SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY S.85-56

MEMORANDUM

To: Senate

From: Senate Committee on
Undergraduate Studies

Subject: School of Computing Science –
New Undergraduate Requirements

Date: November 6, 1985

Action undertaken by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies at its meeting of October 29, 1985 gives rise to the following motions:

MOTION 1:

> "That Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.85-56 , the new GPA requirement for declaration."

MOTION 2:

> That Senate approve and recommend approval to the Board of Governors, as set forth in S.85-56, that the declaration CGPA be lowered to 2.5."

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

MEMORANDUM

To Mr. R. Heath, Registrar and Secretary to the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies.

Subject New Undergraduate Requirements in Computing Science. (ASU 85-1) revised.

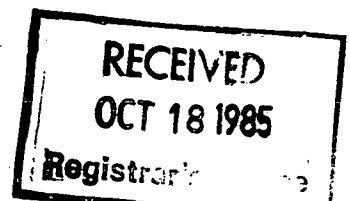**From** J. Blanchet, Admin. Ass't., Faculty of Applied Sciences.

Date October 17/85.

At a meeting of the Faculty of Applied Sciences Undergraduate Studies Committee held on Tuesday, October 15, 1985 the attached document outlining new undergraduate requirements in the School of Computing Science was approved.

Would you please place this item on the next agenda of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies.

Attachment.

J. Blanchet

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Memorandum

To: Janet Blanchet, Faculty of Applied Sciences Re: New Undergraduate Requirements in Computing Science	From: R.D. Cameron, Director of Undergraduate Programs, Computing Science Date: October 15, 1985

Here are the proposed new Computing Science program requirements as approved by the School of Computing Science and as amended and approved by the Faculty of Applied Science Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

1. New GPA Requirement For Declaration

The School has approved an additional GPA requirement on CMPT and required lower division courses for declaration of a CMPT program (CMPT Major, Minor or Honors or DSDP Honors), as follows.

a. The new requirement will be in addition to the current declaration requirements for overall CGPA.

b. The numerical value of the new requirement shall be equal to and shall vary with the overall CGPA requirement for guaranteed declaration in CMPT.

c. The new requirement will be based on all CMPT courses taken at the time of attempted declaration plus the lower division required courses for the particular program as appropriate. No other courses will be included in the calculation for the new GPA requirement.

d. The new requirement will be called the "Computing-Related GPA Requirement for Declaration".

Rationale

These changes solve two problems with the current declaration requirements for CMPT students. First of all, although the current CGPA requirement does imply a good overall background, it does not necessarily imply a good background for Computing. The current requirements thus unfairly allow and encourage students with a weak background in Computing to carry on. This problem is exacerbated by the general impression that a Computing degree is a job ticket which influences many students

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to pursue Computing even though they may not have the aptitude for it. By introducing the new requirement, however, it would be made very clear to students that, unless they are capable of demonstrating significant aptitude for Computing in their lower division courses, they should seriously consider pursuing a discipline more in line with their abilities.

The second problem with the current scheme is that it encourages a kind of game-playing for students who desperately want to pursue a degree in Computing. If a student has completed his lower division requirements without obtaining the required CGPA for Computing, he can then shop around for some courses to raise his CGPA. It does not make sense to suggest this as an appropriate way for a student to better prepare himself for upper division study in Computing.

Although both of these problems would be solved using only the GPA requirement on Computing-related courses, the overall CGPA requirement should be maintained as well. This is important so that intended Computing students treat their non-Computing courses equally as seriously as they treat their required courses for Computing and consequently develop a well-rounded background rather than a narrow perspective centred on Computing.

2. Declaration CGPA To Be Lowered to 2.5

The School has approved a change of the overall CGPA requirement for guaranteed declaration from 2.6 to 2.5 and the corresponding setting of the Computing-Related GPA Requirement for Declaration at 2.5.

Rationale

With the new Computing-related GPA requirement, changing the numerical value of the GPA requirements from 2.6 to 2.5 is a compensating adjustment. In addition, it appears that raising the CGPA from 2.5 to 2.6 had significant negative psychological effects on students, while only having a small effect on the actual number of declarations.

Implementation

Students completing more than half of their lower division required courses for CMPT by the time this change becomes effective will be able to declare either with a CGPA of 2.6 or with a CGPA of 2.5 and a GPA of 2.5 in the lower division required courses for Computing.