

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY*Office of the Vice President, Academic***MEMORANDUM****TO:** Senate**FROM:** J.M. Munro,
Vice President, Academic**SUBJECT:** Planning and Review Framework**DATE:** April 13, 2000

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Academic Planning gives rise to the following motions:

Motion 1

"That Senate approve the Guidelines for Academic Plans as set forth in S.00-44"

Motion 2

"That Senate approve the revised Guidelines for External Reviews of Academic Units as set forth in S.00-44"

Rationale

This is a revision of my earlier proposal to integrate the frameworks for the external review of academic departments and the three-year academic planning process that was referred back to SCAP from the March Senate meeting. The rationale remains the same - both external reviews and academic planning have been important and successful initiatives for the assessment and development of the University's academic programs. However, the proposal to effect a close articulation between them would not have received Senate's approval. Various alternatives suggested would have, in my opinion, weakened the current external review system.

The current proposal has two parts.

1. A system of academic planning is set out in a document titled "Senate Guidelines for Academic Plans". This document is based on the plans as they were prepared in 1997/98 and has been written to be consistent with the Guidelines for External Reviews and other planning documents prepared in recent years. These guidelines also include a reference to the "Statement of Purpose" approved by Senate and the Board of

Governors in 1998 as S. 98-51. All units will prepare plans on a three-year cycle where the next plans will cover the years 2001 through 2003. Brief annual updates to academic plans will be prepared at all levels. A schedule for plans and plan updates is included.

2. Revisions to the existing Senate Guidelines for Reviews of Academic Units to clarify the preparation of responses to external reviews and their consideration by the Senate Committee on University Priorities and by Senate. In this revision, Deans are required to provide the unit with a response concerning the review committee's recommendations and proposals for the allocation of resources to the unit. Various editorial changes are also proposed. There is no change to the current seven-year review interval. The desirability of articulation between reviews and plans is noted but there is no specific process to accomplish this.

These two sets of guidelines were approved by the Senate Committee on Academic Planning on 12 April, 2000.



cc. J.P. Blaney
S. Roppel

SENATE GUIDELINES FOR ACADEMIC PLANS

1. Each academic unit* shall prepare a three-year academic plan in the same year (the next plans will be prepared in the 2000/01 academic year). Academic plans are intended to guide the operation and development of the academic unit and will be considered by the Dean and Vice President, Academic in making decisions on allocation of resources. Academic unit plans are to be completed by December 1st.
2. Each Faculty Dean will prepare a three-year academic plan on the same schedule. These will utilize the three-year academic plans of academic units within the Faculty. These plans are to be completed by February 1st.
3. The Vice-President, Academic will prepare a three-year academic plan on the same schedule as the Faculty plans. This plan, which is to be completed by March 1st, will utilize the three-year academic plans of the Faculties and of academic service units. It will be submitted to SCUP for its review and forwarded to Senate for information.
4. Academic plans should give consideration to the elements in the Statement of Purpose for the University approved by Senate and the Board of Governors in 1998.
5. Academic plans should include the following information. The unit will determine the organization of the plan. The most recent unit external review should be considered in preparing the plan.
 - (a) A statement of objectives.
 - (b) A brief overview of the undergraduate and graduate programs offered by the unit.
 - (c) An assessment of achievements during the previous plan period.
 - (d) The adequacy of resources available to the unit in relation to their situation and objectives. This will include faculty complement, other instructional resources, operating budgets, equipment, and space.
 - (e) A summary of the research activities of the unit's members.
 - (f) A plan for the renewal of the unit's faculty resources.
 - (g) Recruitment and support issues for undergraduate and graduate students.
 - (h) Participation of the unit in other University programs including Continuing Studies and Co-operative Education.

* Departments, non-departmentalized Faculties, Schools, Programs. Parallel procedures will be used for plans of academic service units.

6. Each academic year academic units, Faculty Deans, and the Vice President, Academic will prepare a brief update to their academic plan. This will be completed during the fall semester. The plan update of the Vice President, Academic will be submitted to SCUP for its review.
7. The Office of the Vice- President, Academic, will provide statistical information for use in academic plans and plan updates. This will include an annual budget outlook.

2 May, 2000

SENATE GUIDELINES FOR EXTERNAL REVIEWS OF ACADEMIC UNITS

All academic units* are reviewed on a periodic basis, normally once every seven years. The purposes of such reviews are to enable units to conduct their own assessments of their strengths and weaknesses, to obtain the views of external experts in the field, and to support academic planning. The review process is intended to ensure that:

- (a) The quality of the unit's programs is high and there are measures in place to ensure the evaluation and revision of the teaching programs.
- (b) The quality of faculty research is high and faculty collaboration and interaction provides a stimulating academic environment.
- (c) Department members participate in the administration of the unit and take an active role in the dissemination of knowledge.
- (d) The departmental environment is conducive to the attainment of the objectives of the department.

Review committees should make their assessments taking into account the resources currently available to the unit and the University.

Review Process

1. The review will be initiated by the Vice-President, Academic, after consultation with the Dean of the Faculty and the unit involved. The Dean of Graduate Studies shall be involved in external reviews in relation to graduate programs and graduate student issues.
2. The unit will engage in a period of self-study of one to two semesters, possibly including a retreat, in which its members consider all aspects of the activities included in its academic plan and prepare a report covering the following areas:
 - (a) Institutional role, unit role and activities, goals and aspirations;
 - (b) Quality of teaching demonstrated by student achievement, scholarships and awards, degrees completed, post-graduate employment;
 - (c) Quality of the programs indicated by student demand, access to courses, student opinion on programs, educational experience including co-op and exchange opportunities, experience and satisfaction of students after graduation;
 - (d) Quality of scholarship demonstrated through grants, graduate student achievements; knowledge distribution and utilization, awards, citations, honours, appointments;

* Departments, non-departmentalized Faculties, Schools, Programs. Parallel procedures will be used for periodic reviews of academic service units.

- (e) Service to the community demonstrated by public service activity, involvement in related community groups, membership on boards or similar bodies;
 - (f) Collegial environment for all members of the unit;
 - (g) Appropriate orientation and training, support for employee development;
 - (h) Resources for unit activities; faculty, staff, operating budget, space, equipment, library holdings (including the process for determining collection strategies).
 - (i) Planning for the renewal of the unit's faculty resources.
3. Undergraduate and graduate students will be encouraged to participate in the preparation of material for the departmental self-study and student input will be sought throughout the process. The Chair/Director should contact the student union and student representatives on departmental committees, as well as publicizing the review in classes and within the department. Student contributions will be included or reflected in the self-study and students will have meetings with the external review committee.
 4. The self-study report prepared by the unit shall be made available to all members of the unit (faculty, staff and students) prior to being forwarded to the external review committee. The self-study shall include a standard set of data provided by the Office of the Vice- President, Academic. The unit may supplement this if it wishes. The unit's most recent academic plan will also be forwarded to the external review committee.
 5. The external review committee will normally consist of three persons external to the university who are senior members of the discipline, some of whom have had administrative experience. The unit will be asked to provide the Vice-President, Academic with a list of reviewers who represent a broad cross section of the discipline and who are considered to be outstanding scholars and objective reviewers. The Vice-President, Academic shall appoint the members of the external review committee after consulting with the Dean of the Faculty, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the unit involved. The external review committee will primarily be composed of faculty members from Canadian universities outside British Columbia. The Vice-President, Academic will also appoint an internal member from the University community who will be a full member of the committee. The internal member is to provide the review committee with contextual advice about the environment and operations of Simon Fraser University. Both genders will be represented on the committee.
 6. The Vice-President, Academic will prepare the terms of reference for the review committee in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty, the Dean of Graduate Studies and the unit. At the conclusion of its visit, the review committee will submit a detailed report including a full and frank assessment of the unit's mission, its various activities, the quality of the unit and its programs, and the resource allocations to and within the unit.

7. The dates of the visit of the external review committee and the detailed schedule for the visit will be arranged by the Office of the Vice-President, Academic in consultation with the Deans and the unit.
8. The review committee will meet with the Vice-President, Academic and the Deans at the start and at the end of the review to discuss guidelines for the review and the preparation of the report. The committee will also meet with the unit's faculty and staff members and graduate and undergraduate students as well as with others with responsibilities affecting the unit. Members of the external review committee should avoid informal social events with members of the unit during the site visit.
9. If the review committee receives information or allegations regarding specific individuals, these will be transmitted to the appropriate persons within the University and handled in accordance with established University procedures. These persons might include the Chair, and Dean and/or the Harassment Policy Coordinator. If the review committee receives general comments or complaints that the environment in the unit is not conducive to a high quality of teaching, learning, research and working, the committee may comment and make recommendations on this in its report, and the appropriate persons within the Department, Faculty and University shall be advised.
10. The report of the review committee will be a public document. Any supplementary reports concerning confidential matters will not form part of the public record but will be made available to the appropriate University officers. Any individuals named will be apprised of the information and provided with an opportunity to comment.
11. The external review report will be submitted to the Vice President, Academic and circulated to:
 - (a) the unit involved (including faculty, staff and students)
 - (b) the President
 - (c) the Dean of the Faculty
 - (d) the Dean of Graduate Studies
12. The unit will review the external review report and prepare a response. The response and the external review report together with the comments of the Dean and the Vice-President, Academic will be presented to SCUP for review and to Senate for discussion and advice.
13. The Dean shall consider the advice of Senate and prepare a report for the unit dealing with the significant issues raised in the review and the resources required to address them. A copy of this report shall be sent to the Vice President, Academic for information.

2 May, 2000