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MEMORANDUM

ATTENTION:	Senate	DATE:	August 22, 2023
FROM:	Zareen Naqvi, Institutional Research and Planning (IRP)	PAGES:	1 of 1
RE:	IRP Reports for Information		

At a meeting of Senate held on March 7, 2011, Senator Paul Percival requested that relevant IRP reports, such as the annual Grades Report, be brought to Senate for information.

Attached are two reports for information:

- **2022/23 Grades Report:** This report is prepared once a year and it summarizes course grades at the University over a ten-year period. The 2022/23 Grades Report covers the period from 2013/14 to 2022/23. Attached is the Summary Report. More detailed information is available on IRP's website: <https://www.sfu.ca/irp/students/grades-report.html>
- **2022 Undergraduate Student Survey (UGSS) Report:** The UGSS survey is conducted every fall term. The attached Highlights Report presents a summary of key findings from the Fall 2022 survey. Topics covered are selected in consultation with faculties, Student Services and other administrative units of the University. This year's topics included: course availability, credential completion times, teaching and curriculum, services, and university culture and environment. The full report is located at: <http://www.sfu.ca/irp/surveys/ugss.html>

If you have trouble accessing files on IRP's website, please contact askIRP@sfu.ca.

Enclosure

2022/23 Grades Report:
Executive Summary of
Undergraduate and Graduate Course Grades
2013/14 to 2022/23

Prepared by
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Summer 2023

This report summarizes patterns in student course grades at Simon Fraser University over the ten-year period from 2013/14 to 2022/23¹. Grades are reported on a GPA scale. SFU faculty, staff, and senators can access a report with more detailed tables and charts (<https://www.sfu.ca/irp/students/grades-report.html>).

Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic

- A combination of changes to grading policies and other effects of the pandemic has coincided with a bump in average course grades at the undergraduate level.
- This bump occurs in both lower division (LD) and upper division (UD) courses.
- The pattern is seen in every faculty.
- The increase in average grade awarded begins in 2019/20 - 2020/21, then tapers off, so that by 2022/23 the grades appear to be following their pre-pandemic patterns.

10-Year Patterns

- Even ignoring the grading pattern associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, over the past ten years, the average grade awarded in courses has shown a gradually increasing trend in all faculties at the undergraduate level, and most faculties at the graduate level.
- Comparing grades in 2013/14 versus 2022/23, all *increases* of at least 0.25 occur at the lower division level, and include average course grades awarded by:
 - the Faculty of Education (+0.53),
 - the Faculty of Environment (+0.29), and
 - the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (+0.25)
- There are no faculty-level *decreases* of at least 0.25.
- Over the last decade, the Faculty of Education has consistently awarded the *highest* average grades in both undergraduate and graduate courses.
- In most years, the *lowest* average course grades have been awarded by:
 - LD: the Faculty of Science
 - UD: the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
 - Grad: the Beedie School of Business
- Graduate courses have consistently awarded higher average grades than upper division courses, which have awarded higher average grades than lower division courses, in all faculties.

¹ This report only includes grades with a numeric equivalent, plus P/CR/NC grades due to the Elective Grade System or the one-time Spring 2020 grading policy; only grades with a numeric equivalent are included in averages.

2022/23 Course Grades

- The average course grade this year was 2.95 in undergraduate courses (LD: 2.84; UD: 3.12), and 3.73 in graduate courses.
- Among faculties, the Faculty of Education awarded the highest proportion of A grades and the highest average grades this year at all three course levels (LD, UD, Grad).
- The lowest average grades were awarded by:
 - LD and UD: the Faculty of Science; this faculty also awarded the highest proportion of D and F grades (combined) at both the lower and upper division levels
 - Grad: the Beedie School of Business
- The subjects awarding the highest and lowest average grades this year were:
 - *Highest* average grades:
 - LD: TEKX (3.97)
 - UD: MASC (4.19)
 - Grad: PSYC (4.15)
 - *Lowest* average grades:
 - LD: MACM (2.34)
 - UD: MACM (2.48)
 - Grad: FREN (3.52)
 - Note that FREN and MASC at these levels awarded fewer than 20 grades this year.
- A few course subjects have shown a large change (at least 0.40) in average grade awarded from last year to this year.
- Subjects with a large *increase* include:
 - HUM (Grad: +0.86),
 - NUSC (UD: +0.56), and
 - PUNJ (LD: +0.45)
- Subjects with a large *decrease* include:
 - JAPN (UD: -0.46).
- Note that HUM awarded fewer than 20 grades at the graduate level each year, so significant year-to-year variability is not unexpected.
- Courses offered by the Faculty of Environment had the highest use of the Elective Grade System this year; P/CR/NC grades made up 4% of their undergraduate course grades (LD: 5%; UD: 3%).
- Groups of undergraduate students who were most likely to make use of the Elective Grade Policy in their undergraduate courses were:
 - Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology students taking Faculty of Environment courses (11%) and Faculty of Health Sciences courses (9%),
 - Beedie School of Business students taking Faculty of Environment courses (8%), and
 - Faculty of Applied Sciences students taking Faculty of Environment courses (8%).

Student Faculty vs Course Faculty (Undergraduate Students in Undergraduate Courses)

- Student Faculty:
 - Students in a given faculty most frequently took courses from their own faculty.
 - Students from all faculties received their highest average grades in Faculty of Education courses.

- Course Faculty:
 - Courses in a given faculty were most often taken by students from that same faculty
 - The exception is courses from the Faculty of Environment, which were most frequently taken by students from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.
 - In terms of how courses in each faculty awarded grades to students from different faculties:
 - Courses in the Faculty of Applied Sciences awarded the highest average grades to Faculty of Applied Sciences students.
 - Courses in the faculties of Science, Environment, and Arts and Social Sciences awarded their highest average grades to students from the Faculty of Science.
 - Courses from the remaining faculties awarded their highest average grades to students from the Beedie School of Business.