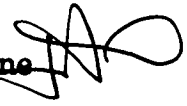


**S.93-41**

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY**  
*Office of the Vice-President, Academic*

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Senate

**From:** Prof. J. Osborne   
Acting Chair,  
Senate Committee  
on Academic Planning

**Subject:** Department of English -  
Changes to Ph.D. Program  
(SCAP 93 - 19)

**Date:** May 14, 1993

---

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Academic Planning and the Senate Graduate Studies Committee gives rise to the following motion:

**Motion:** "that Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.93 - 41 the changes to the Ph.D. Program in English."

**Current Ph.D. Program  
Department of English**

**Proposed Program  
Department of English**

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | 2 COURSES and 810/811  | 3 COURSES and 810/811  |
| 2. | 1 MINOR FIELD (or 2 courses)<br>a. essay<br>b. oral within 2 weeks of marking essay<br><br><i>and</i><br><br>1 MAJOR FIELD<br>a. take-home exam (7 days)<br>b. oral within 2 weeks of marking exam | 2 INDIVIDUALIZED FIELD EXAMS<br>Take-home or sit down<br><br>No oral |
| 3. | Preliminary <b>THESIS ORAL</b>   | <b>THESIS ORAL</b> on thesis area reading list and thesis project    |
| 4. | Thesis   | Thesis   |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A.	Program Description	Page 1
B.	Course Work	Page 2
C.	Field Exams	Page 2
D.	Supervision	Page 4
E.	Interdisciplinary Studies	Page 4
F.	Language Requirement	Page 5
G.	Thesis	Page 5
H.	Rationale	Page 7

Ph.D. PROGRAM ALTERATION AND RATIONALEDEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**A. FROM: Ph.D. Program**

The Ph.D. program in English assumes in the student a background in English or comparative literature equivalent to our MA; this is the condition of admission to the program. The student is required to do a minimum amount of course work to fill any gaps or satisfy any needs. The major emphasis of the program is on personal supervision in one primary and one secondary area and the production of a doctoral thesis. The program is designed to encourage innovative studies. All applicants are expected to describe their study plans in detail.

The program should be completed in 9-12 semesters though the University provides an outside limit of eight years.

**TO: Ph.D. Program**

The English Department at Simon Fraser University has a small Ph.D. program. Students interested in applying should have a well-thought out project that can be integrated into the department's areas of specialization. The department is open to cross-disciplinary proposals and innovative studies. Students are expected to contribute their input at all stages of the program.

The department has expertise in major areas of English literature and language with special strength in the twentieth-century. The S.F.U. Library's Contemporary Literature Collection has the largest single collection of post-war experimental and avant-garde poetry in Canada. It also contains a substantial Wordsworth Collection and William Blake drawings, illuminations and engravings in facsimile.

**Admissions**

For admission to the doctoral program students are required to have an M.A. degree or equivalent with high standing from a recognized university. Students entering the program are expected to have a good background in English studies. To fill any gaps, students may be required to do make-up courses at the undergraduate or graduate level.

To apply, students must submit transcripts, three letters of reference, two samples of academic writing, and a 1-2 page description of their doctoral project. This program has been approved for part-time status.

**Application Deadline**

February 1

**Residence Requirement**

Six semesters

**RATIONALE:** See attached.

**B. FROM: Course Work**

Students must complete two courses by the end of their fourth semester. Their choice of courses will be directed by their Senior Supervisor in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee.

**TO: Program Requirements**

The first two years of the program are designed to provide a necessary grounding for students before they pursue their particular thesis project; in the third year, students will engage in the research and writing of their dissertation. Upon admission, the student will be assigned an advisor until a supervisor and supervisory committee are selected.

The doctoral program has three stages:

1. **Courses** Students shall complete four courses by the end of the third semester: three courses of their choice plus 810, (**Graduate Professional Development Seminar**), a required graduate course. The senior supervisor in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee will advise students in their choice of courses.

2. **Field Exams and Thesis Oral** Students must write their Field Exams by the end of the sixth semester, and complete their Thesis Oral by the end of the seventh semester.

3. **The Thesis** Students complete their research and proceed with the writing of their thesis. Students have 9-12 semesters to complete their degree.

**RATIONALE:** See attached.

**C. FROM: Primary Field of Study**

The primary field is an area encompassing the projected thesis. It may be defined generically, historically, or methodologically, or by a combination of these. It should be broad enough to provide an adequate context for the projected theses and focused enough to be useful as a context for a research project.

The definition of the field, the rationale for its organization, and the literature to be included in it must be prepared by students in co-operation with their Supervisory Committee and submitted to the Graduate Program Committee for approval.

Students should finish this study and be examined in it by the end of their sixth semester.

**Secondary Field Study**

The secondary field may have some indirect connection with the thesis or be a quite independent area that the student wishes to study in depth. This field may be narrower in scope than the primary area and may be covered by the work of a single author of major

importance. A proposal and a reading list must be drawn up by the student in consultation with a supervisor chosen for this area and submitted to the Graduate Program Committee for approval. Work in this area should be completed by the student's third semester.

Requirements for the secondary field of study may be satisfied by taking two additional graduate courses.

### Examinations

The examination in the secondary field study should be taken before the end of the student's third semester. The examination will be conducted by the supervisor for the field and another examiner proposed by the supervisor and approved by the Graduate Program Committee. The examination may take one of two forms: (a) a paper on an assigned topic to be completed within ten weeks of the assignment, or (b) a paper on a topic proposed by the student and accepted by the supervisor. Both examiners will read the paper and submit a report to the Graduate Program Committee.

The examination in the primary field should be taken before the end of the student's sixth semester. It will be conducted by the Senior Supervisor and another examiner proposed by her/him and approved by the Graduate Program Committee. It will be in the form of questions set by the examiners and answered by the student within a limited period of time, normally a week. Variations to this may be permitted by the Graduate Program Committee if the examiners are persuaded that they need a special format.

### Oral Examinations

After each examination (including essays) the student must meet with the examiners and Senior Supervisor to discuss the exam within two weeks after the exam has been marked. Depending on the results of the written exam, the oral may be a relatively brief, informal discussion, or a more formal examination, particularly when the mark has been deferred until the oral (failed written exams will not normally be followed by an oral). In cases where the mark has been deferred, the oral exam will be chaired by the Graduate Program Chair or her/his deputy.

### TO: Individualized Field Exams

Each candidate will write two Field Exams. The student may choose either to a) sit a four hour exam (closed book), or b) take home the examination question and complete it within 7 days. The submitted examination paper should be no more than 30 pages. There will be no oral defence.

In each Field Exam area, a partial reading list will be prepared by the faculty specializing in the area. Students are expected to add to the reading list. The completed reading list must be approved by two of the faculty in the area and the Graduate Program Committee. Current Field Reading Lists may be obtained from the Department.

Both Field Exams are to be completed by July 30 of the second year in the program (sixth semester). The examiners will consist of two faculty in the area appointed by the Graduate Program Committee. The senior supervisor will not be an examiner in the Field Exam. Students will be awarded pass/fail or pass with distinction for truly exceptional exams.

A student who fails a field exam may be allowed to repeat it once not later than the following semester. A second failure will lead to elimination from the program.

### Thesis Oral

The purpose of the thesis oral is to ensure coverage in the thesis area. Upon successful completion of Field Exams, the student will submit a reading list by September 15 on the background readings for the thesis area to the Senior Supervisor. The Supervisory Committee for the Thesis Oral will consist of the Senior Supervisor and one of the other supervisors. The committee must respond to the proposed reading list by October 1. The final reading list must be approved by the Graduate Program Committee

The oral examination on the thesis area and background material will take place by December 15. The oral exam will be approximately two hours in length.

The oral will be graded pass/fail. In exceptional cases a distinction will be recognized.

RATIONALE: See attached.

### D. FROM: Supervision

A student will be accepted in the Ph.D. program if a faculty member is willing to supervise her/his studies. Upon the student's admission, the faculty member will be assigned by the Graduate Program Committee as her/his Senior Supervisor. Before the end of the student's second semester, the Graduate Program Committee will set up the student's Supervisory Committee, consisting of the Senior Supervisor, and two other faculty members with competence in the student's primary field.

The Senior Supervisor is responsible for directing the student's choice of courses, helping the student to organize her/his fields of study, suggesting faculty members who might supervise the secondary field, monitoring the student's progress, and conducting the supervision and examination of the primary field.

TO: Delete (incorporated into other sections)

RATIONALE: See attached.

### E. FROM: Interdisciplinary Studies

The Ph.D. program in English is designed not simply to tolerate, but also to foster studies in areas outside traditionally designated fields. Normally, such studies may be carried on within the departments when availability of staff and resources permit. When this is not possible, or when the applicant specifically seeks an interdisciplinary degree that includes study in more than one department, such a course of study may be worked out through special arrangements with the Dean of Graduate Studies. (See Graduate General Regulations.)

TO: Delete.

RATIONALE: See attached.

**F. FROM: Language Requirement**

All students registered in the Ph.D. program will be required to demonstrate a reading ability in one language other than English that is acceptable to the students' Supervisory Committee. Ability will be determined by a time-limited examination consisting of the translation of a passage of literature or criticism in the particular language. A dictionary will be permitted.

The Department of French and the Department of Spanish and Latin American Studies offer courses to help graduate students meet language requirements. Students interested in courses in German or Russian should consult with the Office of the Dean of Arts

For further information and regulations, refer to the Graduate General Regulations section (1).

To: No change.

RATIONALE: *See attached.*

**G. FROM: Thesis**

Prior to undertaking the thesis, students must submit a prospectus and a bibliography of about 5-10 pages in all. The proposal will be considered in an oral examination by the Supervisory Committee together with a member of the Graduate Program Committee. The purpose of this exam is to determine the feasibility of the thesis topic and to ascertain the student's command of the subject. Students must have the approval of this committee before proceeding further with their thesis.

The completed thesis will be defended in oral examination. Judgement will be made by an Examining Committee.

For the composition of the Examining Committee and other details governing the program as a whole, see the Graduate General Regulations section 1.9.4 and *passim*.

**TO: The Thesis**

In consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, the student will create a supervisory committee consisting of a senior supervisor and two readers (one of whom may be from another department). By his/her third semester, the student must submit the proposed supervisory committee and a thesis proposal to the Graduate Program Committee for approval.

The completed thesis will be defended in an oral examination. The final (defence) examining Committee shall consist of a Chair (normally the Graduate Program Chair), the members of the Supervisory Committee (Senior Supervisor and at least two other members of the Department), a University faculty member external to the English Department, and an External Examiner (not a member of Simon Fraser University).



From the time of the appointment of the Supervisory Committee, the student and his or her Senior Supervisor should meet regularly (at least three times a semester) through the Field Exam period, the semester of the Thesis Oral, and the period of thesis research and writing.

It is the student's responsibility to take the initiative in setting up a schedule of meetings. If the Senior Supervisor is to be away from campus for more than a month, she/he should inform the Graduate Program Committee and arrange for another member of the Supervisory Committee to meet regularly with the student. All students engaged in research (899) should give the supervisor a written report on their research at the end of every semester. This is particularly important for students who are not in the process of submitting chapters of their work. Any changes in direction or new developments should be discussed.

Students may make changes to their Supervisory Committee in cases where, for instance, the development of a more refined topic indicates a different faculty member would be more appropriate for the Committee. Changes made for any reason must be formally approved by the Graduate Program Committee and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

RATIONALE:        See attached.

Department of English  
New Ph.D. Program Proposal

H. Rationale

Currently the doctoral requirements are two courses and Engl. 810/811, a minor field (to be completed by the fourth semester), and a major field (to be completed by the sixth semester). There are oral exams in each field and a preliminary thesis oral. These must be passed before the student proceeds with the thesis. Note: Students may substitute two courses for the minor field.

Several years ago, the doctoral program was revised and one of the minor fields was replaced by two courses and Engl. 810/811 became a required course. This was an improvement since participation in courses ensured that students now felt part of a scholarly community, and had opportunities to meet faculty and find their bearings before embarking upon individual study through the minor and major fields.

However, the program still requires improvements and changes. The reasons lie in

1. historical circumstances
2. practical problems with the current program.

1. Historical Circumstances

The Graduate Program Committee is responding to the dramatically changing constituency and needs of our students. When the doctoral program began in 1974 it was intended to be a very small and specialized program; the students applying to the program and the students subsequently accepted into the program were primarily mature and local students who were highly self-directed and who had a clearly defined project in hand. You can see the successful results from the appended list of graduates.

Twenty years later, both the student body and the graduate situation have changed. This year we have over 25 applications; we have 15 Ph.D. students currently active in the program.

Many students now enter straight from a Master's program. The Graduate Program Committee feels that we must be sensitive to this changing constituency, and that we need to respond to developments in English Studies and in our profession.

2. Practical Problems with the Current Program

Many faculty members and graduate students have expressed concern about the vagueness and indeterminacy of our doctoral program; students have felt uncertain about expectations

and requirements; faculty have felt unclear about the nature of the minor and major fields. Moreover, students often take longer than they should in the preliminary stages, owing to their uncertainty about requirements.

The major and minor fields have created problems for both students and faculty -- the criteria are vague and vary greatly from student to student. Some students do their two fields in different areas, others do them both in their thesis area, some students cover a vast area, eg., Shakespeare, others a very narrow area, eg., Canadian women's poverty narratives 1930-1990.

In response to student and faculty concerns we have devised a more structured program in which nevertheless each student will have his/her own significant input.

The strengths of this new program are:

- a. The course work and Field Exams will ensure that the student has knowledge in areas other than the thesis, and will therefore be able to teach in at least three different fields. This is very important to students currently in the program who are thinking of their future employment.
- b. Because of its more focused and equitable nature this program will facilitate the progress of the student. Currently the major-minor fields are often long and drawn out, and the scope and expectations of fields vary too widely among students and supervisors.
- c. The new proposed system should require less intensive supervision and fewer supervisory hours by faculty.
- d. As all students follow a similar schedule and program, it should foster a closely knit group of students progressing together.
- e. It emphasizes the professional nature of the degree by ensuring coverage and preparation.
- f. It provides an early warning system, for students who are in difficulty before they are well into thesis work.

## Ph.D. Graduands from English

	Graduated	Present position/ Location
Pamela Black	88-3	tenure-track Antigonish
Janet Giltrow	79-3	Senior Lecturer English/SFU
Sukeshi Kamra	88-3	tenure-track Okanagan College, Kelowna
Jean Mallinson	81-1	Contract teacher Kwantlen College, Richmond
Diana Relke	86-2	tenure-track Women's & Gender Studies U of Saskatchewan
Marian Scholtmeijer	89-2	Limited term Asst. Prof. Mt. Allison
Jennifer Simons	89-1	President, Simons Foundation, Vancouver
David Wallace	86-2	Contract position Limited term , York
Marjorie Weir	89-2	English teacher Crofton House Vancouver
John Whatley	90-1	Sessional Instructor English, SFU
Dianne Tiefensee	91-2	SFU Harbour Center Interpreter program Immigrant women Immigrant educators

MEMORANDUM

W.A.C. Bennett Library, Simon Fraser University  
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada V5A 1S6

Date: 13 April, 1993

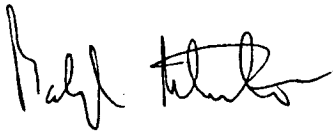
From: Ralph Stanton (Collections Management Office)

To: June Sturrock, Acting Chair, Department of English,  
Graduate Programme

Re: Revised Ph.D. Programme

---

Thank-you for your memorandum of April 6, 1993. We agree that the new programme as described in the accompanying documents should not place new demands on the Library. If any courses are added to the programme please notify us early in the process so we will have time to respond.



Doc is ENGLPHD