

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

*Office of the Vice-President, Academic*

MEMORANDUM

**To:** Senate  
**From:** J.M. Munro, Chair, Senate Committee on Academic Planning  
**Subject:** Access to Telephone Registration for New (Semester 1) Students  
**Date:** March 14, 1994

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Action undertaken at the meeting of the Senate Committee on Academic Planning on March 9, 1994 gives rise to the following motion:

**Motion:** "That Senate approve as set forth in S.94 - 29 , the change to the registration priority of new students."

*J.M. Munro*

## SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

## MEMORANDUM

To: SCAP

From: Ron Heath  
Secretary, SCUSSubject: Access to Telephone Registration  
for New (Semester 1) StudentsDate: March 4, 1994

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At the meeting of SCUS on March 3, 1994, the attached report from W. Wattamaniuk was received for discussion. As noted in the memorandum, last fall the Office of the Registrar and many departmental offices received complaints from new students and their parents that they found it impossible to gain entry to any courses. We knew from previous experience that course spaces would open up as we moved through the registration and course drop process, but that is small consolation to new students who are inexperienced with the registration system. W. Wattamaniuk notes that 'many of these course places were subsequently released in the first three weeks of classes'. In fact, last fall at the end of week three, with 17,522 course places available at the 100 level, 14,993 were filled. In other words, after registration had shaken out, there was more than enough capacity for all who wanted courses at that level. It is worth noting as well that students entering the University at the semester one level are, for the most part, limited to this narrow range of 100 level courses while both continuing and new advanced entry students have completed prerequisites that give them access to a wider range of courses.

While the recently introduced tuition penalty for course drops has had a significant effect on reducing over-enrolment which resulted in subsequent course drops, a continuing problem is timing. Specifically, UBC will be allowing their scholarship students to commence fall registration in early June, and then the remaining new students are integrated with the registration of upper level students in late June/early July. Currently, our grade 12 students do not get a chance to register until about the first week of August. Since many grade 12 students are choosing between these two institutions, the opportunity to complete course selection at UBC much earlier in the process results in these students committing to UBC because they have course spots there.

It was the unanimous recommendation of SCUS (March 4, 1994) that the current registration priority system be modified. In the following proposal, new students are defined as those who are entering with BC Grade 12 or equivalent as their basis of admission and those who are entering the University for the first time with no transfer credit.

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## Recommendation

New students, as defined above, should retain their same relative priority within that group but for their first semester of registration a constant would be added to their current RPN such that the new students would be released to the telephone registration system during the first five days of telephone registration. Coincidentally, continuing students would also be released to telephone registration based on their RPN with the total number released on any given day determined by the capacity of the telephone registration system.

Based on enrolment last year, the following pattern would be illustrative:

Day 1 - new students with an RPN = or > than 30;

Day 2 - new students with an RPN between 26 and 29 inclusive;

Day 3 - new students with an RPN between 20 and 25 inclusive;

Day 4 - new students with an RPN between 18 and 19 inclusive;

Day 5 - new students with an RPN between 0 and 17 inclusive.

The RPN ranges would be adjusted for any given entry semester so that the new students are relatively evenly distributed over the first five days of the telephone registration process.

It is proposed that this recommendation would take effect for the registration process for the Fall Semester 94-3.

As set out in its responsibilities, SCUS would continue to review the practices and procedures with respect to the Registration Priority System.

**SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** J.M. Munro, VP Academic  
J. Osborne, AVP Academic  
R. Heath, Registrar

**FROM:** Walter Wattamaniuk  
Director, Analytical Studies

**RE:** Direct Entry Students

**DATE:** February 9, 1994

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Last fall, the Registrar's Office faced the brunt of many complaints from newly admitted secondary students (and their parents) about the scarcity of introductory 100 level course places at SFU due to full course sections.

At the suggestion of Ron Heath, Liny Chan and I decided to look at the transaction records of all new direct entry B. C. secondary students who registered in 1993-3. Our objective was to systematically try to describe and quantify some of the problems they faced as they attempted to register in courses.

We found that on average the chances of success when attempting to add a course at any given time were about one in five. Only one out of every 13 students was able to get all their first choice courses without being denied entry to a course at least once. The main reason was a shortfall of introductory level course places. One-half of all introductory course places were filled before any new secondary students were allowed to register. Many of these course places were subsequently released in the first three weeks of classes. However, at the time, because of their unfamiliarity with the teleregistration system, the inability to get courses probably caused a lot of frustration for students.

The 1993 SCIMO survey which was administered to students in November largely supported the teleregistration evidence. It indicated that 79% of new secondary students were able to get the number of courses they required but only 33% were able to get all the specific courses they wanted. By contrast, these percentages were 83% and 51% for all students surveyed.

I expect that the new course drop policy will largely solve the problem of course hoarding next fall. However this measure in itself will not be enough and if the supply of introductory course places does not increase, students will continue to experience problems with course availability, particularly since the enrollment targets presently before SCAP will increase their numbers next fall.

I do not believe that we can continue on this course of action. Students presumably make decisions to accept our offers of admission on the assumption that courses will be available in their first semester of study. If new students continue to have difficulty obtaining courses in their first semester at SFU, they will eventually begin to reconsider our offers of admission. We stand in danger of gaining a reputation similar to some colleges vis-a-vis course availability.

Our options are fairly straightforward:

- Increase the supply of introductory course places. This involves finding additional resources and poses the problem of determining which specific disciplines and courses to target for increases.
- Reserve a minimum number of course places for secondary students.
- Increase the registration priority for secondary students in their first semester at SFU.

The last two options both involve a reallocation of teleregistration priority. Giving new secondary students highest priority has the advantage of being easiest to implement. It will also ensure that our very most senior students, who are close to graduation and who also have high registration priority, will get the 100 level courses they need in order to graduate. Unfortunately, continuing students who have the lowest priority will have difficulty finding course places. Mitigating this argument is the fact that continuing students are more teleregistration "street-wise", will persevere in their quest for specific courses and will eventually be able to get places, albeit perhaps only after classes start in some cases.

A more detailed report follows.

cc. L. Chan, Analytical Studies

## THE SUPPLY OF INTRODUCTORY 100 LEVEL COURSE PLACES AT SFU

We first identified all 100 level courses offered at SFU in 93-3 which did not require any prerequisites and which had new secondary students registered in them. A complete listing of the 93 courses is attached in Appendix A. For each course we examined the enrollments on:

- Aug 2nd; the day prior to the first release of secondary students.
- End of Week One (Ewk1) of classes.
- End of Week Three (Ewk3) of classes.

Some observations:

### 1. There was a shortfall of course places prior to August 3rd.

- On August 2nd, out of the total supply of 17,400 course places, 8,300, or 48% were filled. The students enrolled thus far had an  $RPN \geq 31$  but did not include any secondary students (all secondary students had lower RPNs).

- Since students have discipline and scheduling preferences, it is not possible to fill 100% of the course places. Historically, the maximum capacity is closer to 90%. This means that there were about 7,400 course places left for the approximately 2,900 students with  $RPN \leq 30$  who subsequently attempted to register. These students, of which 1,500 were new secondary students, each required, on average, 3.5 courses or a total of 11,600 course places.

- This means that a potential short fall of about 2,750 places existed prior to August 3rd.

### 2. Students registered in courses prior to August 3rd were primarily second and third year continuing students. Of the 8,300 filled course places

- 12% were held by new students with  $RPN \geq 31$
- 58% were held by Yr2 continuing students with  $31 \leq RPN \leq 70$
- 22% were held by Yr3 continuing students with  $71 \leq RPN \leq 105$
- 8% were held by Yr4 continuing students with  $106 \leq RPN \leq 105$

### 3. Of the 8,300 filled course places prior to August 3rd about 1,100 course places were subsequently released by Ewk1.

- Yr4 students dropped 170 course places (24% out of 700)
- Yr3 dropped 300 course places (17% out of 1,800)
- Yr2 dropped 600 course places, (12% out of 4,800)
- New students dropped 52 course places (5% out of 1,000)

4. By Ewk1, 91% of all introductory course places were filled (15,700 out of 17,400) with 52 out of 93 courses filled at  $\geq 95\%$  of capacity.

5. By Ewk3, 86% of all introductory course places were filled (15,000 of the 17,400) with 20 out of 93 courses filled at  $\geq 95\%$  of capacity.

6. The five disciplines secondary students had most difficulty with insofar as full courses were English, Philosophy, Psychology, Criminology, and Biosciences.

We looked at all transactions made by secondary students against each of the 93 courses between August 3rd and Ewk1. For each course we counted the number of students who tried to register in the course unsuccessfully between August 3rd and Ewk1. Figure 1 shows the forty courses with the highest course-full transactions. For instance, 633 secondary students tried unsuccessfully to register in English 101 between August 3rd and Ewk1. 531 students tried unsuccessfully to register in Psychology 100 and were turned away.

### TELEREGISTRATION TRANSACTIONS MADE BY NEW SECONDARY STUDENTS

We next looked at all teleregistration transactions made by 1,414 new secondary students who registered in the 93 introductory 100 level courses between August 3rd and Ewk1.

We found that during this period each student on average :

- made 27.1 course transactions
- was able to successfully add 5.7 courses
- later dropped 1.5 courses
- was successfully registered in 4.2 courses by Ewk1
- was denied entry 17.7 times because the desired course section was full.
- was denied entry into 6.4 different courses because the course section(s) desired was full
- made 2.2 unsuccessful transactions due to other reasons.

Specifically, we found that by Ewk1 only 108 students out of 1,414 were able to register in all their courses successfully; 177 students had been turned away from one course; 159 students from 2 different courses; 162 students from three different courses; 123 students from four different courses and the remaining 685 students from five or more courses. Figure 2 shows the distribution for all students.

**RESPONSES TO THE 1993 SCIMO STUDENT SURVEY FROM  
SECONDARY STUDENTS**

The Fall, 1993 SCIMO survey was administered to students in November, 1993 and identified 114 students who were new and who came directly from secondary school. Their responses to the survey questions on course availability gave rise to the following observations:

- The average number of courses registered in was 4.3.
- 21% of new secondary students said they were unable to get the number of courses they wanted. This percentage dropped to 16.4% for all students surveyed. Most new secondary students wanted one additional course.
- 66% of new secondary students said that they were unable to get all the specific courses they wanted. This percentage dropped to 48.7% for all students surveyed. Most new secondary students were unable to get 2-3 courses.

## APPENDIX A

## SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

## TELEREG STATISTICS FOR INTRODUCTORY FIRST YEAR COURSES, FALL 1993

COURSE	MaxE	Enroll	Aug 2nd	MaxE	ActE	Ewk1	MaxE	ActE	Ewk3
	2-Aug	2-Aug	% Cap	Ewk1	Ewk1	% Cap	Ewk3	Ewk3	% Cap
ARCH101	261	120	46%	261	243	93%	291	240	82%
ARCH105	40	33	83%	40	39	98%	40	32	80%
ARCH131	170	76	45%	170	166	98%	170	159	94%
BISC100	120	81	68%	120	117	98%	120	117	98%
BISC101	270	88	33%	270	264	98%	270	252	93%
BISC102	270	88	33%	335	293	87%	335	287	86%
CHEM101	225	71	32%	225	190	84%	225	187	83%
CHEM102	550	74	13%	623	532	85%	623	505	81%
CHEM106	72	25	35%	76	72	95%	76	73	96%
CHEM115	460	55	12%	452	445	98%	452	421	93%
CHIN100	45	23	51%	45	45	100%	45	44	98%
CMNS110	213	190	89%	208	201	97%	208	200	96%
CMNS130	220	195	89%	211	217	103%	211	207	98%
CMPT1	100	67	67%	120	103	86%	100	96	96%
CMPT100	85	57	67%	85	60	71%	85	56	66%
CMPT101	130	39	30%	140	137	98%	130	131	101%
CMPT103	150	100	67%	150	145	97%	150	139	93%
CMPT105	105	69	66%	115	115	100%	110	114	104%
CNS160	48	50	104%	48	44	92%	48	46	96%
CRIM101	344	123	36%	339	321	95%	369	325	88%
CRIM103	169	127	75%	154	145	94%	154	137	89%
CRIM104	113	94	83%	114	110	96%	114	104	91%
CRIM131	174	106	61%	169	161	95%	169	149	88%
CRIM135	157	126	80%	153	148	97%	153	139	91%
CRIM151	101	49	49%	84	65	77%	84	56	67%
ECON102	256	43	17%	288	249	86%	288	233	81%
ENGL101	515	234	45%	494	483	98%	494	463	94%
ENGL102	268	126	47%	264	257	97%	264	246	93%
ENGL103	224	118	53%	224	212	95%	224	200	89%
ENGL104	208	71	34%	208	199	96%	208	188	90%
ENGL199	196	186	95%	186	180	97%	216	184	85%
FPA104	100	87	87%	100	87	87%	100	80	80%
FPA111	136	60	44%	136	129	95%	136	126	93%
FPA136	108	44	41%	108	92	85%	108	85	79%
FPA151	60	56	93%	60	60	100%	60	64	107%
FPA167	130	77	59%	130	120	92%	130	103	79%
FPA170	24	26	108%	24	19	79%	24	19	79%
FREN100	106	52	49%	106	73	69%	106	70	66%
FREN151	154	31	20%	155	134	86%	154	115	75%
GEOG100	250	94	38%	250	245	98%	250	234	94%
GEOG102	64	42	66%	64	61	95%	64	56	88%
GEOG111	240	125	52%	240	235	98%	270	241	89%
GEOG112	64	56	88%	64	61	95%	64	57	89%
GEOG162	192	84	44%	192	179	93%	192	167	87%
GERM102	66	52	79%	76	61	80%	76	52	68%
GERM141	20	20	100%	25	20	80%	25	20	80%
HIST101	340	109	32%	340	297	87%	340	277	81%
HIST105	357	121	34%	357	341	96%	357	323	90%

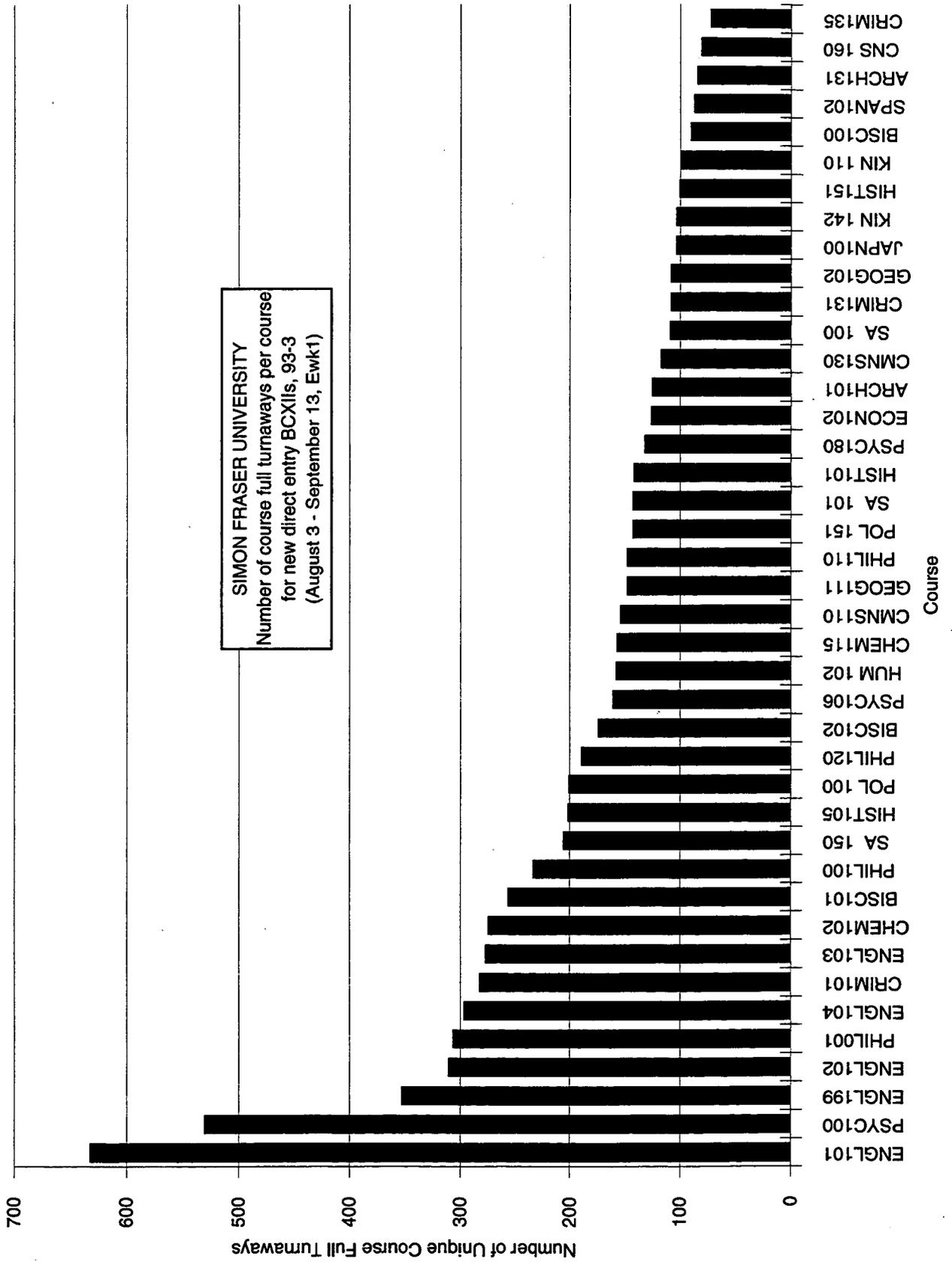
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COURSE	MaxE	Enroll	Aug 2nd	MaxE	ActE	Ewk1	MaxE	ActE	Ewk3
	2-Aug	2-Aug	% Cap	Ewk1	Ewk1	% Cap	Ewk3	Ewk3	% Cap
HIST146	36	36	100%	36	33	92%	36	34	94%
HIST151	136	105	77%	136	133	98%	136	125	92%
HUM102	120	123	103%	120	118	98%	120	114	95%
HUM161	30	31	103%	30	30	100%	30	26	87%
JAPN100	60	64	107%	60	56	93%	60	61	102%
KIN105	60	60	100%	51	51	100%	51	49	96%
KIN110	270	221	82%	260	253	97%	260	238	92%
KIN140	160	141	88%	152	148	97%	152	147	97%
KIN141	45	15	33%	45	39	87%	45	30	67%
KIN142	210	153	73%	231	223	97%	231	215	93%
KIN143	180	153	85%	170	165	97%	170	161	95%
LAS100	60	32	53%	60	59	98%	60	53	88%
LING100	280	76	27%	280	211	75%	280	195	70%
LING110	410	159	39%	400	325	81%	400	297	74%
LING130	140	88	63%	140	119	85%	170	126	74%
MATH100	300	76	25%	300	247	82%	300	216	72%
MATH110	285	76	27%	285	165	58%	285	148	52%
MATH144	60	17	28%	60	33	55%	60	29	48%
MATH151	430	39	9%	489	397	81%	489	389	80%
MATH154	275	49	18%	275	254	92%	275	244	89%
MATH157	350	85	24%	350	258	74%	350	256	73%
MATH161	35	3	9%	35	13	37%	35	13	37%
MATH190	210	79	38%	210	125	60%	210	112	53%
PHIL1	413	194	47%	349	335	96%	335	322	96%
PHIL100	192	103	54%	192	183	95%	180	170	94%
PHIL110	226	92	41%	219	204	93%	219	188	86%
PHIL120	174	75	43%	142	137	96%	135	126	93%
PHIL150	85	37	44%	85	81	95%	85	74	87%
PHYS100	320	93	29%	330	265	80%	330	245	74%
PHYS101	240	121	50%	302	241	80%	302	239	79%
PHYS120	250	24	10%	250	206	82%	250	188	75%
POL100	204	153	75%	204	198	97%	204	194	95%
POL151	153	141	92%	153	149	97%	183	163	89%
PSYC100	604	242	40%	536	584	109%	536	568	106%
PSYC102	264	142	54%	240	232	97%	240	212	88%
PSYC106	136	127	93%	120	119	99%	120	105	88%
PSYC180	136	122	90%	120	126	105%	120	115	96%
RUSS100	40	29	73%	40	38	95%	40	35	88%
SA100	126	71	56%	112	117	104%	142	110	77%
SA101	126	87	69%	112	112	100%	142	115	81%
SA150	297	130	44%	269	279	104%	269	263	98%
SPAN102	152	116	76%	152	135	89%	144	128	89%
STAT101	45	36	80%	55	40	73%	55	34	62%
STAT103	200	98	49%	205	144	70%	230	146	63%
WS100	179	140	78%	174	166	95%	174	156	90%
TOTAL	17374	8294	48%	17334	15718	91%	17522	14993	86%

**FIGURE 1.**



**FIGURE 2**

