

Simon Fraser University
Senate Graduate Studies Committee
Annual Report to Senate for 2001
February 2002

Submitted by Dr. Jon Driver, Dean of Graduate Studies

Composition and Mandate of the Committee

The current membership of SGSC is the Dean (chair), Registrar (or designate), Librarian (or designate), chairs of the five faculty graduate programme committees, one other faculty member from each of the five graduate programme committees, two graduate students, the Graduate Issues Officer of SFSS, and the Assistant Director Graduate Records (non-voting).

SGSC has established a regular monthly meeting schedule, in an attempt to spread the workload of the committee more evenly over the year. A list of meetings and activities for 2001 is attached as Appendix A.

SGSC is responsible to Senate for admissions (delegated to the Registrar and the Dean), maintenance of academic standards, changes to existing programmes, evaluation of new programmes, and administration of the graduate general regulations. SGSC approves admissions under Special Arrangements, and may act as an appeal body for student progress reviews.

Graduate Studies at Simon Fraser University

Masters programmes are offered in each faculty, doctoral programmes in all but Business Administration, and graduate diploma programmes in Business Administration and Education. (The Graduate Diploma in Urban Studies will commence in the Faculty of Arts in 2002). In addition, the Dean of Graduate Studies office administers the Special Arrangements Programme, which provides a home for students with individual interdisciplinary programmes of study and research. Summary statistics on enrollments and award of degrees are available from the Analytical Studies web site and from the biannual Graduate Factbook (see Appendix B of this report for data on enrollments and credentials awarded). A list of programmes that permit part-time study is available in the Calendar.

During the year 2001 a number of new graduate programmes were proposed. These include the Graduate Diploma in Urban Studies (approved by Senate), the Masters in Public Policy and Management (external reviews complete, and final proposal in preparation), and a Ph.D. programme in Women's Studies (preliminary approval from the Ministry, with full proposal currently going for external review). 2001 was the last year in which departments were required to submit a letter of intent for preliminary approval by the Ministry for new programme proposals. Under recently announced revisions only the final full proposal will go to the Ministry for approval.

The other major change in graduate programmes is the division of the Department of Mathematics and Statistics into separate departments during 2001.

In 2001 the Dean participated in a number of external reviews of SFU's academic programmes. Generally there have been positive assessments of graduate programmes. Perhaps the most common concern (other than funding of graduate students) has been the difficulty of offering stand-alone graduate courses in smaller departments and programmes.

Enrollment and Graduation

Graduate enrollments in degree programmes increased steadily from the late 1980's to the mid-1990's, and have remained relatively stable since then (see Appendix B). This stability is the result of a number of factors. There were relatively few new graduate programmes approved in the late 1990's, and the number of faculty members available for graduate supervision did not increase significantly in the mid to late nineties. Furthermore, funding levels for graduate students have increased slowly, while employment opportunities outside the university were relatively good. There was a significant increase in graduate enrollment in 2001, as measured by graduate headcount in 2001-3. This is because of the development of graduate diploma programmes in Education and Business Administration. Enrollment in Masters and Doctoral programmes has also seen an increase over the previous year, probably reflecting the hiring of new faculty.

Data on credentials awarded are presented in the second table in Appendix B. There has been no clear trend in the number of degrees awarded, but there will be an increase in the future as the current enrollment increase has an impact on graduation. It should be noted that the proportion of doctoral to masters students remains relatively low (less than 20%). SFU figures are consistent with the national average (15% based on 1998 data). The SFU figures are comparable to Victoria, Calgary, and Saskatchewan, while UBC, Alberta, Toronto, Waterloo, McMaster and Guelph have slightly higher percentages of Ph.D. graduates.

Major SGSC activities in 2001

SGSC regularly deals with changes to graduate programmes. Minor changes are reported to Senate. Major changes are brought to Senate for approval. A summary is presented in Appendix A. A major task for Senate Graduate Studies Committee in 2001 was to complete the review of Graduate General Regulations. The proposed changes were approved by Senate, and will be implemented in September 2002.

Assessment Committee for New Graduate Programmes

This committee is a sub-committee of SGSC.

In 2000 the ACNGP met twice, and recommended approval of the MBA(MOT). This programme was approved by SGSC and Senate in 2001.

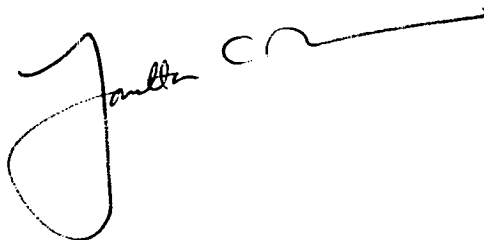
In 2001 the ACNGP met once, to review a proposal for a Masters in Public Policy Management (Faculty of Arts). This proposal has been sent for external review, and a final proposal is being prepared for Senate approval and submission to the Ministry..

Funding for graduate students

Financial support for graduate students continues to be a concern, particularly as we have to compete for students with universities in provinces that provide a provincial scholarship plan. However, there have been few increases to the financial support we are able to offer graduate students. For recruitment purposes we now offer top-up scholarships to entering students with NSERC PGS-A and PGS-B scholarships or SSHRC doctoral fellowships. The number of these available per department is limited. In addition, we have been able to create travel awards for students in NSERC-funded disciplines. These awards are funded by fall-out money from the NSERC scholarship programme, and are available only for direct travel costs of students attending major conferences. A comparable programme is planned for SSHRC-funded disciplines, but we are waiting for an announcement on funding.

At the national level there is some reason for optimism. The federal government and its agencies clearly recognise the need to fund graduate students. It is likely that we will see new and enhanced scholarship programmes developing over the next few years, provided that the economy remains stable. The granting councils have stressed the importance of graduate training as a component of faculty research grants, and one way to increase graduate support at SFU is to encourage faculty members to apply for research grants and to include graduate student support in their budgets.

At the provincial level, there has been relatively little support of graduate students for many years. Increases in graduate student enrollment have not been matched by increases to the operating grant, even though it can be shown that the provincial economy benefits from holders of advanced degrees. Furthermore, British Columbia lacks a comprehensive scholarship plan for graduate study.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John C. ...', is written over the text of the document.

Appendix A Senate Graduate Studies Committee, Activities 2001

Meetings were held in January, February, March, April, May, June, July, September, October and November.

Graduate curriculum changes were approved in Archaeology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Education, English, French, Geography, MBB, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology/Anthropology, and Women's Studies

Approved MBA in Management of Technology

Approved Graduate Diploma in Urban Studies

Approved policy for the temporary and permanent withdrawal of courses

Revised the Graduate General Regulations

Received four applications for admission to the Special Arrangements programme; three were approved.

Appendix B. Graduate Enrollment and Credentials Awarded

Note: figures refer to headcounts; no allowance is made for full-time, part-time and on-leave status

Faculty	Fall 1997	Fall 1998	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Change 97 to 01
Applied Sciences	443	446	466	452	476	7.5%
Arts	751	777	752	730	769	2.4%
Business Administration (GDBA only)	301	270	296	344	416	38.2%
Education (GDE only)	532	468	451	641	1124	111.3%
Science	0	0	(57)	(60)	(103)	
Total headcount *	375	377	393	393	432	15.8%
% change	2402	2338	2358	2560	3217	33.9%
Total degree program headcount **		-2.7	0.9	8.6	25.7	
%change	2402	2338	2301	2345	2506	4.3%
		-2.7	-1.6	1.9	6.9	

*total of all graduate students, including those enrolled in diploma programmes

** total of all graduate students enrolled in masters and doctoral programmes

Notes:

- if diploma enrollments are excluded, the %change from 1997 to 2001 in the Faculty of Business Administration is 4%
- if diploma enrollments are excluded, the %change from 1997 to 2001 in the Faculty of Education is -3%

Credentials awarded by academic year (NB the Graduate Diploma in Education will be awarded for the first time in the 2001/2002 academic year)

Faculty/credential	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01
Applied Sciences					
Masters	59	74	56	66	68
Ph.D.	14	20	15	16	22
Arts					
Masters	103	122	104	138	134
Ph.D.	29	40	26	38	24
Business					
Administration					
GDBA	0	0	0	26	27
MBA	99	126	113	132	119
Ph.D.(SAR)	1				
Education					
GDE	0	0	0	0	0
M.Ed.	91	116	151	121	94
Other Masters	38	33	48	22	21
Doctoral	3	8	13	13	7
Science					
Masters	48	55	57	49	51
Ph.D.	25	33	21	41	26
Total degrees	510	627	604	636	566
Total masters	438	526	529	528	487
Total Ph.D.	72	101	75	108	79
% Ph.D.	14.1	16.1	12.4	17.0	14.0