

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate
From: J. M. Munro
Chair, SCAP
Subject: Minimum Graduation
Requirements
Date: December 11, 1990

SCAP recommends

Motion:

"That Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.91 - 2 the following recommendations of SCUS (as amended by SCAP): (Note: SCAP amendments underlined)

1. In order to qualify for graduation from the general degree program, a student must satisfy, as a minimum, both of the following requirements:
 - a minimum CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average) of 2.00.
 - and**
 - a minimum grade point average of 2.00 calculated on the basis of all upper division courses taken at Simon Fraser University. This grade point average will be calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned in upper division courses by the total number of semester credit hours assigned for those courses, counting only the higher grade in courses that have been duplicated.

2. In order to qualify for graduation from the honors degree program, a student must satisfy, as a minimum, both of the following requirements:
 - a minimum CGPA (Cumulative Grade Point Average) of 3.00.
 - and**
 - a minimum grade point average of 3.00 calculated on the basis of all upper division courses taken at Simon Fraser University. This grade point average will be calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned in upper division courses by the total number of semester credit hours assigned for those courses, counting only the higher grade in courses that have been duplicated.

 - If a student in the honors degree program has completed both the CGPA and the grade point average for upper division courses at 3.50 or higher, the designation "First Class" will apply.

3. Individual faculties and departments may, with the approval of Senate, maintain their own supplementary graduation requirements. Individual faculties and departments may apply to Senate for permission to increase the minimum grade point average required for graduation, or to impose additional requirements, or both.

4. In keeping with the above regulation, the definition of the grade "C-" on page 22 of the current calendar should be revised from 'Satisfactory Performance' to 'Marginal Performance'.
5. The upper division grade point average should appear on students' transcripts in a running manner.
6. The revised minimum graduation requirements apply to all students entering the University commencing with the Fall 1991-3 Semester. Students who were registered at the University prior to the Fall 1991-3 Semester may satisfy either the minimum graduation requirements as stated on page 11 of the 1990/91 Calendar, or the revised minimum graduation requirements as set out in SCUS 90-18.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCUS SUB-COMMITTEE ON
MINIMUM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Recommendations:

1. The minimum requirement for graduation on the general degree program is a grade point average of 2.00, calculated on the basis of all upper division courses taken at SFU, counting only the higher grade in courses that have been duplicated. The average will be computed by dividing the total number of grade points earned in upper division courses by the total number of semester hours assigned for those courses, counting only the higher grade in courses that have been duplicated.
 2. The minimum requirement for graduation on the honors degree program is a grade point average of 3.00 calculated on the basis of all upper division courses taken at SFU, counting only the higher grade in courses that have been duplicated. The designation of First Class Honours requires a minimum grade point average of 3.5 in all upper division courses taken at SFU. The average will be computed by dividing the total number of grade points earned in upper division courses by the total number of semester hours assigned for those courses, counting only the higher grade in courses that have been duplicated.
 3. Individual faculties and departments may, with the approval of Senate, maintain their own supplementary graduation requirements. Individual faculties and departments may apply to Senate for permission to increase the minimum grade point average required for graduation, or to impose additional requirements, or both.
 4. and, in keeping with the above regulation, the definition of the grade "C-" on page 22 of the current calendar should be revised from 'Satisfactory Performance' to 'Marginal Performance'.
 5. The upper division grade point average should appear on students' transcripts in a running manner.
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Explanation/Rationale:

1. It is useful to place our recommendations in an historical context. The present graduation rules came into effect before the existing duplication, probation and withdrawal system was put into operation. As a result of this temporal sequence, it can and does happen that students graduate from SFU with a cumulative grade point average as low as 1.64. Raising our graduation standards will prevent such occurrences and is in keeping with recent changes that have been to raise both admission and continuance standards.

2. Our recommendations represent a significant simplification with only a marginal tightening of graduation requirements. Data show that seven students (of 112) in the past two years in the Faculty of Science and eight students (of 382) in 89-2 and 89-3 in the Faculty of Arts who graduated would not have done so if the proposed requirements were adopted. (It should be noted that these figures are underestimates, as the effect of the proposed tightening of the duplication policy is not taken into account.) Attached are the graduation reports of six students in the Faculty of Arts which illustrate the problem that the proposed change will eliminate. Among the six, upper division grade points range from 1.72 to 1.99, but lower division grades "carry" them so that they graduated. Also attached is a memo from the Chairman of the Department of the major granted to student "A".

3. In essence, we are recommending the discontinuation of the current practice of calculating "graduation grade point averages". This recommendation is based on the following considerations:

a) The graduation grade point average does not appear on the student's transcript and, indeed, cannot be calculated until the student has completed his or her coursework. This creates confusion and uncertainty for students.

b) In the calculation of the graduation grade point average, courses not applied to the degree are not counted. Courses for which a student receives an F or an N, and therefore not used for the degree, are not counted. Basically, this means that F's and N's do not matter.

c) The process of calculating graduation grade point averages is done manually under severe time constraints and is, therefore, subject to errors. Also, there are very few people at the University who know how it is done; the difficulty arising in the determination of courses to be used in the calculations.

4. Given current uncertainties about the relationship between universities and colleges in the province, we feel minimum graduation requirements that focus on upper division

coursework are appropriate at this time (as grades obtained in courses transferred from other institutions are not included in SFU grade point averages). Also, it is the opinion of the Sub-committee that, in principle, graduation requirements should stress upper division performance.

5) Our recommendations allow for students to "browse" with lower division courses without long-term penalty and are, thus, in keeping with the liberal arts focus of the University. The recently implemented more stringent standards for continuance may discourage this practice; at the very least, our recommendations do not add further discouragement.

Submitted by: Ellen Gee
Associate Dean of Arts (Chair)

Robert Frindt
Faculty of Science
Representative to SCUS

Robert Rogow
Faculty of Business Administration
Representative to SCUS

EG/rd

att.

cc: R. Heath

* Please note FAS recommendations

**MINUTES OF THE FACULTY OF APPLIED SCIENCES UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE
(FAS-UCC) MEETING HELD ON MONDAY JULY 16, 1990, 1:00 P.M., ROOM ASB9861.**

PRESENT: P. Bawa (Kinesiology), Committee Chair
R. Anderson for B. Hackett (Communication)
B. Hadley (Computing Science)
P. Ho (Engineering Science)
L. Cooke (Recording Secretary)

ABSENT: J. Blanchet (FAS Administrative Assistant)
C. Jones (Student Representative)
J. Lyall (Student Representative)

6. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SCUS SUB-COMMITTEE ON MINIMUM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

* The Committee was in agreement with the SCUS Sub-Committee's recommendations regarding minimum graduation requirements. P. Bawa asked if the Committee Members had any further recommendations. P. Bawa's suggestion was in regard to graduation medals. She suggested that in order to put SFU students at par with those who have been admitted with transfer credit that only the last 60 credits be taken into consideration. The Committee was in agreement and P. Bawa will forward this recommendation to R. Heath.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF ARTS
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

To: Ron Heath, Registrar
Ross Saunders, Chair, SCUS

From: Ellen Gee
Chair, FACC

Re: Graduation Requirements

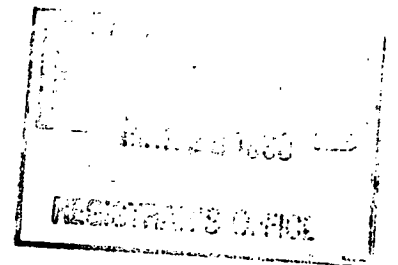
Date: March 19, 1990

This memorandum is to inform you that the Faculty of Arts strongly supports the recommendations of the SCUS Sub-Committee on Minimum Graduation Requirements.

Ellen Gee/rd

EG/rd

c.c. Bob Rogow, B.Admin
Bob Frindt, Physics

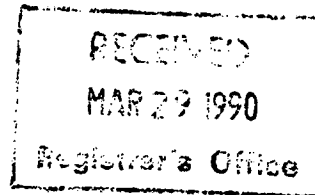


MEMORANDUM
Faculty of Business Administration

To: W. R. Heath, Registrar
From: Robert Rogow, Undergraduate Program Director
Faculty of Business Administration
Subject: Minimum Graduation Requirements
Date: March 29, 1990

The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee of the Faculty of Business Administration wishes to express its agreement with and support for the changes in University graduation requirements recommended by the sub-committee of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies, as attached to Dr. Gee's February 13th memorandum.

Robert Rogow



SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Education

Undergraduate Programs

Memorandum

TO: Ron Heath, Registrar

FROM: Cornel Hamm, Director,
Undergraduate Programs, Faculty of Education

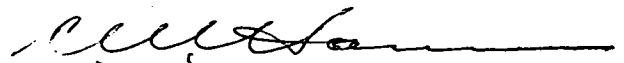
RE: MINIMUM GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

DATE: September 28th, 1990.

The document by the SCUS Sub-Committee on Minimum Graduation Requirements has now been reviewed by the Faculty of Education.

The Undergraduate Programs Committee of the Faculty favoured the recommendations in the document. Open discussion of the document at a Faculty meeting revealed that there is some opposition to it. In particular the following reservations were expressed:

- 1) It is unacceptable that a student can complete all course requirements and yet be denied the degree. The sensible approach is to grant a degree to any student who successfully completes the individual courses that constitute a program or degree requirements. If the University wishes to improve graduation "standards", then the acceptable level of performance at the course level should be addressed.
- 2) The minimum GPA requirement is based on unreliable marks assigned in the first place. This is critical particularly at the degree/non-degree decision point. If we could guarantee that all instructors follow standard practices across and within departments, there might be some justification in using summative numerical scores to make the judgments. In this regard, SCUS might care to undertake a study of grading practices where a student's portfolio of work is evaluated independently by several members of a department.



Cornel Hamm,
Director,
Undergraduate Programs.

CH:smh

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
MEMORANDUM

To: R. Saunders, Chair, SCUS
R. Heath, Registrar
E. Gee

From: R.F. Frindt, Chair
Faculty of Science Undergraduate
Curriculum Committee

Subject: Graduation Requirements

Date: March 23, 1989

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The Faculty of Science has considered the SCUS Subcommittee recommendations on Minimum Graduation Requirements and generally agrees with the proposal.

However, the Faculty suggests that for the Major degree it would be better to use an average over the last 60 hours taken (including the normal 45 upper division hours) rather than just the "upper division courses taken" which could be as low as 44/45 hours.

R Frindt

R. F. Frindt

RFF:pl

cc: C. H. W. Jones, Dean of Science

