

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice-President, Academic

Memorandum**To:** Alison Watt
Secretary of Senate**From:** David Gagan 
Vice-President, Academic**Re:** Terms of Reference and Membership **Date:** April 17, 1998
SCUTL

The Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning and I have now concluded our discussions regarding a revised mandate for the Committee. I attach Irene Gordon's covering memo and the revised document. It should now be forwarded to SCAR.

Motion:

That Senate approve the revised terms of reference and membership of the Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning as set out in S.98-42

Attachment

2203

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Memorandum



TO: Dr. David Gagan
Vice-President, Academic

FROM: Dr. Irene M. Gordon
Chair, Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning

I. M. Gordon

SUBJECT: Terms of Reference

DATE: April 9, 1998

First, on behalf of the Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning [SCUTL], I would like to express our appreciation to you for meeting with us on Wednesday, March 25th. We realize that it was a busy time for you but the meeting helped us in our April 3rd discussion of your recommended terms of reference for SCUTL.

I am attaching a copy of the revised terms of reference that have been accepted unanimously by SCUTL. We have made some changes to the terms. Some of the changes we discussed with you, but four resulted from SCUTL's April 3rd meeting. The changes are:

1. The Director of Student Academic Resources is a voting member of SCUTL.
2. We have included a sentence stating that student representatives will be elected for a term of one-year.
3. We have included item (a) about learning outcomes and prior learning assessment. However, we have changed the wording to "to provide advice" and have deleted the words "Vice-President, Academic (or his/her designate)". Our reason for the deletion was to indicate that Senate, the Vice-President, Academic, or others could ask and be provided advice on this topic. Also, this wording is consistent with the phrasing of the remaining seven items.
4. We have placed a comma after "guidance on" in item (c) and deleted the comma after "appropriateness of". The comma seemed to be out of place in the original terms.
5. In item (d) we deleted the words "support and" from item (d) and added "sessional instructors and teaching assistants" after the word faculty.
6. In item (e), we spelled out all of the acronyms for clarity and changed Lohn Lab to LohnLab.
7. We changed the word "efficiency" to "efficacy" in item (g).
8. We added "in May" to "Reports to Senate annually".

We are submitting the attached terms to you for the consideration of Senate and the appropriate Senate Committees.

The members of SCUTL are quite positive about the process we have gone through in arriving at the new terms of reference. Thank you for your assistance throughout this process.

cc: SCUTL members

attachment

FINAL DRAFT

PROPOSED MANDATE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND LEARNING
(SCUTL)

A. MEMBERSHIP:

- one faculty member from each Faculty, elected by Senate;
- one graduate student, elected by Senate;
- one undergraduate student, elected by Senate;
- Director, Centre for University Teaching (ex officio, voting)
- Director, Student Academic Resources (ex officio, voting).

The Committee will elect a Chair from among the faculty representatives. Faculty representatives will be elected for staggered three-year terms. Student representatives will be elected for a one-year term.

B. TERMS OF REFERENCE:

- (a) to provide advice on matters pertaining to Learning Outcomes and Prior Learning Assessment;
- (b) to review periodically, and provide advice on, grading practices and standards in the Faculties;
- (c) to review periodically, and to provide advice and guidance on, the appropriateness of teaching evaluation instruments in use in the University;
- (d) to review periodically, and to provide advice on, the instructional development needs of faculty, sessional instructors and teaching assistants;
- (e) to review and comment on the annual reports of the Centre for University Teaching, the Instructional Media Centre, the Academic Computing Services, the Student Academic Resources office and the LohnLab, and annual undergraduate surveys;
- (f) to provide advice on the annual program of the Centre for University Teaching;
- (g) to provide advice on the efficacy of various teaching strategies in relation to changing teaching and learning environments;
- (h) to consider such matters, related to teaching and learning, referred to the Committee by Senate and its committees.

C. Reports to Senate annually in May.

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Office of the Vice-President, Academic

Memorandum

To: Professor Irene Gordon
Chair, SCUTL

From: David Gagan 
Vice-President, Academic

Re: SCUTL Mandate

Date: February 6, 1998

Your letter to Dr. Blaney regarding SCUTL's terms of reference was referred to SCAR and then back to me in the hope that SCUTL and I could negotiate new terms of reference, or alternative ways of pursuing SCUTL's business. I must report back to SCAR.

I attach for the Committee's consideration a draft mandate, and some membership revisions. I would be pleased to discuss them with the Committee, in particular B (a) which requires a rather lengthy explanation.

I have discussed this draft with Faculty Deans who suggested other possibilities: (a) creating a standing committee of Associate Deans (Undergraduate Studies) to pursue this agenda; (b) inviting SCUS to assume these responsibilities. They are, nevertheless, very supportive of the idea that some group should be formally responsible for these matters.

I will be happy to meet with you and your Committee as soon as possible.

Attachment

DRAFT

PROPOSED MANDATE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON UNIVERSITY TEACHING
AND LEARNING (SCUTL)

A. MEMBERSHIP:

- one faculty member from each Faculty, appointed by Senate;
- one graduate student;
- one undergraduate student;
- Director, CUT (ex officio, voting);
- Director, Student Academic Resources (ex officio, voting).

The Committee will elect a Chair from among the faculty representatives. Faculty representatives will be appointed for staggered three-year terms.

B. TERMS OF REFERENCE:

- (a) to advise the Vice-President, Academic (or his/her designate) on matters pertaining to Learning Outcomes and Prior Learning Assessment;
- (b) to review periodically, and provide advice on, grading practices and standards in the Faculties;
- (c) to review periodically, and to provide advice and guidance on the appropriateness of, teaching evaluation instruments in use in the University;
- (d) to review periodically, and to provide advice on, the instructional support and development needs of faculty;
- (e) to review and comment on the annual reports of the CUT, the IMC, the SAC and the Lohn Lab, and annual undergraduate surveys;
- (f) provide advice on the annual program of the Centre for University Teaching;
- (g) provide advice on the efficiency of various teaching strategies in relation to changing teaching and learning environments;
- (h) to consider such matters, related to teaching and learning, referred to the Committee by Senate and its committees.

SUGGESTED REVISED SCUTL TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

In a 1997 requested meeting with Dr. D. Gagan, Vice-president Academic, Senate Committee on University Teaching and Learning [SCUTL] members outlined problems with Committee's purpose as described in its original mandate. Dr. Gagan noted that Senate committee's are generally responsible for policy recommendations. SCUTL's original terms of reference make it an exception. In particular the first two points outlining SCUTL's purpose have occupied much of the members' time with only minimal results. As specified in June, 1996, these purposes are:

1. To assist departments in the development of methods of evaluating teaching.
2. To develop new standard teaching survey instruments and to develop a policy regarding the regular use of teaching surveys by all course instructors.

SCUTL'S difficulty with these two purposes arose primarily due to three factors. First, SCUTL members are generally not experts in teaching evaluation design. This lack of expertise was compounded by the wide variety of accepted evaluation instruments and the controversies surrounding the uses of these instruments. The second difficulty existed because SCUTL has been treated like all other Senate committees in terms of budget. A budget was not established to undertake the purposes outlined. The third factor relates to the changing membership of the committee. While the infusion of new talents and ideas is an important component of the revitalization of a committee, it also can serve as a negative aspect when tasks take more than one year to complete.

On Dr. Gagan's suggestion, SCUTL's purposes should perhaps be revisited so that it becomes a committee that recommends policies to Senate. The following are suggested as SCUTL's revised purposes.

Terms of Reference

1. To report on
policies and practices relating to teaching and learning throughout the University, and when appropriate and without undermining academic freedom, make recommendations to Senate concerning:
 - teaching practices, including teaching formats (e.g., lecture, tutorial, laboratory, practicum, supervision of projects and theses, modes of distance education)
 - programs for improving teaching practices and learning

- teaching workload
 - methods of evaluating teaching and learning
 - uses of media and technology in teaching and learning
 - advisement of students
 - class size
 - grading practices and standards
 - patterns of completion and withdrawal from courses and academic programs
 - instructional support for sessional instructors, teaching assistants and other limited-term instructional staff
 - information and support systems for students.
2. To help disseminate information about learning methods with the aim of improving the University's instructional effectiveness.
 3. To review periodically the programs of awards given for excellent teaching in the University.
 4. To receive annual reports from the Directors of the Centre for University Teaching, Student Academic Resources, the Instructional Media Centre, the LohnLab and other similar units.
 5. To consider matters relating to teaching and learning referred to the Committee by Senate and its committees [e.g., SCAR, SCAP, SGSC and SCUS].
 6. To advise the Centre for University Teaching.

Membership:

One faculty member, from each Faculty, elected by Senate. One of these members will be elected by Senate as Chair of the Committee.

One graduate student

One undergraduate student

Director of the Centre for University Teaching [ex officio, voting]

Director of Student Academic Resources [ex officio, non-voting]

Reports annually to Senate in May.