintain a minimum CGPA of 2.00. A student who does not do so shall be considered to be performing unsatisfactorily in his/her studies.

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### ***Readmission after Required to Withdraw***

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### ***Acceptance GPA***

The acceptance GPA refers to the minimum admission GPA in effect for that semester for British Columbia college transfer students, according to enrolment limitation measures. The acceptance GPA may vary.

## Student Success Program

### Additional information requested by SCUS:

1. What is the cost to students for enrolling in the program?

The cost for the two-semester program will be \$500 (total for two semesters), and will be the same for both international and domestic students. The full amount will be charged at the beginning of the first semester. Students who are eligible to continue at the University, i.e. not Required to Withdraw (RTW), after completion of the second semester will receive a \$250 tuition credit towards their subsequent semester's tuition fees. In addition, students can enroll in up to 9 credit hours of regular courses. Normal tuition and fees will apply to credit courses, with international students admitted Fall 2003 and onwards paying the differential rate.

2. What contextual changes are driving this program?

In response to the growing number of students with poor academic standing, and the institutional objective to improve student retention, we must develop proactive strategies that support student success and retention. This type of program has been proven to improve retention rates amongst students who are struggling academically. Data shows that our RTW and OAP rates have been generally increasing since 2000. Given the declining admission averages of our new students, we can anticipate this trend to continue. Therefore, it will become increasingly important for us to support students who are facing academic difficulties. We know that improved retention rates results in improved reputation, which, over the long term, leads to greater success in recruiting high quality students. We can consider this program an investment in our students that should have long lasting returns.

3. Why is this program being targeted to RTW students?

The pilot program is targeted to RTW students; however, subsequent phases of the program would be expanded to include OAP students. Given the challenges the University is facing in meeting new student targets, we are more reliant on continuing or returning students. As a 'stop-gap' strategy, an immediate reduction in student attrition can be realized by reducing the number of students who are RTW. We know that significant numbers of these students are not returning to the University for various reasons that merit further investigation. It would certainly be a desirable long term strategy to implement this program for students on academic probation, or even earlier, and actually, reduce the number of students who reach 'academic crisis'.

4. Why is this program being targeted to International students?

The primary reasons for targeting international students:

- International students are overrepresented in the group of RTW students (see tables 1 and 2)
- International student retention is an area of significant concern, particularly as it becomes increasingly difficult to recruit new international students to meet enrollment targets
- Data shows that, after being RTW, International students return to study at the University at significantly lower rates than domestic students (see table 3)
- During the discussions regarding partnering with IBT, in response to concerns raised by students, the University promised to enhance activities for international student retention

Table 1 shows the proportion of international students versus domestic students, admitted in a given year, who became RTW.

Table 1: Students Required to Withdraw within 2 Years of Admission (Admit Year=2004/2005)

|                            | # Admitted | # RTW | % RTW |
|----------------------------|------------|-------|-------|
| <b>Overall</b>             | 6617       | 730   | 11.0  |
| <b>Domestic</b>            | 5917       | 623   | 10.5  |
| <b>International</b>       | 700        | 107   | 15.3  |
| <b>BC College Transfer</b> | 2620       | 237   | 9.0   |
| <b>BC High School</b>      | 2526       | 394   | 15.6  |

Table 2 (a) shows the percentage of registered international students who were RTW over a 10 year period and Table 2 (b) shows the percentage of registered domestic students who were RTW for the same period.

Table 2(a)

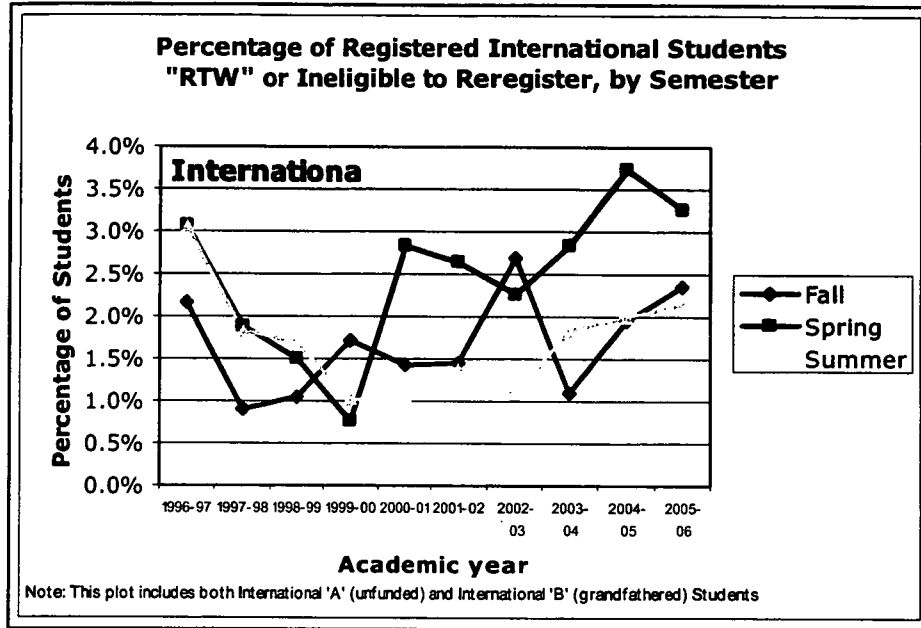


Table 2(b)

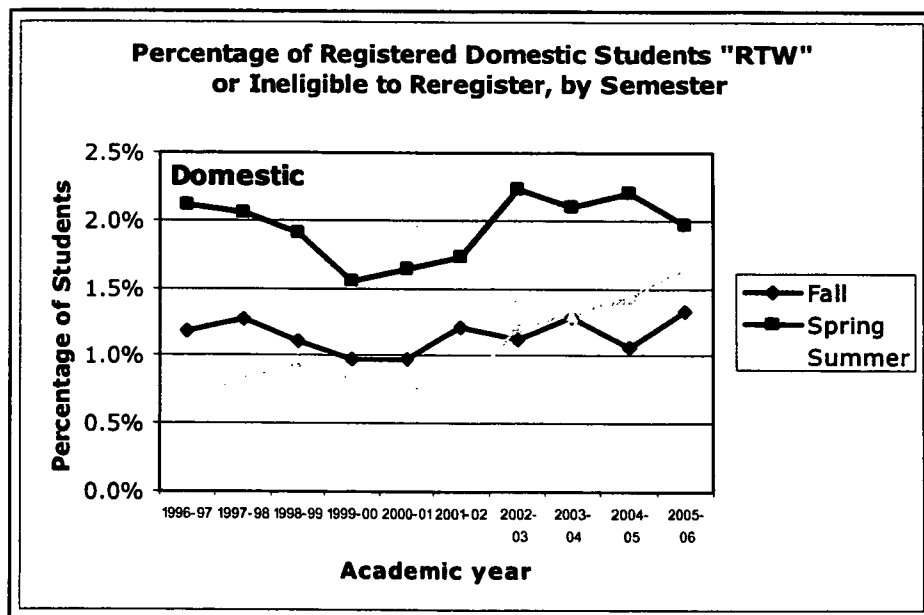


Table 3 shows the proportion of domestic students versus international students who returned to the University after being RTW.

Table 3: RTW Students Outcomes

RTW Undergraduate Students Admitted Fall 1996 to Summer 2006

|               | #RTW |      |       | %RTW |      |         |
|---------------|------|------|-------|------|------|---------|
|               | Dom  | Intl | Total | Dom  | Intl | Overall |
| Returning     | 1087 | 28   | 1115  | 22.9 | 11.8 | 22.4    |
| Not Returning | 3658 | 210  | 3868  | 77.1 | 88.2 | 77.6    |

5. What is the program budget?

### Student Success Program Budget 2007/2008

**Costs**

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Module development                  | \$20,000         |
| 1.0 FTE Program Coordinator         | \$81,661         |
| 1.0 FTE Academic Advisor            | \$65,524         |
| On-line assessment tools            | \$3,091          |
| 1.5 FTE Learning Skills Coordinator | \$122,492        |
| Material & Supplies                 | \$4,000.00       |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>\$296,768</b> |

We will have to factor in resources required at the faculty level for additional advising

**Revenue**

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Program Fee for 250 Students @ \$250/ea | \$63,750         |
| Applied Science                         | \$100,000        |
| <b>Total</b>                            | <b>\$163,750</b> |

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Funding request from VPA</b> | <b>\$133,018</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------|

**Incremental Tuition & Fees for  
250 Students**

|                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Domestic Students (125)      | \$372,798          |
| International Students (125) | \$1,122,948        |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>\$1,495,745</b> |

6. What are the resource implications for the Faculties?

The pilot program is being developed for students in the Faculty of Applied Sciences and International students. All students entering the Student Success program will be assigned an academic advisor in Student Services. Where a student has a declared major, their assigned academic advisor will consult with their department or school advisor to develop an appropriate course plan for the student. This will typically average one hour per student. The large majority of International students who are RTW do not have a declared major, and therefore, they will primarily seek academic advising in Student Services. The following table shows the breakdown of International and Applied Sciences RTW students by program and declared major:

RTW International Students (excluding Applied Sciences)

Spring 2007 Term (1071 Actual)

| Prog         | Intl A    | Intl B   | Declared  | Undeclared |
|--------------|-----------|----------|-----------|------------|
| BA           | 28        | 1        | 2         | 27         |
| BSC          | 13        | 0        | 7         | 6          |
| BUS          | 5         | 0        | 5         | 0          |
| HLTH         | 1         | 0        | 1         | 0          |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>47</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>15</i> | <i>33</i>  |

\* non-degree seeking Arts

Summer 2007 Term (1074 Projected)

| Prog         | Intl A    | Intl B   | Declared | Undeclared |
|--------------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| BA           | 19        | 1        | 1        | 19         |
| BSC          | 5         | 0        | 3        | 2          |
| BUS          | 1         | 0        | 1        | 0          |
| HLTH         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0          |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>25</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>5</i> | <i>21</i>  |

Fall 2007 term (1077 Projected)

| Prog         | Intl A    | Intl B   | Declared | Undeclared |
|--------------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| BA           | 41        | 1        | 3        | 39         |
| BSC          | 3         | 0        | 2        | 1          |
| BUS          | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0          |
| HLTH         | 0         | 0        | 0        | 0          |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>44</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>5</i> | <i>40</i>  |

RTW Applied Sciences Students (Domestic and International)

Spring 2007 Term (1071 Actual)

| Prog         | Intl A    | Intl B   | Domestic  |
|--------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| BACH         | 1         | 0        | 22        |
| BGSAP        | 1         | 0        | 1         |
| CMNS         | 1         | 0        | 9         |
| CMPT         | 2         | 0        | 15        |
| ENSC         | 2         | 0        | 10        |
| IAT          | 2         | 0        | 1         |
| IATA         | 0         | 0        | 2         |
| KIN          | 0         | 0        | 9         |
| PCMPT        | 1         | 0        | 0         |
| <i>Total</i> | <i>10</i> | <i>0</i> | <i>73</i> |

Summer 2007 Term (1074 Projected)

| Prog         | Intl A   | Intl B   | Domestic  |
|--------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| BACH         | 2        | 0        | 8         |
| BGSAP        | 0        | 0        | 3         |
| CMNS         | 0        | 0        | 2         |
| CMPT         | 0        | 0        | 5         |
| ENSC         | 1        | 0        | 5         |
| IAT          | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| IATA         | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| KIN          | 0        | 0        | 2         |
| PCMNS        | 0        | 0        | 1         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>26</b> |

Fall 2007 Term (1077 Projected)

| Prog         | Intl A   | Intl B   | Domestic  |
|--------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| BACH         | 0        | 0        | 11        |
| BGSAP        | 0        | 0        | 1         |
| CMNS         | 1        | 0        | 2         |
| CMPT         | 2        | 0        | 2         |
| ENSC         | 3        | 0        | 7         |
| IAT          | 0        | 0        | 1         |
| IATA         | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| KIN          | 0        | 0        | 1         |
| PCMNS        | 0        | 0        | 0         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>0</b> | <b>25</b> |

7. What is the program curriculum?

- The program curriculum is being developed by a working group with staff and faculty from Student Learning & Retention, Student Learning Commons, Health and Counselling, Faculty of Applied Sciences, Mathematics and Statistics, and the FAL (Foundations of Academic Literacy) program
- Students will be allowed to take up to 9 credit hours per semester of regular courses, as prescribed by their academic advisor, in each of the two semesters
- Several individual academic advising consultations per semester
- A written agreement between the student and the program outlining expectations from each party
- Every student will receive an assessment of their study/learning skills and other academic skills, e.g. writing and numeracy; areas requiring strengthening and support will be identified
- Every student will develop a personal learning plan prescribing resources, workshops, and non-credit modules
- All students will be required to take a core study/learning skills module (non-credit); topics covered will include time management, motivation, exam anxiety, academic writing, library/research skills, etc.
- Where appropriate students will be directed to take FALX99 and/or FANX99
- Additional non-credit modules (two to four weeks) will be prescribed as required:
  - International student transition
  - English as an Additional Language modules for reading, writing, and oral skill development
  - Budgeting workshop offered by Financial Aid & Awards
  - Computer skills, e.g. MS Word, Excel, SPSS
  - On-line instructional modules for improving study/learning skills
  - Discipline specific modules will be developed by instructors/faculty
- Students will also be encouraged to participate in facilitated study groups led by peer educators and other peer led programs, such as the International Mentorship program
- Where appropriate students will be directed to Counselling Services, the Centre for Students with Disabilities, Student Learning Commons, etc.
- On-line non-credit module to keep students on track during semester two



8. Do the two semesters in the program need to be consecutive?

During the pilot the two semesters will need to be taken consecutively as the program is only being offered for a limited number of semesters. There will only be two intakes for the pilot year; one in September 2007 and second in January 2008. Students who are RTW in either the Spring or Summer 2007 semesters will be invited to participate in the program during Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 semesters. Students who are RTW in the Fall 2007 semester will be invited to participate in the program during the Spring and Summer 2008 semesters. The program will be reviewed both during the Spring and Summer 2008 semesters. A recommendation regarding the program's future will be presented in May 2008.

MEMO

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Canada

ATTENTION SCUS

FROM Rummana Khan Hemani  
Director, Academic Advising and Student Success

RE Changes to Undergraduate Academic Standing &amp; Continuance Policy

DATE April 25, 2007

The percentage of registered undergraduate students with poor academic standing has been generally increasing since about 2000. While the percentage is relatively small, the increasing student population translates into significant increases in the number of students in academic difficulty. A recent study conducted by Analytical Studies shows that only 22% of students who were "Required to Withdraw" over a ten year period, Fall 1996 to Summer 2006, returned to SFU.

Our current Academic Standing and Continuance policy evaluates students on the basis of grade point average alone. However, we know that there are a number of factors which can contribute to a student's academic achievement, particularly in their early semesters. We are in the early stages of developing a pilot initiative aimed at improving undergraduate student retention amongst under-performing students. This two-semester "Student Success" program provides a "safety net" for students by integrating intensive academic advising and non-credit modules designed to teach skills for academic success and development.

During the proposed pilot phase, September 2007 to August 2008, the program will be offered to International and Faculty of Applied Science students who would normally be "Required to Withdraw" from the University due to unsatisfactory academic performance. International students are targeted for two main reasons. First, they are overrepresented in the group of RTW students. Second, it is becoming increasingly difficult to meet our International student enrollment targets through new admits. FAS students were selected as they have seen a marked increase in RTW students since 2003. It is estimated that approximately 275 students within the two targeted student groups will be RTW during the Fall 2007, Spring 2008, and Summer 2008 semesters. To ensure successful implementation of the program, given its resource-intensive nature and integration across multiple administrative and academic units, the pilot should be small-scale. Ideally, if the pilot is successful, then consideration should be given to increasing its scope to other Faculties, as well as students on Academic Probation.

Attached is the program proposal, which has received strong support at the VP/Dean's table. Implementation of the "Student Success" program requires three amendments to the Academic Standing and Continuance policy (see attached):

1. *Current:* An undergraduate student's academic standing is evaluated upon completion of 9 credit hours. If a student's CGPA is below 2.00, they are placed on Academic Probation (OAP). Upon completion of a subsequent semester, regardless of the number of credits completed, a student is RTW if both their SGPA (semester grade point average) and CGPA (cumulative grade point average) are below 2.00. If their SGPA is  $\geq 2.00$  and CGPA is  $\leq 2.00$ , then the student's standing is Continued on Academic Probation (CAP).

*Proposed:* In the first enrolled semester subsequent to being placed on Academic Probation, if a student's SGPA and CGPA are both below 2.00, rather than being RTW, they will be invited to enroll in the "Student Success" program. If they choose this option, then their academic standing will be changed to CAP. Students who do not take up the program will remain RTW, and will be required to meet the normal readmission requirements (see attached).

2. *Current:* A student whose academic standing is CAP will be RTW if both their SGPA and CGPA are below 2.00 in a subsequent semester. If their SGPA is  $\geq 2.00$  and CGPA is  $\leq 2.00$ , then the student's standing remains CAP.

*Proposed:* At the end of Semester One of the "Student Success" program, if both the SGPA and CGPA are below 2.00, a student will only be RTW if they have not completed the prescribed non-credit modules. This is the only exception to the current evaluation policy for students enrolled in the program. At the end of Semester Two, the current evaluation policy will apply to all students.

3. *Current:* A student whose academic standing is OAP or CAP will not be permitted to enroll in a course overload.

*Proposed:* A student enrolled in the "Student Success" program will not be permitted to exceed 9 credit hours of regular course enrollment, with the exception of students whose CGPA  $\geq 2.00$  at the end of Semester One. These students will be in Good Academic Standing.

If approved, the above policy changes, in conjunction with the "Student Success" program, should be reviewed at the end of the Spring 2008 semester. At that point the program will have been in place for two semesters, which should provide an adequate review period. Using both quantitative and qualitative assessment methods, the program's affect on student success will be measured, and a recommendation will be brought forward regarding the program's future.

- c. Nello Angerilli, Associate VP, Students and International  
Nancy Johnston, Senior Director, Student Learning and Retention  
Kate Ross, Registrar & Senior Director, Student Enrollment

## UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC STANDING & CONTINUANCE POLICY

### Standing Required for Continuance

Every student is expected to maintain an acceptable standard of scholarship. Specifically, a student must maintain a minimum CGPA of 2.00. A student who does not do so shall be considered to be performing unsatisfactorily in his/her studies.

- upon first admission to Simon Fraser University, a student shall be placed in good academic standing
- academic performance shall be evaluated on Simon Fraser University courses that have assigned grades ('assigned grade' include grades A+ through to D, F, and N, but exclude P, W, CR, AE, CC, DE, GN, FX, IP and AU)

### Academic Alert

A student whose semester grade point average (SGPA) falls below 2.00, but who is not placed on any of the academic standings given below, shall receive an 'academic alert' notification and shall be advised to seek guidance at Academic Advising and Student Success in Student Services.

### Academic Probation

A student who has a CGPA of less than 2.00 shall be placed on academic probation (OAP). A student on academic probation may not register in a course overload. A student on OAP standing may not receive a 'letter or permission' to attend another university or college.

### Required to Withdraw

A student may be required to withdraw (RTW) after one or more semesters on academic probation (see 'outcomes for a student on academic probation' below). A student on RTW standing may not receive a 'letter or permission' to attend another university or college.

### Extended Withdrawal

A student may be placed on extended withdrawal (EW) after she/he is required to withdraw (RTW), is readmitted and subsequently is on academic probation for one or more semesters (see Outcomes for a Student on Academic Probation below). A student on EW standing may not receive a 'letter of permission' to attend another university or college.

### Outcomes for a Student on Academic Probation

A student on academic probation shall be evaluated at the end of each semester. If at the end of the semester

- the SGPA and the CGPA are each 2.00 or higher, the student shall be in good academic standing
- the SGPA is 2.00 or higher, but the CGPA is less than 2.00, the student shall continue on academic probation
- the SGPA is less than 2.00, but the CGPA is 2.00 or higher, the student shall continue on academic probation. (This could occur if a student repeats a course.)
- both the SGPA and the CGPA are less than 2.00, the student shall be required to withdraw (RTW) from the university or, if previously required to withdraw (RTW), shall be placed on extended withdrawal (EW)

## **Readmission of Involuntarily Withdrawn Students**

A former student who is involuntarily withdrawn from the University (required to withdraw or placed on extended withdrawal) may apply for readmission based on performance achieved in external academic course work completed after she/he last registered at Simon Fraser University (see below for details).

### ***Readmission after Required to Withdraw***

A former student who is required to withdraw (RTW) shall be eligible for readmission if she/he completes externally further transferable academic work according to the following schedule (any of the following five options):

- 12-17 credit hours with a minimum 3.50 GPA
- 18-23 credit hours with a minimum 3.00 GPA
- 24-29 credit hours with a minimum 2.75 GPA or with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below) whichever is higher
- 30 or more credit hours with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below)
- a completed 2 year technical diploma with a 70% minimum average and at least 12 credit hours of transferable course work with a minimum 2.75 GPA. (The transferable work may be within the diploma program or supplementary to it.)

### ***Readmission of Students on Extended Withdrawal***

A former student on extended withdrawal (EW) shall be eligible for readmission if she/he completes further transferable academic work according to the following schedule (any of the following five options):

- 24-35 credit hours with a minimum 3.50 GPA
- 36-47 credit hours with a minimum 3.00 GPA
- 48-59 credit hours with a minimum 2.75 GPA or with the acceptance GPA (see *Acceptance GPA* below), whichever is higher
- 60 or more credit hours with the acceptance GPA
- a completed two year technical diploma with a 70% minimum average and at least 24 credit hours of transferable course work with a minimum 2.75 GPA. (The transferable work may be within the diploma program or supplementary to it.)

### ***Acceptance GPA***

The acceptance GPA refers to the minimum admission GPA in effect for that semester for British Columbia college transfer students, according to enrolment limitation measures. The acceptance GPA may vary.

**Discussion Paper: 'Improving Retention using an Integrated, Collaborative Approach to Student Success'**

Under the current policy on Academic Standing and Continuance, an undergraduate student's academic standing is evaluated upon completion of 9 credit hours. If a student's CGPA is below 2.00, they are placed on Academic Probation. Upon completion of a subsequent semester, regardless of the number of credits completed, a student is Required to Withdraw if their SGPA (semester grade point average) and CGPA are both below 2.00. To be considered for readmission, students must complete transferable courses at another post-secondary institution; readmission is based on the number of transfer credits and CGPA achieved in transfer courses.

**Background Data**

Students on Academic Probation or Required to Withdraw within 2 Years of Admission (Admit Year=2004/2005)<sup>1</sup>

|                            | # Admitted | # OAP | % OAP | # RTW | % RTW |
|----------------------------|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| <b>Overall</b>             | 6617       | 1763  | 26.6  | 730   | 11.0  |
| <b>Domestic</b>            | 5917       | 1517  | 25.6  | 623   | 10.5  |
| <b>International</b>       | 700        | 246   | 35.1  | 107   | 15.3  |
| <b>BC College Transfer</b> | 2620       | 644   | 24.6  | 237   | 9.0   |
| <b>BC High School</b>      | 2526       | 850   | 33.7  | 394   | 15.6  |

|             | # Admitted |      | # OAP |      | % OAP |      | # RTW |      | % RTW |      |
|-------------|------------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|
|             | Dom        | Intl | Dom   | Intl | Dom   | Intl | Dom   | Intl | Dom   | Intl |
| <b>APSC</b> | 791        | 78   | 256   | 24   | 32.4  | 30.8 | 132   | 12   | 16.8  | 15.4 |
| <b>ARTS</b> | 3700       | 424  | 936   | 153  | 25.3  | 36.1 | 359   | 65   | 9.7   | 15.3 |
| <b>BUS</b>  | 319        | 99   | 46    | 22   | 14.4  | 22.2 | 16    | 10   | 5.0   | 10.1 |
| <b>SCI</b>  | 877        | 99   | 278   | 47   | 31.7  | 47.5 | 115   | 20   | 13.1  | 20.2 |

52% of BC High School students with admission averages between 3.00 and 3.25 were on Academic Probation within two years of admission, compared to 27.7% with admission averages between 3.25 and 3.50 and 8.7% between 3.50 and 3.75. Similarly, almost twice as many BC College Transfer students with admission averages below 2.50 were on Academic Probation compared to those with averages between 2.50 and 3.25.

Students with Unsatisfactory Academic Standing<sup>2</sup>

|                    | # OAP/CAP | % of Total Enrollment | #RTW/PW | % of Total Enrollment |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| <b>Spring 2006</b> | 960       | 4.9                   | 456     | 2.3                   |
| <b>Summer 2006</b> | 530       | 4.1                   | 232     | 1.8                   |
| <b>Fall 2006</b>   | 1548      | 7.5                   | 316     | 1.5                   |

The percentage of registered students that are RTW each term has been generally increasing since about 2000. While the percentage is small, the increasing SFU student population translates into even larger increases in the number of RTW students. It is important to note that the proportion of international students with unsatisfactory academic standing is higher than the proportion of domestic students enrolled in any given term. In terms of overall numbers, it is estimated that approximately 10 to 15% of students in poor academic standing are international students.

RTW Students Outcomes<sup>3</sup>

RTW Undergraduate Students Admitted Fall 1996 to Summer 2006

|                      | #RTW |      |       | %RTW |      |         | BOA  |       |       | BOA% |       |
|----------------------|------|------|-------|------|------|---------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|
|                      | Dom  | Intl | Total | Dom  | Intl | Overall | BC12 | BCCOL | Total | BC12 | BCCOL |
| <b>Returning</b>     | 1087 | 28   | 1115  | 22.9 | 11.8 | 22.4    | 784  | 259   | 1043  | 25.1 | 19.9  |
| <b>Not Returning</b> | 3658 | 210  | 3868  | 77.1 | 88.2 | 77.6    | 2335 | 1040  | 3375  | 74.9 | 80.1  |

<sup>1</sup> Based on Dynamic Student Retention Reporting Tool provided by Analytical Studies

<sup>2</sup> Sources: SIMS Query and Analytical Studies Enrollment Reports

<sup>3</sup> Based on Academic Standing longitudinal study provided by Analytical Studies

The main demographic differences between the groups that did and did not return are:

- Returners are less likely to be international students,
- returners are more likely to have been admitted to SFU from BC-12,
- and returners are more likely to have been in the Faculty of Science at RTW.

### **Problems with Current Practice**

The intent of the current policy is to ensure that students maintain a minimum academic standard during completion of their program. However, because it is based on a very narrow set of criteria with fixed outcomes, it does not give due consideration to individual student situations. As such, we continue to turn away bright, capable students. It must be recognized that there are many factors that contribute to a student's poor academic achievement, particularly in their early semesters. These include, but are not limited to, inadequate learning and study skills, difficulty balancing work and study, transition issues, inappropriate course load/course selection, etc. Although there are a number of resources in place at the University that provide academic and personal support to students, they are largely uncoordinated, and under-utilized by those students who need them most.

### **Recommendations**

In response to the growing number of students with poor academic standing, and the institutional objective to improve student retention, we must develop proactive strategies that support student success and retention. More importantly, these should be integrated and delivered collaboratively across the University. As part of this more progressive approach, we propose the following mechanism for assessing academic success based on broader criteria:

All students who would normally be Required to Withdraw under the current policy should be required to enroll in a one or two-semester 'Student Success' program which incorporates the following elements:

- a written agreement between the student, their academic advisor, and faculty designate outlining an action plan for the student based on a student self-assessment, an advisor assessment, and any other assessment deemed appropriate (e.g. learning specialist, counselor, etc.)
- mandatory one or two semester course designed to teach skills for academic success which incorporates learning and writing skills, peer mentoring, on-line resources, facilitated study groups, English language resources, library skills, etc.
- utilization of prescribed resources, e.g. Health and Counselling, Student Learning Commons, SFU International, Centre for Students with Disabilities, peer mentorship, etc.
- participation in prescribed workshops and seminars aimed at improving study skills, learning skills, time management, etc.
- regular consultations with an assigned academic advisor who will monitor and evaluate progress, approve course selection, make appropriate referrals, and update action plan, as necessary, in consultation with faculty designate
- where necessary, successful completion of preparatory courses, such as FAL and FAN
- restriction on course load to 9 credits per semester

Upon completion of each term in the 'Student Success' Program, a student's academic standing will be evaluated by their advisor and faculty designate. If the student has satisfactorily completed their action plan, then, depending on their level of academic achievement, they will either be reinstated to their regular academic program, on Academic Probation or in Good Academic Standing, or they will be required to enroll in the 'Student Success' Program for a subsequent semester. Details regarding minimum GPA requirements need to be determined.

If a student is not successful at the end of their second term, then they would be required to discontinue with the current requirements for readmission. The university policy which requires students to achieve a minimum CGPA of 2.00 for graduation would remain in place to ensure overall academic standards are maintained.

### **Benefits**

- Improved student success and retention rates
- Improved reputation as an institution that values their students
- Helps to establish a positive, long-term relationship between the institution and student (happy alumni)
- Integrated, collaborative approach utilizing proactive strategies maximizes University resources
- More fair assessment, based which effectively determines the student's ability to be successful
- Combining developmental academic advising, which considers the needs of the students as a whole person, with instruction in practical study, life and learning skills equips the student with long term strategies for success
- Students continue taking regular courses while improving their grades
- Engages students in their own learning
- Proven success at another leading Canadian university, University of Alberta (averaging 60% success rate since its inception five years ago)

### Resource Requirements

A program of this type is resource-intensive at the front-end, but would return significant gains in retention and reputation. A training program would need to be widely available to staff and faculty who will work with 'at-risk' students with this program. It is recommended that this be considered a pilot initiative that could be implemented in phases, e.g. international students in Year 1. The program's success would need to be regularly evaluated using identified performance indicators.

### Estimated Annual Program Budget

Using an estimated number of 250 International and Faculty of Applied Science students Required to Withdraw annually:

## Student Success Program Budget 2007/2008

### Costs

|                                     |                  |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Module development                  | \$20,000         |
| 1.0 FTE Program Coordinator         | \$81,661         |
| 1.0 FTE Academic Advisor            | \$65,524         |
| On-line assessment tools            | \$3,091          |
| 1.5 FTE Learning Skills Coordinator | \$122,492        |
| Material & Supplies                 | \$4,000.00       |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>\$296,768</b> |

We will have to factor in resources required at the faculty level for additional advising

### Revenue

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Program Fee for 250 Students @ \$250 (net)/ea | \$63,750         |
| Applied Science Contribution                  | \$100,000        |
| <b>Total</b>                                  | <b>\$163,750</b> |

|                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Funding request from VPA | \$133,018 |
|--------------------------|-----------|

### Anticipated Revenue from Tuition & Fees for 250 Students Retained

|                              |                    |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Domestic Students (125)      | \$372,798          |
| International Students (125) | \$1,422,948        |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>\$1,495,745</b> |

Currently, a significant number of these students will expend their tuition dollars at other institutions after leaving SFU. With an estimated success rate of 60% (as per University of Alberta), we stand to retain an additional 90 international students annually. A recent longitudinal study of academic standing undertaken by Analytical Studies shows the proportion of students returning to complete their degrees at SFU after being Required to Withdraw is already low and is decreasing. This is likely due to many factors, but we believe it is primarily a result of increased competition for students across the country. Given the relatively low cost of this initiative, the potential for a significant decrease in lost tuition revenue, and a unique opportunity to improve our reputation with our students and in the community, we recommend this proposal be considered for immediate implementation.

*Submitted by Rummana Khan Hemani & Bing Lee,  
Academic Advising and Student Success  
Updated May 9, 2007*



MEMO

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ATTENTION SCUS

FROM Rummana Khan Hemani  
Director, Academic Advising and Student Success

RE Student Success Program - Request for Extension of Special  
Exemptions from Undergraduate Academic Standing &  
Continuance Policy

DATE April 25, 2008

At its meeting in May 2007, SCUS approved, on a one-time basis, three exemptions to the Undergraduate Academic Standing & Continuance Policy for International and Faculty of Applied Sciences students who were 'Required to Withdraw' from the University at the end of the Spring, Summer, and Fall 2007 semesters (see Appendix A). Essentially, these exemptions allowed eligible students in these two groups to 'Continue on Academic Probation' at the University, if they participated in the Student Success Program.

Early results of the Program have been promising (see Appendix B), and at this point, we are recommending the pilot be extended for a one year period, September 2008 to August 2009, in its current format (see Appendix C). A proposal regarding extension of the pilot was submitted for discussion at the April 2, 2008 VP/Deans meeting (see Appendix D), and received strong support. As such, we request SCUS approve an extension to the original policy exemptions for a further one year period, ending August 31, 2009. Two amendments are proposed to the exemptions: expansion of the target groups and a change in the fee policy.

#### 1. Target Groups

##### 1.1 Continue with all eligible International students:

- In comparison to domestic students, international students have double the rates of academic difficulty.
- International students have rising attrition rates.
- The University has committed to improving international student success and retention rates.
- Early indicators show that international students benefit greatly from this type of personalized intervention.

##### 1.2 Continue with eligible domestic Faculty of Applied Sciences students:

- Significant resources have been dedicated to customizing components of this program for FAS.

##### 1.3 Extend program to include eligible domestic Faculty of Science students:

- Highest percentage of RTW students originates from Science.
- Math department has already been involved in the original program curriculum development, particularly around quantitative issues, and this work can easily be expanded on to meet the needs of Science students.

To stay within our program capacity goals for 2008/09, it may be necessary to implement some form of eligibility criteria or filter for domestic students in Applied Sciences and Science. Initially, this could be a minimum number of attempted units, but requires further analysis and recommendation based on the program evaluation. This will be undertaken in the Fall 2008 semester, following completion of the Spring/Summer 2008 cohort, and a full report will be provided to SCUS.

#### 2. Program Fee Change

Currently, students are charged \$250 in each semester of the two-semester Program. They are eligible for a \$250 tuition credit if they complete the Program, are eligible to continue at the University (either on probation or in good standing), and enroll in a subsequent term. Going forward we propose that the Program retain the entire \$500. This allows us to extend the Program to more students, and seems appropriate given the substantial value of the Program.

In addition to the RTW Student Success Program, we will be developing academic success initiatives to address other areas of concern. These include strategies for students 'On Academic Probation', undeclared students above 45 credits, and entrance scholarship students. These will primarily be introduced for students in Arts & Social Sciences largely through optimization of resources in place for the RTW Student Success Program.

- c. Nello Angerilli, Associate VP, Students and International  
Nancy Johnston, Senior Director, Student Learning and Retention  
Kate Ross, Registrar & Senior Director, Student Enrollment  
Mehran Kiai, Director, Enrollment Services  
Richard MacLeod, Director, Records & Registration

## STUDENT SERVICES

### Academic Advising and Student Success

## APPENDIX B

### STUDENT SUCCESS PROGRAM – PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Student Success Program for students Required to Withdraw (RTW) offers students in academic difficulty the opportunity to assess their academic choices, analyze their challenges, strengthen skills, and develop strategies for future academic and personal success. The program uses a mix of individual consultations, group meetings, in-person activities, and online learning opportunities which promote self-regulation, reflective practice, and transformative learning. Students on Academic Probation (OAP) are encouraged to take steps toward academic success by being offered the Student Success Program - Back on Track. The program incorporates academic advising along with a learning assessment that will be used to assist participants in addressing areas that may be holding them back from academic success.

### RTW Program Defined:

The RTW pilot program within the Student Success suite of programs is an academic success program offered to students who have been Required to Withdraw (RTW) for the first time and in which students can participate once in their academic undergraduate career.

The program includes the following elements:

- a signed agreement between the student and their academic advisor outlining the expectations of the student's participation in the program
- two consecutive terms
- a learning assessment and a self-assessment
- a learning plan outlining student-developed goals for their program participation
- use of prescribed on-campus resources (e.g. Health and Counselling, Student Learning Commons, Centre for Students with Disabilities)
- a mandatory one-term course designed to teach skills for academic success
- prescribed workshops and seminars aimed at improving study skills, learning skills, time management, etc.
- regular consultations with an assigned Student Success Programs advisor (SSP advisor) who will monitor and evaluate progress, and approve course selection, in consultation with a faculty designate
- courses such as Foundations of Academic Literacy and Foundations of Academic Numeracy, where necessary
- unit load restricted to 9 units per term in courses pre-approved by the student's SSP advisor or SSP manager

### Program Objectives:

#### University

- Short term: Academic success for participants
- Long term: Increased student retention and degree completion rates

#### Student

- Gain understanding of academic and personal goals
- Improve skills in areas identified through assessments
- Develop strategies for future academic and personal success
- Explore how their interests link to career options and academic program
- Know and access ongoing support as needed

### Values/Expectations that Inform the Program Objectives:

- Academic success program that supports better choices and provides opportunities to develop skills
- Students are academically and personally capable of success
- Students are expected to be actively engaged in the program and in their own academic and personal development
- While learning from past setbacks is important, the program seeks to build on success rather than focus on past failure(s)

SSP Update

**Highlights from 2007/2008**

Year 1 of the pilot program for RTW students wrapped up at the end of the Summer semester. The second cohort, which started in January 2008, included 78 participants, 39 domestic and 39 international. At the end of the first semester, the success rate (students with a semester GPA and/or cum GPA  $\geq 2.00$ ) was 64% for students who had been fully participating in the program. Of the 35 students who did not achieve 2.00 or higher semester GPA's, 24 were allowed to continue (although 4 chose not to for various reasons) into semester 2 due to their full participation in the weekly core module sessions. The remaining 11 students were required to discontinue, and a further 7 deferred their second semester. The results for the 56 participants who completed the second semester were beyond our expectations -- they had a 70% success rate, 6% higher than the first cohort that completed the program in Spring 2008. An interesting observation, that is consistent with analysis we undertook with the first cohort, is that international students had higher success rates than domestic students -- 77% vs. 69%.

Overall, the RTW program yielded better than expected results in comparison to similar programs at other institutions. Almost 100% of students who successfully completed the program have enrolled in a subsequent semester at the University. This translates into an additional 55 domestic students and 51 international students. What is most heartening to the SSP team is the feedback we receive from our students:

hi keert,

- >guess what i got a B+ in physics and B- in archeology.... i defeated my goal
- >and now im off AP!!! thank you for all the help and support, you and the
- >program totally changed my university experience around.
- >Thank you
- >Have a wonderful Christmas and see you in the next year!!!
- >Sincerely,
- >Student X

- >Hi Keert! I'm not sure if you remember me but my name is (Student Y).
- > I met with you in the Fall semester when I started the Student
- >Success Program and you were my academic advisor throughout the
- >program. I'm happy to let you know that I am no longer on Academic
- >Probation after this past Spring semester and I would like to thank
- >you very much for your support and as well as for inviting me back
- >to try again!
- >
- >I am taking this semester off just to have a small break after
- >consecutive years of school. What I am mainly contacting you about

>is whether or not the SSP is still active and I am actually  
>inquiring for a friend of mine. His name is (Student Z) and he has  
>been required to withdraw for have two consecutive semesters on  
>academic probation. I told him about the program and he is very  
>willing to be a part of it, I was just hoping there was a chance he  
>could be invited back to SFU as I had been.  
>  
>I was not sure who else to contact because I haven't personally  
>spoken to the new SSP coordinator for the past semester. His contact  
>is <studentz@sfu.ca>; again, thank you so much for  
>everything, Keert- being given another chance has really made me  
>work even harder than before.  
>  
>Please take care and I hope to hear from you soon!  
>  
>--  
>- Student Y

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"I would like to thank you and all the SSP team, which I think helped me to improve my academic grades." (Current Standing GAS, International Student, APSC)

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"I just want to tell you that I got a B- on ECON 305 which I failed last semester! :) Yeah!! Please keep SSP running because it works! Well at least it helped me adjusting my attitude towards academic study." (Current Standing GAS, International Student, Business)

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### What's New?

Year 2 of the pilot program for RTW students is now underway this Fall semester. There are 193 participants -- 22% higher than the original projections. We continue to see an increase in students who are RTW, and expect an upward trend in the number of students participating in the RTW pilot. As you'll recall the program has been expanded to include Faculty of Science, in addition to Applied Sciences and International students.

In addition to the RTW program, we have added two new SSP initiatives this Fall:

### **"BACK ON TRACK"**

The Back on Track program initiative for students On Academic Probation (OAP)/Continued on Academic Probation (CAP) offers those in academic difficulty the opportunity to assess their academic choices, analyze their challenges, strengthen skills, and develop strategies for future academic and personal success. The program incorporates academic advising along with a learning assessment that will be used to assist participants in addressing areas that may be holding them back from academic success.

We invited 353 students from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to participate in "Back on Track" in September 2008. Although the uptake for this program is only 15%, we are optimistic that participating students will benefit from the regular contact with an academic advisor and will take up other important resources that will improve their chances of success.

### **"HIGHROADS"**

The Highroads program initiative for Summit scholarship recipients in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences offers this particular group of students the opportunity to assess their academic choices, analyze their challenges, strengthen skills, and develop strategies for future academic and personal success such that they will be able to maintain their scholarship. The program incorporates individualized contact/support from a student advisor who is also a scholarship recipient, an intensive study skills workshop and academic advising.

In September 2008, 142 Summit scholarship winners were contacted by email, and subsequently, received a phone call from an academic advisor. The idea was to check in and see how their classes were going, if they had any questions, and tell them more about the study skills workshop designed for them. Attendance at the workshops was somewhat limited due to conflicts with classes, etc. However, we will continue to maintain regular contact with all of the students throughout their first semester with the goal of providing them with person they can connect with for support and guidance.

### **Next Steps**

We are currently undertaking a research study with our Year 1 RTW pilot program participants. This will include both a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the student outcomes, and will result in a report (December 2008) that we expect will inform the future direction of this program.

Excerpt from the SSP Pilot Program Evaluation Report: *"The Results and Impacts of SFU's Student Success Pilot Program"*<sup>i</sup>

The main findings of the report are:

The SSP had between 61.7 percent and 65.3 percent of the students who participated in the program move out of the Required To Withdraw academic standing, thus avoiding mandatory withdrawal from SFU.<sup>ii</sup>

Evidence supports the conclusion that the SSP enabled students to raise their cumulative grade point average more than a roughly comparable group of students who did not take part in the program. The change in CGPA from program entry (2007 spring/summer semesters) to exit (2008 spring semester) was larger for SSP graduates than for the roughly comparable students who did not participate in the program. The difference is statistically significant.

Chi Square tests supported the conclusion the final academic status of SSP graduates was positively associated with their experience (the number of credit hours completed at SFU), their initial CGPA, and their attendance of the first-semester program seminars.

Students who ended the program in OAP/CAP academic standing raised their CGPAs as much as students who ended the program in GAS (that is, there was not a statistically significant difference in the average change of their cumulative grade point averages during the program).

The academic path of one group of 14 students was especially impressive. They started the program with the lowest GPA of any of the paths through the program (1.249), but had two semesters with good grades and raised their CGPA by .553 points. Though they ended the program in CAP status, they have a good trajectory for future academic success.

A total of 22 students never escaped from the RTW status during the program. They started with a 1.419 CGPA and did not have a semester GPA as high as their initial CGPA. A majority (52.5 percent) of the students in this path were female students, who made up 44 percent of all SSP graduates.

It appears that 48 of SSP graduates had records that indicate a good chance of avoiding the RTW standing in future semesters. These have a good trajectory (two good semesters during the SSP) and most of them are already in GAS. The other 18 SSP graduates who avoided mandatory withdrawal from SFU appear to remain in academic jeopardy.<sup>iii</sup>

Females made up 44 percent of the 101 SSP graduates but 56 percent of the students whose final academic standing was Good Academic Standing.

Male students made up 56 percent of the SSP graduates but 70 percent of the students who ended the program in the OAP/CAP standing.

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<sup>i</sup> The report is currently in draft format; the final report, expected by March 2009, will be made available upon request

<sup>ii</sup> This report covers only the first cohort of participants in the pilot program; 69.6 % of the 56 students 'graduating' from the second cohort, who ended in the Summer 2008 term, avoided mandatory withdrawal

<sup>iii</sup> Enrollment data confirms this notion, with 100% of all SSP graduates from the first cohort subsequently enrolling at the University after completing the pilot program

**Student Success Programs  
Proposal: 2009/10 Budget Model**

Background

The pilot Student Success Program (SSP) was implemented in September 2007 for undergraduate International and Applied Sciences students who had been Required to Withdraw (RTW). Students completing the pilot program had a 67% success rate, which was higher than expected based on results from similar programs at other Canadian universities. With these positive results, and a growing demand from other academic programs, the program was expanded to include the Faculty of Science for the 2008/2009 academic year. In addition, two new programs for FASS students were added to launch the suite of 'Student Success Programs': 'Back on Track', for students on academic probation (OAP), and 'High Roads', for entrance scholarship students.

Looking Ahead

During the pilot phase, and subsequent expansion, of SSP, it was recognized that RTW students outside the eligible faculties had not been treated equitably. However, the expressed expectation was that if the program delivered desired results, it should be expanded to include all undergraduate students, and more substantive efforts ought to be placed on providing similar support to OAP students. There has been widespread support for this notion from SCUS, Senate, SFSS, FASS, etc. Both President Stevenson, and past VP Academic, John Waterhouse, requested that business models be developed that would allow for such inclusion. With the more costly program development work largely complete, and the pilot evaluation indicating very positive outcomes, the Student Success Program can, and should, now support the addition of OAP and RTW students from all faculties. Not only is this operationally feasible and fair, we have now developed a viable fiscal model that utilizes the advantages of scale to implement and sustain these programs. This is primarily due to significantly larger anticipated revenues from the student fee portion of the budget (as a result of both an increase in the fee itself and in the number of students that would be participating).

Proposed Budget Model for 2009/10

| <i>Student Success Programs</i>    | 09/10 (projected)<br>All Faculties |           | 08/09<br>Intl, FAS, Science |           |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------|
|                                    | # Students                         |           | #Students                   |           |
| RTW Program                        | 885*                               |           | 470                         |           |
|                                    | Per student                        | Total     | Per student                 | Total     |
| Cost                               | \$850                              | \$752,250 | \$1226                      | \$576,039 |
| Program fee revenue (on average)** | \$759                              | \$671,319 | \$272                       | \$128,000 |
| University portion of cost         | \$91                               | \$80,931  | \$953                       | \$448,039 |
| OAP Program                        | 470                                |           | 53                          |           |
| Cost per student<br>OAP Program    | \$302                              | \$141,858 | \$0                         | \$0       |
| Program fee revenue (on average)   | \$250                              | \$117,432 | \$0                         | \$0       |
| University portion of cost         | \$52                               | \$24,426  | \$0                         | \$0       |

\*includes 139 students continuing from 08/09 fiscal year



## **\*\*Fee structure**

**08/09** - RTW program fee \$500 (\$0 in planning term, \$250 per term in subsequent two terms)  
- OAP program students do not pay a fee

**09/10** - RTW program fee ranges from \$800 to \$1250 (\$350 in planning term, \$450 in Term 1, and \$0/\$250/\$450 in Term 2 depending on student's academic standing)  
- OAP program fee is \$250. Students who are RTW after participation can enter directly into Term 1 of the RTW program following the same fee structure with an overall saving of \$100.

## Key Benefits

In comparison to the 08/09 budget model, the proposal for 09/10 has significant advantages:

- The fee based OAP Program (Back on Track) offsets the overall SSP costs
- Back on Track students who end up RTW can transition directly into the RTW Program without an intervening planning term (RTW Program students are not permitted to take credit courses during the planning term)
- Back on Track students have the added incentive of \$100 saving on the overall cost of the RTW Program and are hopefully encouraged to address their academic problems earlier vs. later (at the RTW stage)
- The cost per student has decreased, as many of the start up costs and specialized resources, e.g. curriculum development, etc., are declining, and efficiencies have been found through streamlining of business processes and systems
- Economies of scale are realized with the increased numbers of students as overhead costs, e.g. program administration, don't increase in proportion to other costs
- The proposed fee structure significantly reduces the university contribution per students making it more feasible to accommodate higher numbers of students in the future if necessary (although there has been a significant spike in the OAP/RTW numbers over the past three semesters, projections show the rate should level off)

## Impacts of SSP to SFU Enrollment

Projected Total number of student terms\* retained at SFU in fiscal 2009/10 with proposed full SSP roll out: **1083**

Projected Number of domestic student terms retained: **942**

Project Number of international student terms retained: **141**

Projected **Lost Tuition\*\*** revenue should above NOT be retained: **\$1,710,897.00**

\*Due to a rolling program intake, the above information represents the total projected 'active' student SSP terms (both term 1 and term 2), and, therefore, does not equal unique students, but unique student terms. The International Student number is based on actuals in 08/09 (13%). Total number of unique students which this represents is in the 700+ range.

\*\*The lost tuition revenue total is limited to the 09/10 fiscal and does not include tuition that will be generated in future years by successful students. It is based upon the number of student terms x the ave. # units taken (8) x the domestic (\$154.20) or international (\$487.60) per unit tuition rate.

**Note:** these student numbers CANNOT be replaced through projected recruitment rates. The loss of these students will result in reduced enrollment at SFU, and resultant revenues. Even if we could recruit in sufficient numbers to replenish these losses, the cost of recruitment outweighs the cost of retention (both financial and reputation). Specifically, the cost of recruiting one international student is approx \$8,000 vs. the retention cost, which, given this budget proposal, is no net cost to SFU and significant reputational and financial gain.

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• Policy Implications

Currently, students participating in the RTW Program have special exemption from the academic standing and continuance policy for the duration of the program. These exemptions were approved by SCUS and Senate for the pilot program, and earlier this year were extended to include Science students for a further two year period ending August 31, 2010. If the above budget and program expansion proposal is accepted, then a request will be submitted to SCUS at its February 2009 meeting for a permanent change to the academic standing and continuance policy for RTW students effective Spring 2009 term.

*Submitted December 20, 2008*