

S.350

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

To: Senate

From: L.M. Srivastava, Chairman
Senate Committee on Graduate
Studies

Subject: Second Master's and Second Doctoral Degrees

The enclosed paper has been approved by the Executive Committee of the Senate Committee on Graduate Studies and by mail referendum by the entire Senate Committee on Graduate Studies. This problem needs urgent solution because we have some students who wish to take a second Master's degree. The paper is being presented to Senate for approval. Only the second page entitled 'Calendar Entry' need be voted upon by Senate.

With reference to Item 4, an alternate recommendation - 4(a) is presented to Senate:

Alternate recommendation -

4(a) There will be no waiving of course credit requirements for the Second Master's or Doctoral degree.

SECOND MASTER'S AND SECOND DOCTORATE DEGREES

The Problem

Students with Masters degrees from this or other Universities have applied to do a second Masters degree in a different subject or in different aspects of the same subject at this University.

Questions

- 1) Can we permit students to have two, or more, Masters degrees?
- 2) Why doesn't the student do a Ph.D. instead?
- 3) Can the second degree be in the same subject area as the first?
- 4) Can there be a transfer of credit and residence from the first to the second degree?
- 5) May the research project of the second degree be a continuation of that of the first?
- 6) What is the purpose of a degree?
- 7) Can we permit students to have two, or more Doctorate degrees?

Appraisal

This University is a centre of learning where individuals who meet the admission requirements may undertake a program of study in one of many disciplines culminating in the award of a degree. Providing that the student has not already been awarded an equivalent degree in the same subject matter and provided the department is prepared to accept him and recommend him to undertake a degree program at this University the student should be permitted to do a degree of the same type. It is recognized that the content of the courses and research is different and so, ipso facto, in order for the student to derive full benefit from the degree program (course material, facilities and faculty) he cannot be allowed extensive transfer of course credit or residence credit from his first degree.

This second Masters degree is commendable for a student who wishes to widen his/her competence in a new field of study or who wishes to bolster his/her general knowledge of an area by some specialist studies. However, highly motivated students who wish to extend the knowledge they gained from the first degree would do better to proceed to a Ph.D. degree.

SECOND MASTER'S AND SECOND DOCTORAL DEGREES

Persons who have already obtained a graduate degree at this or at another University may wish, under special circumstances, to do a second Master's or a second Doctoral degree. It is recognized that the content of the program for the second degree must be different from that of the first. Providing that a Department is prepared to accept a student in these circumstances and, in order for the student to derive full benefit from the second degree program, the following regulations will apply:

1. Applicants into the graduate studies program who satisfy the minimum admission requirements and wish to do a second Master's or a second Doctoral degree should consult the Department in which they wish to do the major study. Admission will be under the regulations for a Master's (or 'Doctoral', as the case may be) degree program.
2. If that Department approves, it must send a favourable recommendation, including a statement that there will be no content overlap of the two degrees, to the Senate Committee on Graduate Admissions for their approval. This Committee will inform the Department and the Registrar of the result.
3. There will be no waiver of the normal residence requirement for the Master's and Doctoral degrees respectively.
4. There will be no waiving of course credit requirements for the second Master's or Doctoral degree. However, if a student has taken courses in excess of the first graduate degree requirements which are pertinent to the second degree program and not previously counted towards a degree, a Department may recommend to the Senate Committee on Graduate Admissions at the time of application for admission that those courses be counted towards the second degree. Not more than 50% of the total course credits required for the degree can be so transferred.
5. Before recommending the candidate for a second Master's or Doctoral degree, the Examining Committee must ensure that the content of the courses, dissertation, extended essay and/or research project (if any) in the second degree does not overlap that of the student's first degree.