

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S.71-113, a, b.

MEMORANDUM

To	SENATE	From	JON WHEATLEY
			DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Subject	"THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND THE ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING PROGRAMS" - S.71-113, S.71-113a and S.71-113b	Date	SEPTEMBER 15, 1971

MOTION: "That the paper entitled 'The Introduction of New Graduate Programs and the Assessment of Existing Programs,' S.71-113b, be accepted."

# SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

S.71-113

## MEMORANDUM

To.....	SENATE	From.....	JON WHEATLEY
			DEAN OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Subject.....	"THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND THE ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING PROGRAMS"	Date.....	SEPTEMBER 15, 1971

The paper entitled 'The Introduction of New Graduate Programs and the Assessment of Existing Programs' was passed by the Executive Committee of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee on August 2, 1971 and the Senate Graduate Studies Committee on August 9, 1971 and again on September 13, 1971.

MOTION: "That the paper entitled 'The Introduction of New Graduate Programs and the Assessment of Existing Programs' be accepted".

S.71-113a

INTRODUCTION TO THE PAPER ENTITLED

'The Introduction of New Graduate Programs and  
the Assessment of Existing Programs'

The document under discussion is a controversial one as any genuinely innovative document affecting all graduate work at the University is bound to be. I give here the history of the paper and, at the request of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, I identify and discuss some of its more controversial provisions.

When I was being interviewed before coming to Simon Fraser I was frequently questioned about my attitude towards interdisciplinary graduate work. It was plain that many faculty members felt that there was presently inadequate provision for interdisciplinary graduate work at Simon Fraser. As soon as I came, therefore, I began working on this problem. On the basis of preliminary discussions with the Executive Committee of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee, I drafted a document and took it back to that Committee. The Committee, sitting in Committee of the whole, discussed it in detail and I then rewrote the document in the light of that discussion.

I took the rewritten document back to the Executive Committee of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee for action on August 2, 1971 and it was passed unanimously. I then took it to the Academic Planning Committee who suggested a number of amendments. As the Academic Planning Committee is not a Committee of Senate I took the point of view that they could not amend the document but I undertook to take their suggested amendments to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee.

The Senate Graduate Studies Committee discussed the paper on August 9. It accepted all the amendments suggested by the Academic Planning Committee but then itself amended the document so as to effectively reject

one suggested amendment. The amendment rejected was as follows: that in the case of the establishment of any new degree program the Academic Planning Committee was to be consulted.

At the August 9 meeting of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee there was vigorous debate of the paper. Objections to it fell under two headings: objections to principles in the paper and objections centering round the fact that departments had not had enough time to discuss the paper. To meet the second point the following procedure was adopted: there was a solid majority in favour of the paper and it was therefore forwarded to Senate for approval; but the Committee agreed to meet again before the next Senate meeting, so that if, after fuller discussion with departments, the paper seemed unacceptable, it could be withdrawn from Senate.

The paper accordingly went to the Senate Agenda Committee. That Committee rejected it on three grounds:

- a) It was said to be inconsistent with the Universities Act
- b) It was so written as to accommodate the form of the Faculty of Education decided by Senate only in principle; the objection being that until the changes in the Faculty of Education had been approved in detail by Senate new Senate documents should conform to the Senate regulations presently in force
- c) The President wanted to refer the document to the Academic Planning Committee.

Point a) is a nice point in law but it seemed simpler to seek an amendment to the document than to get ourselves into dubious legal waters. b) could be accommodated with some simple housekeeping but again an amendment was required. c) presumably was a further shot in the battle as to whether Academic Planning should be consulted in all cases of the

introduction of a new graduate degree program.

Because the document had been rejected by the Senate Agenda Committee, the September 13 meeting of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee was no longer one where the paper could simply be withdrawn from, or left before, Senate. Accordingly there was full scale debate of the paper both in Committee of the whole and, later, sitting in ordinary session.

Amendments were offered and passed in three different categories. First, amendments were passed to accommodate points a) and b) above. Second, an amendment was offered, based on a detailed discussion with the Chairman of the Academic Planning Committee, to provide that the Academic Planning Committee shall be consulted on all cases where a new graduate degree program is to be offered. Third, amendments were passed to meet those objections raised at the August 9 meeting of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee and later in written submissions to me by interested groups. The paper passed by a vote of 8 to 5 and is accordingly forwarded to Senate.

It is of course a pity that the paper could not come to Senate backed by a unanimous vote. If I had thought that a unanimous vote were possible I would have withdrawn the paper and rewritten it. However, any paper dealing with such serious conflicts of principles defies unanimous consent. I here outline the two main points of conflict of principle involved:

- 1) There is a fundamental conflict of principle between the notions of the power of freely associated groups of faculty members, the powers of departments, and the power of the University. The provisions of this paper involve two changes in the present power structure: a) Well qualified groups of faculty members can offer interdisciplinary programs (under careful control by University bodies as regards both the qualifi-

cations of the faculty members involved and the use of university resources) independent of departments b) Review, under specific criteria, of all graduate programs, including departmental programs, by University bodies is provided for. These two provisions have been seen as an erosion of departmental power.

2) Graduate programs can be seen as either faculty-member-oriented or program-oriented or, of course, both. Faculty-member-oriented programs are graduate programs mounted on the basis of having well qualified faculty members in the area in which a program is to be mounted. Program-oriented graduate programs involve principal emphasis on the program of studies to be offered. Very large and very good universities could conceivably give equal weighting to both programs and the qualifications of faculty members, although it is notable that for genuine research degrees most universities do not. The provisions of this document are that for professional graduate degrees (e.g. the M.B.A.), the program is of greater importance, while for genuine research degrees it is the quality of the faculty members who direct and man the program which must be primary. Thus, under the provisions of this document, the review procedure is primarily directed at the qualifications of the faculty involved.

There is an even more fundamental matter of principle underlying both points above which I stated frequently in debates on this paper and which received sufficiently wide acceptance to bear repeating here. In my opinion, there is only one way to attain and maintain high standards of graduate work: namely to have good faculty of integrity. Without this, no proliferation of regulations will achieve high quality; with it, there will be good graduate work if the regulations allow it. Thus the aim of legislation must be to provide a) a way for good programs to operate smoothly, and b) a not too cumbersome procedure for discovering which programs are good. The paper has been written in the light of this

principle.

There are three other points of contention within this paper where no real matter of principle is involved. If the qualifications of faculty members are paramount, how many highly qualified faculty members must one have in a given area before it is proper to mount a graduate degree program? The numbers used in the document are as follows: two for a Master's degree, four for a doctoral degree. These numbers seemed to the Committee to be right but any straight number tends to look arbitrary.

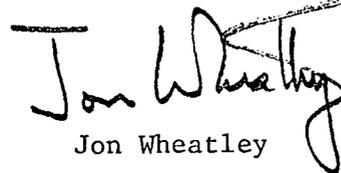
Some concern was expressed in the Committee over what constitutes a "new graduate program". This is a notion which defies definition but is surely clear enough in particular cases. When a department is not now authorized to give, say, a Ph.D., the offering of a Ph.D. in that department constitutes a new program. And the same reasoning applies to interdepartmental programs. Or to put the same thing in another way, we now have a set of established graduate programs, and procedures are set out in the paper for recording exactly what these are. All other programs are new.

Concern was also expressed in the Committee over what constitutes an area of specialization within a discipline, a concept which plays an important part in the paper. If one asks an Academic what his area or areas of specialization are he can usually give an answer: he works in transformational grammar, in analytic philosophy, in number theory, on Dryden or Yeats, in 17th Century History, in solid state physics, in constitutional law, or in more than one of these areas. It is precisely these sorts of statements the paper envisages. In the language of the paper, "the description of an area of specialization may be broad or narrow, depending on the qualifications of the faculty involved" and, for departments, that "it is in general better to have a few fairly broadly

stated areas of specialization rather than a great many very narrowly stated areas". This section of the paper needs only to be implemented in a straight-forward way.

Whatever its vices, this paper has three real virtues:

- a) It allows for the introduction of new graduate programs under careful but flexible control.
- b) It allows for the introduction of inter-departmental programs by the same procedures used for the introduction of departmental programs.
- c) It gives specific direction as to what criteria are to be used for the review of existing programs or the introduction of new ones.

  
Jon Wheatley

/olm

S.71-1134

THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW GRADUATE PROGRAMS AND THE ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING PROGRAMS

Description of document

This document lays out regulations for the introduction of new graduate programs, new specializations within existing programs, new programs offered by a sub-group within a Department, new interdisciplinary programs whether within departments or between departments, and the assessment of existing programs. As a consequence it substitutes for and goes beyond EGS. 41, sent to Senate for information on January 26, 1970. In designing the new document it has been borne in mind that EGS. 41 has never been used, presumably because its provisions are so cumbersome that it is less trouble to circumvent it than to follow it.

Preamble

Traditionally, new graduate programs at universities have just been allowed to grow, usually round a few eminent men. Lately there has been a move towards regulating the introduction of graduate programs with considerable assessment procedures for proposed programs. It seems desirable to strike a compromise between unfettered introduction of graduate programs, though this has clear advantages in favour of spontaneity, and heavily fettered introduction with elaborate assessment procedures designed to protect standards. In this document, the attempt has been made to keep the whole area of graduate programs flexible with the continued possibility of the introduction and elimination of programs as staff and need vary.

The establishment of new interdisciplinary graduate degree programs between departments or graduate programs offered by a sub-group within a department should follow the same guidelines (given below) as the establishment of a graduate program within a department. The only difference, indeed, is that a substitute structure must be found for the

departmental committees which now handle graduate programs and graduate students.

There are in general two sorts of graduate degrees offered at universities and, though there is a good deal of blending between them, an operational distinction can be drawn. The sorts of programs are as follows:

a) Research degree. The research degree involves a prescribed course of study usually requiring a competence across a fairly broad field but also requiring an area of intensive investigation peculiar to the student. The programs are rarely directed to some specific end. At the master's level they are associated with original research and at the doctoral level require original research. There is usually no specified entrance or graduation date and the student progresses through the program largely at his own speed.

b) Professional degree. The professional degree involves a prescribed course of study, usually with few options for the student, not necessarily culminating in a thesis. The programs are customarily directed to some specific end which need not necessarily be closely associated with original research. The degree is invariably at the master's level and is seen as a terminal degree. Such programs usually take students in groups with a specified date for entry and graduation. An example of such a program in existence is the M.B.A.; a proposed program is that in Pestology.

It is clear that appropriate mechanisms for introducing these two types of programs will differ somewhat; with the research degree it is of central importance that there are faculty members competent to direct research in the required area; research facilities, where required, must be committed in advance. With the professional degree the program is of central importance and must be specified in advance; the staffing for the courses to be offered must be committed in advance.

I Authorization for new graduate programs and new areas of specialization within authorized programs

The authorization of new graduate programs covers new programs within existing departments and programs offered between existing departments.

All new graduate programs require the approval of Senate. Senate shall, in general, act on such matters only on the basis of a recommendation from the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. The investigating component of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee shall be its Executive Committee who shall consult with the Academic Planning Committee and other appropriate bodies in the University before making its recommendation. Any member of faculty, or groups of members of faculty, may submit proposals for new graduate programs under the specifications of III or IV below.

The Executive Committee of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee shall have the power to authorize new areas of specialization within an existing program and shall report such authorization to Senate for information. Any member of faculty, or groups of members of faculty, may submit proposals for new areas of specialization within an existing program.

Any application for a new master's or doctoral degree program shall have the approval of the Faculty Committee or Committees concerned before being submitted to the Executive Committee of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. At the earliest possible time, preferably before submission to the Faculty Committee or Committees, a copy of the application shall be sent to the Dean of Graduate Studies for information.

In assessing proposed graduate programs or proposed new areas of specialization, the Executive Committee of the Senate Graduate Studies

Committee will, in all cases, follow such procedures as it thinks necessary for a proper assessment. In cases where it is clear that a new program or a new area of specialization is justified, it will endeavour to act quickly, especially in interdisciplinary areas where there will be only a few students. However, on occasions when the case is not clear, the Committee has the power to strike an independent committee to report back to it, to require outside assessment or to require any other reports or assessment it thinks necessary. The criteria to be used are given in III and IV below.

II The peculiarities of interdepartmental programs or programs offered by a sub-group within a department.

Any interdepartmental program, or one offered by a sub-group within a department, shall have a Program Committee with the powers of a Departmental Graduate Studies Committee and the authority to set formal requirements for the interdepartmental degree or sub-departmental degree. In the case of an interdepartmental degree, the Program Committee shall consist of at least one faculty member from each department concerned and one other faculty member from one of the departments concerned. In the case of a degree offered by a sub-group within a department, the Program Committee shall consist of at least three faculty members from the department concerned. Membership in the Program Committee shall be determined by the department or departments concerned. All faculty on the Program Committee except, if desired, one member shall be qualified as required for the establishment of a new research graduate program or a new professional degree program as given in III and IV below. Any program offered by a sub-group within a department shall have the approval of the department concerned.

III Criteria of assessment for new research graduate programs or new areas of specialization within such programs

New research degree programs or areas of specialization within existing programs can be proposed by any faculty member or group of faculty members, whether within an existing department or not. The description of an area of specialization may be broad or narrow, depending on the qualifications of the faculty members involved. Thus the wording of the description of an area of specialization is up to individual faculty members or groups of faculty members and it is under the submitted wording that the application or review investigation will take place. The various reviewing bodies have no power to change the wording of a stated area of specialization though they could suggest changes in wording. With departmental areas of specialization at least, it is in general better to have a few fairly broadly stated areas of specialization rather than a great many very narrowly stated areas.

The general criteria the Committee will use in making the assessment of a new program or a new area of specialization are the following. New research graduate programs will be approved only within specified areas of specialization. A new application is required whenever a new specialization is added. For a new master's program or area of specialization at the master's level, at least two faculty members shall have a Doctorate or significant publication in the area concerned or a closely related area; for a new doctoral program or area of specialization at the doctoral level, four faculty members shall be so qualified. An exception can be made to this rule for one faculty member if an outside assessor with significant publications in the area states that the faculty member meets the intention behind these formal requirements in a less formal way. Any new equipment,

library acquisitions or other charges on the University for the new program shall be stated and sources of funds for these charges given. In the case of library acquisitions there shall be an independent report from the Library. If the program is interdepartmental or sub-departmental, the membership in the Program Committee shall be specified and the qualifications of its members given (see II above).

IV Criteria of assessment for new professional graduate programs (masters level only)

New professional degree programs can be offered by a department or sub-group within a department or in an interdepartmental area. There shall be a program specified; the faculty to teach and direct the program shall be specified and their qualifications for teaching in the program given, any extra facilities required shall be committed. The chair(men) of the department(s) concerned or the dean(s) of faculty concerned shall give their written commitment that faculty in their department(s) or faculty(ies) will be available to teach the courses required. If new faculty members are required there must be written commitment from a faculty dean or faculty deans that funds will be made available for hiring such faculty. The composition of the Program Committee shall be specified and the chairman named, who will act as Director of the program. Where students are to be taken in groups, a statement as to the anticipated enrolment shall be given. Entrance requirements shall be specified.

V Review of existing graduate programs

The Executive Committee of the Senate Graduate Studies Committee can at any time require justification for an existing graduate program with its areas of specialization by the criteria for the introduction of new graduate programs or new areas of specialization. It shall do this for all existing graduate programs at least once every ten years. Findings of this investigation, with recommendations for

action (if any), shall be reported to Senate through the Senate Graduate Studies Committee. The interest of students in existing programs shall at all times be protected.

#### VI Announcement of Programs

Any new graduate program authorized by Senate may be announced in the graduate calendar either under the departmental offering, where appropriate, or under a new section to be titled 'Interdepartmental Graduate Degrees.' The usual information about entrance and degree requirements should be given.

#### VII Implementation

These rules come into force as soon as they are passed by Senate. The Executive Committee will then request from departments the programs with areas of specialization in which they are qualified under these regulations to direct graduate work for the degrees they now offer. Detailed justification for these programs and areas of specialization will not be required at that time but the names of faculty members whose qualifications justify an offered specialization will be requested. These programs and areas of specialization will then form the authorized programs at Simon Fraser to be reviewed and augmented or decreased under the provisions of these regulations.

#### VIII Special Provision for Faculty of Education, if required

If at any time Senate passes a resolution making the Faculty of Education a faculty without departments, the following paragraph shall be inserted at the end of Article II:

The Faculty of Education, which has no departments, will offer graduate degrees by forming Program Committees in discrete areas of specialization under the provisions of this and the next two sections.

Membership in such Program Committees shall be set by the Faculty of Education. Areas of specialization which involve a parent discipline in another faculty shall always contain at least one faculty member from the parent discipline.