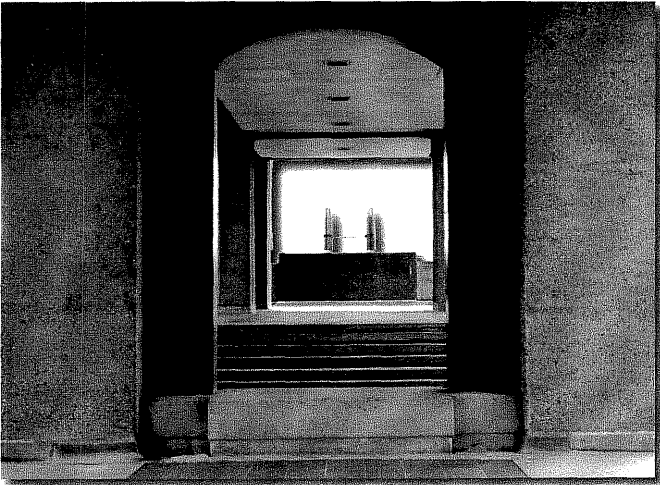
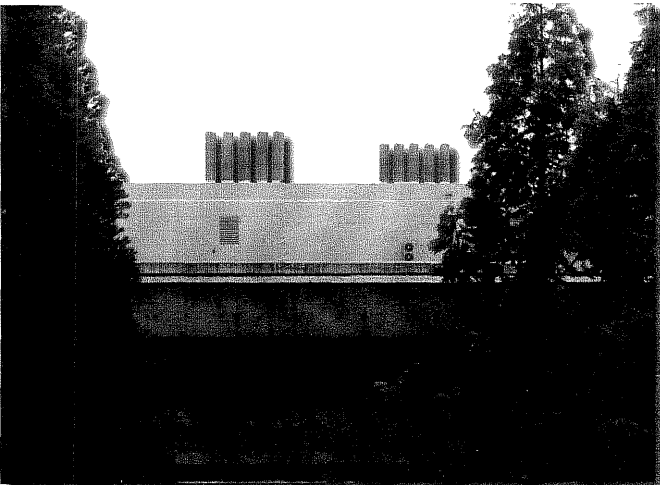




**the  
simon fraser student society**



**1999  
annual general meeting**



**report  
to the membership**



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report prepared by the simon fraser student society  
resource office CUPE 2396  
cover photos by cailey crawford  
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# VICTORIES & CHALLENGES

Dear Members,

Students at SFU can point to several accomplishments in the 1998/99 academic year. First, working in cooperation with student unions across BC, we successfully campaigned to maintain the province-wide tuition fee freeze. This was the fourth year in a row that tuition fees in BC have been frozen, contributing greatly to more accessibility to post secondary education for students.

In addition, through our work with other student unions across Canada, we continued to actively lobby the federal government, in particular Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Finance Minister Paul Martin, to restore the billions of dollars in funding for post secondary education that has been cut over the past six years. Through these and other activities, including provincial and national general meetings, we continued to be full and active participants in the Canadian Federation of Students.

We accomplished much within the University community during the past year as well. Our Society spearheaded efforts to raise awareness and concern around plans to develop a residential and commercial community inside SFU's ring-road. In particular we worked on getting greater student input, and raised concerns around issues of student housing, services for students, and environmental concerns, all coordinated through our Burnaby Mountain Development working group. We succeeded in gaining elected student representation on the Board of Directors which will oversee the project, as well as guaranteed representation for students in Residence on the Board's advisory committee.

We also worked over the year on issues such as fighting SFU VP Academic David Gagan's call for an end to the tuition fee freeze through a "Pie in the Eye of Higher Tuition" event, which raised awareness and got many members involved in the issue. Our Society also worked on issues at SFU such as supporting the Teaching Support Staff Union in its fight to keep tutorial classes small and fully funded; fighting for (again) and winning a Spring semester reading break (which will happen in February 2000).

Our Society continued to provide the wide range and depth of advocacy and other services for students at SFU that we have come to expect. These included free pancake breakfasts, free student handbooks, free legal clinic, ombuds office, clubs, department student unions, book buy-back, concert events, womens' centre, out on campus, and many others.

Much action was taken with respect to improving the financial performance of our Society, including a full review and the beginnings of a significant restructuring of our Food & Beverage services, and a review of our book store and copy centre. Much still needs to be done over the coming years to ensure our Society improves its financial performance and stability.

There are many other challenges that still face us in the coming years: fighting to continue to improve access to post secondary education, fighting to ensure the highest quality of public education here at SFU and across Canada, improving activities and services for our members, and representing the interests of all our members strongly and consistently to the University and the outside community. Working together, in solidarity, along with our hard working and talented members, staff, volunteers and partners we will move into the twenty-first century a stronger and better organization. Please join us as we continue this work.

In solidarity,

the Executive Committee

## Executive Officers

*President* Maya Russell  
*Treasurer* Dave Crossley  
*Internal Relations Officer* Bevin Worton  
*External Relations Off.* Tanya Aguila  
*University Relations Off.* Ryan Mijker  
*Graduate Issues Officer* Nancy Olson

## Department Representatives

### *Archaeology*

Michael Reid 05.27.98-04.30.99

### *Biological Sciences*

Ayala Knott 01.27.99-04.30.99

### *Business Administration*

Jason Childress 01.27.99-04.30.99

Kenneth Giffen 10.07.98-02.22.99

Anders Kise 07.29.98-04.30.99

Alvin Leung 07.08.98-01.13.99

Vipul Pachchigar 07.08.98-01.13.99

### *Canadian Studies*

Scott Byhre 05.01.98-04.30.99

### *Chemistry/BioChemistry*

Shiva Galbaransingh 10.07.98-04.14.99

### *Cognitive Science*

Toby Chow 10.21.98-04.30.99

### *Communications*

Audrey Wang 10.07.98-04.30.99

### *Computing Science*

Michael Pedé 05.27.98-04.30.99

### *Criminology*

John Kim 10.21.98-04.30.99

### *Dance*

Jennifer Knowles 10.07.98-02.24.99

Kirsten Wiren 02.24.99-04.30.99

### *Economics*

Stephen McBride 11.04.98-04.30.99

### *Earth Science*

Devin Gallant 05.01.98-04.30.99

### *Education*

Shane Alfred 01.13.99-03.24.99

### *Engineering Sciences*

Jennifer Overington 05.01.98-04.30.99

### *English*

Jason Thomas 05.01.98-01.13.99

### *Film:*

Jonathon Howells 01.14.98-04.30.98

Robert Yates 05.01.97-10.22.97

### *Theatre and Music*

John Crawford 05.01.98-04.30.99

### *French*

Marc Banzet 10.07.98-01.13.99

Katy Chou 02.24.99

### *Geography*

Vanessa Tellier 05.01.98-01.27.99

### *History*

Michael Parkes 05.01.98-04.30.99

### *Institute of Molecular Biology and Biochemistry*

Jim Stewart 10.07.98-04.30.99

### *Kinesiology*

Chapman Cheung 10.07.98-04.30.99

### *Latin American Studies*

Stephanie Pettigrew 05.01.98-11.04.99

David Saraceno 11.04.98-04.30.99

### *Linguistics*

David Ashton 05.27.98-04.30.99

### *Mathematics and Statistics*

Joy Morris 05.01.98-04.30.99

### *Philosophy*

Jon Tweedale 05.01.98-03.24.99

### *Physics*

Kuan Teong Chuah 05.01.98-04.30.99

### *Political Science*

Jade Burnside 05.01.98-01.13.99

Paria Didehban 01.13.99-04.30.99

### *Psychology*

Jean Manktelow 11.04.98-04.30.99

### *Sociology/Anthropology*

Leanne Lunghamer 05.01.98-01.13.99\

Mark Veerkamp 02.24.99-04.30.99

### *Visual Arts*

Devon Larsen 01.27.99-04.30.99

### *Women's Studies*

Markie Sellers 02.24.99-04.30.99

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## Annual General Meeting October 1, 1998

**Forum Members:** Maya Russell, President; Dave Crossley, Treasurer; Tania Aguila, External Relations Officer; Nancy Olson, Graduate Issues Officer; Mike Reid, Archaeology; Vipul Pachchigar, Business Administration; Scott Byhre, Canadian Studies; Devin Gallant, Earth Sciences; John Crawford, FPA Theatre and Music; Michael Parkes, History; David Ashton, Linguistics; Joy Morris, Math and Stats; Kuan Chuah, Physics; Leanne Lunghammer, Sociology/Anthropology.

**Excused:** Bevin Worton, Internal Relations Officer; Michael Pede, Computing Science.

**Absent:** Ryan Mijker, University Relations Officer; Anders Kise, Business Administration; Jennifer Overington, Engineering Science; Jason Thomas, English; Vanessa Tellier, Geography; Stephanie Pettigrew, Latin American Studies; Jon Tweedale, Philosophy.

**Students At Large:** Erin Fitzpatrick, Jim Stewart; Nancy Janovicek; Alex Long; Mark Veerkamp; James Fletcher; Laila Singh.

**Guests:** Charlie Miller, Auditor; Maura Parte, CFS BC Chairperson.

**Staff:** Cailey Crawford, Resource Coordinator; Scott Perchall, Resource Coordinator; Rebecca Fettis, Student Union Organizer; Amanda Camley, Student Employee; Hattie Aitken, Student Union Organizer.

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**1. Call to Order**

Russell called the meeting to order at 4:35pm.

**2. Appointment of the Chair**

Veerkamp/Parkes

M/S/C

*To appoint Maura Parte as chair of the SFSS 1998 Annual General Meeting.*

Parte introduced the SFSS Executive Officers present at the meeting and conducted an overview of Robert's Rules of Order.

**3. Adoption of the Agenda**

Byhre/Morris

M/S/C

*To adopt the agenda as presented.*

**4. Adoption of the Minutes**

Pachchigar/Byhre

M/S/C

*To adopt the SFSS Annual General Meeting Minutes of October 30, 1997.*

**5. Forum Report**

Morris/Long

M/S/C

*To adopt the 1997/98 SFSS Forum Report as presented.*

# 1997 AGM

## Minutes

Russell presented the report and stressed that it had been a busy year for the SFSS rebuilding from a divisive time between the Society and its membership, the university and the Canadian Federation of Students. She was pleased to report that the organization had become much stronger during the 97/98 fiscal year and she hoped that the trend would continue.

### 6. Treasurer's Report

Russell/Veerkamp

M/S/C

*To adopt the 1997/98 Treasurer's Report as presented.*

Crossley presented the report.

### 7. Auditor's Report

Veerkamp/Parkes

M/S/C

*To accept the 1997/98 Auditor's Report as presented.*

Miller stated that it was his unqualified opinion that the statements reflected the financial activity for the 1997/98 fiscal year. Miller quoted the financial statements saying that in the opinion of Tompkins, Wozny and Co.:

"these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Society as at April 30, 1998 and the results of its operations and the changes in its financial position for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles. As required by the British Columbia Society Act, we report that, in our opinion, these principles have been applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year."

Miller stated that the Society broke even outside of its Food and Beverage Services. He said that although Quad Books and the Printshop came in under budget, there had been an unexpected unpaid leave for a staff member and the layoff of the General Manager that created a balance.

Singh asked what would be done about the Food and Beverage Services. Russell said that this was a "huge issue" and that there had been a number of changes that took place over the summer and early fall including the elimination of a management position in the Pub; the closure of the Atrium Cafeteria on October 9th; changes to pricing, menus, and renovations; and a proposal to put more resources into promotions and special events.

### 8. Appointment of the Auditors

Crossley/Morris

M/S/C

*To appoint Tompkins, Wozny and Co. to be the SFSS Auditors for the 1998/99 fiscal year.*

### 9. SFSS Name Change

This discussion could not occur as quorum for such an additional item had not been achieved.

### 10. Announcements

Russell thanked SFSS staff for their work over the past year Russell also thanked the 1997/98 Executive Committee and stressed that they were an unusually hard working group of people.

### 11. Adjournment

Veerkamp/Byhre

M/S/C

*To adjourn.*

### Campaigns and Government Relations

The Student Society endorsed, financially supported, and/or participated in several important campaigns during the past year.

### The Campus Community

The Peak archivist Matt X and SFU archivist Frances Fournier began important work on preserving the Peak's history. Many of the existing original copies of SFU's student newspaper were in bad shape and deteriorating quickly. In order to help raise the \$6000.00 necessary to transfer archived Peaks to microfilm, the Student Society donated \$300.00.

Concerns from Society members were raised regarding the administration of the SFU Food Bank. Every year the Society donates 10% of its vending revenue to the Food Bank in addition to a budgeted donation. In response to concerns regarding the fact there was little accountability (the Food Bank is not a Student Society service; it is under the mandate of the University's Campus Community Services and has no board of directors or management structure), the Society and CCS formed a Foodbank Committee to oversee the running of the service. The Society and CCS also formed a joint coordinating committee to administer programs on campus with cross-involvement from the University and the Student Society.

Transit service to SFU continued to be of concern to SFU students. In response to the announcement that the FasTrax program would be eliminated in the future, the Society formed a BC Transit working group to lobby for the program's continuance, as well as to lobby for better service to SFU. Rob MacDonald, representative of the BC Transit President's Advisory Council, was invited to speak to members of Forum regarding U-Pass systems in operation in North America.

The Society cost-shared the construction of a new darkroom facility with the Peak Newspaper. The new darkroom provides many members of SFU's Darkroom photography club with a space to carry out its activities.

When the union representing SFU's Teaching Assistants, Sessional Instructors, Tutor Markers, and Language Instructors encountered opposition from the University Administration during collective bargaining, the Student Society came out in support of the TSSU in its position to cap tutorial sizes and preserve the quality of education at SFU. The Society wrote a letter to the University Administration outlining its support for the TSSU and placed posters around campus encouraging students to support their TA's and other support staff in the struggle to preserve the integrity of SFU's tutorial system.

When SFU Vice President Academic David Gagan stated in a media interview that he was in favour of repealing the tuition fee freeze and instituting drastic tuition hikes to make up for shortfalls in public funding to post-secondary education, the Student Society reacted. "Pie in the Eye of Higher Tuition" saw the erection of a large target in the Main Mall; the target's "Bull's Eye" featured a larger than life portrait of David Gagan. Students came out to throw cream pies at Dr. Gagan showing him what students think of the idea of raising tuition. The event attracted media attention from CKWX News 1130, the Burnaby Now, college student papers, and CKNW and VTV; donations were taken for each pie and the money was given to the SFU Food Bank.

### The Wider Community

The Society also supported many campaigns and initiatives that affected people in the wider community.

When Sikh Temple caretaker Nirmal Singh Gill was brutally murdered by Nazi Skinheads,



## Forum Report

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Forum unanimously voted to endorse and support the Communities Against Racism and Extremism rally. Further support was provided by the Society's Advocacy Committee and many Society members attended the rally.

Racism was again the focus when Forum endorsed a protest against the Canadian Free Speech League organized by Communities Against Hate. The Canadian Free Speech League was condemned for its support of known Holocaust deniers and prominent leaders of hate groups like the Heritage Front.

Student Society representatives were also present at a rally for the Bigots Ban Books protest in Vancouver that drew attention to the Surrey School Board's decision to ban children's books that recognize diversity within the definition of family and that recognize same-sex relationships within the context of family. The Graduate Issues Officer and Treasurer for the Society attended a fund-raiser for the legal challenge to the Surrey School Board decision.

SFU students continued to have representation in their provincial and national organization, the Canadian Federation of Students. Delegates were sent to both national and provincial general meetings. At the meeting in May, the national campaign "Make it Public! Education for Everyone!" was initiated. As a local of the Canadian Federation of Students, SFU planned and carried out various actions to support the campaign which called for a national tuition fee freeze; cessation of the deregulation of tuition fees and differential fees; massive public re-investment in universal post-secondary education; reversal of current trends in student financial assistance and debt. During the Week of Action in October, SFU students along with students from several lower mainland campuses picketed the constituency offices of Liberal MPs, including the Minister of Women's Affairs Hedy Fry. In addition to the protests, there were people encouraging fellow students to sign postcards calling for an extension of the tuition fee freeze. The past year also saw the kick-off of ACCESS 2000: The Campaign for Higher Education. ACCESS 2000 is a campaign of the Canadian Federation of Students for a universally accessible, high quality public system of higher education in Canada. The Student Society endorsed the campaign and committed to full participation in the achievement of its goals. The heart of the campaign calls for the restoration of federal funding which has witnessed extreme reductions (\$7 Billion) since 1993. An Access 2000 working group was formed and began work on getting information to SFU students about changes to bankruptcy and insolvency legislation, changes to the Canada student loans program, and concerns regarding the Millennium Scholarship Fund.



SFSS graduate issues officer, Joy Morris, representing our local at the CFS national meeting.

Student Society President Maya Russell was asked to interview with a number of media including the CBC, CKNW, the Vancouver Sun, and Coquitlam Now, outlining the concerns of the Society and the Canadian Federation of Students regarding the provincial government's proposed Youth Community Action Program whereby students who performed volunteer service in their community were granted up to one year in tuition credits.

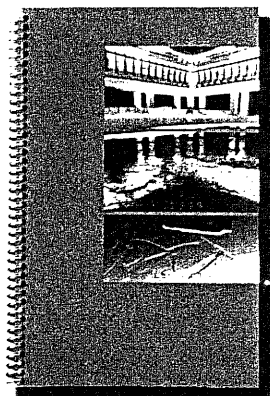
The past year also saw the Student Society represented at another student organization, the British Columbia and Yukon Student Association (BCYSA). While no post-secondary education policy or student advocacy was discussed at BCYSA meetings, the conferences did allow representatives from the Student Society to communicate and network with a large variety of student associations from BC and the Yukon.

Student Society representatives were also sent to the SuperCon student leaders conference hosted by the UBC Alma Mater Society.

## University Relations

Out of concern with the University's proposed Burnaby Mountain Community Development plan, Forum established a BMD working group to, "organize and facilitate student activities,

## Forum Report



The 1998/99 Student Handbook

generate policy ideas, inform the SFU community...with respect to the proposed Burnaby Mountain Community Development plan." The working group was very well organized and many people were involved in this important issue. Two important forums were organized and very well attended; they attracted participants and speakers from the SFU community and beyond who gathered to discuss the issue of development on Burnaby Mountain and to recommend a course of action. The working group also embarked on researching development plans at other universities to compare with the one here at SFU. When the university administration held a closed "envisioning" session for developers, architects, the City of Burnaby, SFU Facilities Management, and other heavy weights at the Diamond University Club, there was little or no representation from the SFU community. Forum sent a strongly worded letter protesting the closed nature of the planning session and pointing out the need for students, faculty, and staff at SFU to have input into the development of their campus. Many students showed up at the "envisioning" session, despite not being invited, and participated in the session. Finally, Student Society Treasurer Dave Crossley was elected to the Burnaby Mountain Community Corporation, the corporation responsible for decisions regarding the direction of development at SFU. A student position on this board was hard won over the past year, and will be of the utmost importance in ensuring students have a voice in campus development.

During the Spring 1998 general election, the Student Society put a referendum question to SFU students asking if they would be in favour of a Spring semester Reading Break, given SFU is one of the few universities without a Spring break. The response was overwhelmingly in favour. While the results were non-binding on the University, the "straw poll" was an effective way to encourage the University to make allowance for a such a break. Consequently, the Dean of Student Services and Registrar Ron Heath met with Student Society representatives and worked out a timetable for the break that was then incorporated into the new SFU Calendar. However, there was a problem. At a meeting of the University Senate, the question of the Reading Break was raised and the decision to implement it was reversed. After a presentation by Student Senators and meetings with the Student Society and the University, the Reading Break was finally approved for the Spring 2000 semester.

The Student Society reacted quickly when it came to light that Campus Community Services (the department responsible for providing student services on campus) had cut the much needed Peer Helpers Program and fired the students employed there. Peer Helpers is an essential and much used service for students who, whether suffering personal or academic crises, can talk about their situation with a fellow student. The students who worked as peer helpers were not paid very much but they relied on the income to help pay for their education; also, they were dedicated students who devoted their time to helping colleagues in need of someone to talk to, or advice. The Student Society saw two issues of concern. One was the fact the Peer Helpers were treated unfairly and unlawfully by the University. To that end the Student Society provided legal counsel for them in an effort to win some compensation or continued employment. Two, the Student Society was concerned that each year brought further cuts to student services provided by the University; there was a growing expectation for the Society to take up the slack left behind by the University cuts. Since each student at SFU pays \$18.00 per semester for student services, the Society was concerned that fewer of those dollars paid by students seemed to go toward student services. The Society began requesting meetings and information regarding where exactly the money from the \$18.00 student services fee went. The issue continues currently.

Similarly, when the University in its round of budgeting made cuts to every academic department to fund the creation of a "Strategic Initiatives Fund" under the sole discretion of the Vice-President Academic, the Student Society began making enquiries and sent a letter to the VP-Academic outlining its concerns regarding the Fund; e.g., its discretionary nature, its cost *vis-a-vis* department budget cuts, and its lack of accountability.

## Forum Report

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When students complained that they were being denied borrowing privileges at the Library because they were not taking courses in one semester, the Student Society investigated. There had been an unofficial change to Library Loans policy. Whereas before, a student retained borrowing privileges for one year following a registered semester, students were now being barred access to library resources unless they were actually enrolled in courses. Since this affected students on Co-op terms, or students still working on long-term assignments but not taking a course, the Student Society met with the Librarian to point out that the policy change contravened the Library's own official policies. The issue was resolved.

During the snowstorm of 1998/99, many members of the campus community were outraged at the conduct of the University. Rather than close the University, the administration chose to remain open; and although the Traffic and Security Information Line stated there was no snow and busses were running, BC Transit had in fact cancelled service to SFU. Many people were inconvenienced by the situation, some were unable to make it to work or class, despite the University being open. The Student Society called a campus-wide meeting for the SFU faculty, staff, and students. President Jack Blaney, VP-Academic David Gagan, and VP-Finance Roger Ward were invited to hear questions and comments from the campus community. The event was very well attended and some high-profile SFU faculty and staff came to voice their frustration at the administration's handling of the situation during the storm. The result was a commitment from the University to upgrade its information systems and to consider closing earlier upon a snow warning.

The Student Society also was involved in the Academic Computing Services External Review. The report coming out of the review pointed to a looming "crisis" in the computing system. There was talk of charging undergraduates a fee for computer access and closing some of the campus computing labs in favour of one central lab. A working group of the Student Society met and drafted questions and proposals that were then presented to the ACS Review Forum. First, the working group questioned the method used to calculate undergraduate student use of the system and presented the concern that printing access in the labs was inadequate, which led to extended use periods by undergraduates as they endured lengthy waits for their print jobs. The Society argued that centralization of the computer labs would further reduce access to SFU students. The working group recommended the installation of docking bays around study areas on campus for lap top use; the increase of lab hours and lab staff to aid students; and the better promotion of computer services available to SFU students.



Student Society executive and staff on hand at Clubs Days providing information and answering questions.

Student Society representatives and staff met with the university to discuss SFU's policy on student banners. The Society was asked to propose a policy to extend the current limit on the number of banners allowed in the Maggie Benston Centre. In the end, the Society was granted designated space on the 2000 level of Maggie Benston Centre for the display of student banners.

The Society met with the University's Development Office to discuss the priorities of that office. The Society expressed a need to concentrate on such issues as calls for restored federal funding, and funding for services such as World University Services of Canada (WUSC) and the SFU Foodbank. Meetings were also held with the Dean of Student Services, Ron Heath, to discuss the issue of funding for services on campus in light of university budget cuts to services for SFU students.

A meeting was also held with the University's Director of Government Relations, Ken Mennell, where the Society offered a number of suggestions on the focus of the university's lobbying strategies, including the possibility of joint lobbying efforts with the Student Society on issues affecting post-secondary education and federal funding.

When the University entered into an agreement with Beaver Foods and Coke to have 14 new

## Forum Report

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Coke machines brought on campus, a number of complaints about the location of the new machines were made, especially from student unions who were slated to lose money as many of them had their own revenue-generating machines. The Society expressed its concern over the matter to the University, and some machines which competed directly with those of student unions were subsequently moved.

The Society's Graduate Issues Committee (GIC) had semesterly meetings with the Dean and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies to raise graduate issues and concerns.

After much urging from many groups within the University community, including the Graduate Issues Committee, SFU President Jack Blaney set up a 2 person committee to review the University's decision regarding the Russell Ogden situation. GIC both met with that committee and provided a written submission, including several recommendations. In the end the recommendations were the same as those the committee itself made to Blaney. Russell Ogden was given a letter of apology and reimbursed for his legal costs. The protection and support available to faculty members who do research are now also available to graduate students doing research.

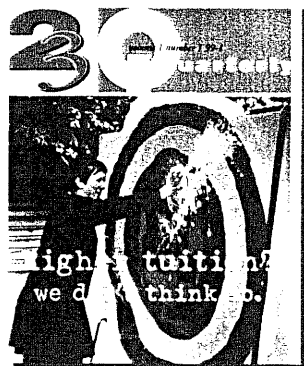
When the History Department sent a motion to Senate changing the terms of the department's guidelines regarding completion of graduate degrees GIC responded on behalf of SFU graduate students. The precedent-setting change would also affect students in other departments who followed History's lead. The policy change wished to force full-time thesis option grad students to complete their degree requirements in just 5 semesters; project option students would be forced to finish in 3 semesters. Given cuts to graduate funding, and the growing need for grad students to seek employment in order to pay for their degrees, the proposed policy changes would have added undue hardship to many grads. GIC reps and student senators worked hard to raise concerns regarding the motion and to make sure that the members of Senate understood the concerns. The motion was sent to the Senate Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC) where it was revised substantially to be informational in nature about what to expect within the program rather than a rigid requirement.

The office of the Dean of Graduate Studies conducted a comprehensive survey of SFU graduate students, the results of which were reviewed by a Graduate Student Survey Implementation Task Force. The Task Force prepared a final report outlining recommendations coming out of the survey. GIC met with the task force chair, Kathy Heinrich, and provided the task force with a written submission outlining its concerns with the report. GIC was very disappointed with the final report and wrote a critical response to it. GIC is continuing to focus on the issue and sends representatives to attend SGSC meetings to make sure the committee members are aware of the inadequacy of the Task Force final report.

GIC members attended all of the public forums put on by the Research Ethics Review Task Force and provided a written submission outlining graduate student concerns regarding the ethics policy and the research ethics approval process.

## Membership Outreach and Organizing

In 1998 the Student Society continued to improve its communication with the membership of SFU. In order to provide students with information on post-secondary issues that affect them, funds were budgeted to publish a new quarterly newsletter the 23 Quarterly. Endeavouring to provide SFU students with the opportunity to share points of view on issues of importance to students locally, provincially, and nationally, the 23 Quarterly provides a forum for them to share information about activities within their student unions and graduate caucuses, and to share their opinions on a wide variety of topics. The newsletter attracted the attention of various people including the provincial chair of the CFS, the director of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and the President of the University, all of whom have contributed to its



The Society's newsletter 23 Quarterly

# Forum Report

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content. The University of Victoria Students' Society has even been using the newsletter as a resource for its own members.

The Graduate Issues Committee continued with its successful publication of the Grad Bull, a semesterly newsletter outlining issues affecting SFU's graduate students, such as information on taxes, repaying student loans and the results of the Graduate Student Survey. In October 1998 GIC held an orientation for new committee members and in November of 1998 GIC held a retreat to identify issues of concern to graduate students across the University, to prioritize those issues and to form working groups to develop strategies for addressing the issues.

GIC's Grad Gab and Grub nights continued through the Fall 98 semester and then in the Spring 99 semester GIC and the Committee for Department Student Unions (CDSU) cosponsored the very successful grad student "Fools Day" social on April 1, 1999.

Again, as in past years, the Student Society served up hundreds of pancakes and litres of coffee in its semesterly Free Pancake Breakfast. Each year, the Society uses over 200 pounds of pancake mix and thousands of blueberries serving free breakfasts to its members.

This past year, the Society made a concerted effort to improve the look and usefulness of its free Handbook and academic planner. Over 13,000 copies were distributed to students in the Fall and Spring semester with demand for the Handbooks higher than ever. It continues to be one of the most popular services offered to SFU students by the Society. Part of the Handbook's success this year was the hiring of a dedicated advertising marketer who solicited ads from large clients and raised more much needed revenue to pay for the Handbook's production.

In 1998/99 there were over 36 active department student unions on campus. The Student Union Fieldwork Office provided information seminars for student unions on organizing department unions, socials, etc. In an effort to service the needs of students at Harbour Centre, the Communications student union held alternate meetings for its members at the downtown campus. Other Harbour Centre based student unions included Gerontology, Community and Economic Development, and Resource and Environmental Management.



SFSS executive and staff serving up free pancakes to SFU students

The Student Union Fieldworker Office and the Student Union Organizer designed and launched a web site for all department student unions on campus. The web site provides information on upcoming department student union events, how to organize a student union, and how to run student union fundraisers and socials. In addition, the Society sponsored the development of many student union web pages for the benefit of their members.

The Society's Committee for Department Student Unions also organized many socials for the campus community. These included a Summer Siesta Fiesta, the Matthew Good Band Concert event, and the Spring Fling beer garden in the Atrium Cafeteria. The Student Union Fieldwork Office produced a guide to producing Anti-Calendars; Kinesiology, English, Communications, Biology, and the Psychology graduate caucus all produced effective Anti-Calendars. The Calendars offer students in a department evaluations regarding courses and professors.

Department Student Unions also organized several career fairs for their members; among the unions and clubs who held such fairs were Chemistry/Biochemistry, Engineering, Computing Science, the Student Marketing Association, Criminology, Psychology, Management Information Systems Association, Business Administration, Kinesiology, Physics, and Biology.

\$56,139 in grants was allocated to Department Student unions and Graduate Caucuses in 1998/99. Almost 70% of this funding went toward travel and conference support for students.

In an effort to keep Society and Forum members informed on issues facing post-secondary students the Forum Speaker Series sees a guest present at many forum meetings. Some of the guests

# Forum Report

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invited to speak to Forum included:

Mike Dinning, Director of Campus Community Services and James Philips, CCS Program Development Coordinator

Rob MacDonald, BC Transit President's Advisory Council

Lynn Copeland, SFU Head Librarian

Marnie Thorp, Teaching Support Staff Union Organizer, and Lori Barkley, TSSU Chief Steward



SFSS president maya russell with new food and beverage services business manager peter grant.

The Society also sponsored a presentation from the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs on the Nisga'a Treaty Process; and Federal MP for Burnaby Svend Robinson presented a talk on the issues of Human Rights and APEC.

## Servicing the Membership

As part of its ongoing work to provide services that are relevant and responsive to the needs of SFU students, the Student Society spent much time and energy reviewing its services and implementing changes.

In an effort to improve the performance of the Student Society's Food and Beverage Service operations, the consulting firm KPMG was commissioned to perform a detailed analysis of the Pub, the Catering Services, the Atrium Cafeteria, and the coffee bar, and to make specific recommendations for improvement. Based on the report's recommendations, the FBS management was totally restructured and the Atrium was closed. The Catering service and the coffee bar were performing well. The Society hired a new Business Manager to oversee all Food and Beverage operations and a new position was created, the Pub Promotions Coordinator. The Pub Promotions Coordinator made it possible to organize popular social events at the Pub such as Wednesday Swing Nights where swing dance instructors were on hand to teach about 100 people how to swing every week; Friday Afternoons at the Pub saw popular Vancouver jazz musician Laura Crema perform for those relaxing in the Pub at the end of their week. The Promotions Coordinator also worked with campus groups like Athletics and Residences to provide the Pub as a social gathering place.

The Printshop underwent major restructuring as well. After a detailed internal review of the operations, new policies were put in place ensuring better tracking of print jobs, underutilized services were eliminated, and pricing was brought into line with comparable operations.

Following the Printshop review, Quad Books underwent a similar review of its operations and a recommendation was put forward to merge the Society's Printshop and bookstore into one business.

Responding to feedback from graduate students that felt there was no social gathering place for students in grad school to hang out with their colleagues or hold colloquia, the Graduate Issues Committee began discussions with the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies for securing financial support in renovating the current graduate lounge in the Maggie Benston Centre.

In 1998, the Society continued to run the popular Film Night, showing recently-released feature-length movies on Thursday nights at Images Theatre. The Society's vending program and annual Christmas Craft Fair continued very successfully in 1998. Revenues realized from the program continued to provide financial support to the SFU Foodbank in the amount of \$3572 in addition to the \$4000 donation budgeted for the year. Also, the Society made financial donations to World University Services of Canada for the support of one student refugee in the amount of \$2862, and to the SFU Nightline (a crisis line for SFU students) in the amount

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of \$4750.

400 SFU students made use of free legal counsel provided by the Student Society through its weekly Legal Clinic administered through the General Office. The General Office also issued over 2000 International Student Identity Cards (ISIC). The cards are free of charge to SFU students as members of the Canadian Federation of Students—local 23. The General Office also administered all funding to SFU clubs on campus that saw more than 4400 students involved.

The past year for the Women's Centre consisted of coalition efforts with campus and off-campus groups, as well as structural and resource development within the Centre. Annual programming efforts included the Day of Action Against Violence Against Women and Children (December) and International Women's Week (March), Eating Disorders Awareness Week and Fat Happiness Day (Feb.), co-sponsorship of a film presentation for Black History Month (Feb.), as well as the sponsorship of a speaker on the panel "Exploring Diverse Spiritualities at SFU" (Mar.). Additionally, collective members participated in a community conference on disordered eating sponsored by ANAD (Association for Awareness & Networking around Disordered Eating). Support/Discussion groups continued to run at the Centre covering such issues as Parenting, Body and Image, and Women Caring for Aged Parents. Additionally, the Centre organized Wenlido, a self defense course for women. New projects during the year included the launch of the Women's Centre Zine *Forbidden Fury* as well as the Collage Project (women pasted together cut up magazine images to talk in pictures about issues of concern to them). Training and orientation development for both library and collective volunteers enhanced the number of volunteers at the Women's Centre and enriched volunteer experience. The library continued to grow and expand to accommodate the amazing diversity of the Simon Fraser University community. The collection of books, videos, and periodicals was increased through regular budget purchases as well as generous donations from the community. Updated library catalogues were produced and copies housed in SFP!RG as well as the Belzberg Library at Harbour Centre and, in conjunction with Library Week events, access to one of the best women's centre libraries in Canada was made even better. Campus and community resources continued to be updated enhancing access for women and men on a myriad of issues including, but not limited to, domestic violence, custody, self-help, health, and others. The Women's Centre continued its work for the full participation of women in society, to end all forms of oppression and to provide access to women-centred resources.

## Student Representation

Representation of students' interests in the university's governance structure is an important issue. The Student Society appoints undergraduate and graduate representatives to many University, Senate, and Faculty committees. These representatives play a critical role in ensuring a student perspective is heard by administrators and faculty, as well as providing information to the student Forum. In addition to the university, students at SFU require effective representation at the provincial and federal levels. Through elected representatives to the Canadian Federation of Students, SFU students have a voice on many government committees and forums.

Over the 1998/99 fiscal year, the Student Society sent representatives to the following committees:

### Provincial Government

- BC Student Assistance Review Committee

### University

- Academic Computing Services Committee
- Advisory Committee on Mandatory Supplementary Course Fees
- Bookstore Advisory Committee
- Committee for Excellence in Teaching Awards
- Committee to Review Student Conduct Policies

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- Date and Acquaintance Rape Committee
- Dean of Science Search Committee
- Parking Advisory Committee
- Personal Safety and Security Committee
- Radiological Safety Committee
- Registration Appeals Committee
- Research Ethics Policy Review Committee
- SFU Art Gallery Board
- SFU Dining Services Advisory Committee
- SFU Foodbank Committee
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council In-House Adjudication Cttee
- Traffic and Parking Appeals Committee
- Transportation Advisory Committee
- University Safety Committee

## Senate

- Committee on International Activities
- Committee on Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries
- Committee on Undergraduate Studies
- Committee on University Teaching and Learning
- Diverse Qualifications Adjudication Committee
- Graduate Awards Adjudication Committee
- International Undergraduate Student Exchange Committee
- Library Committee
- Library Penalties Appeals Committee
- Undergraduate Awards Adjudication Committee
- Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
- University Development Committee

## Faculty

- Faculty of Applied Science Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
- Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee
- Faculty of Arts Graduate Studies Committee
- Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Studies Committee
- Faculty of Science Graduate Studies Committee
- Faculty of Science Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
- Faculty of Science Undergraduate Studies Committee

Student Society Forum represenatives Joy Morris and Mark Veerkamp also represented SFU students on the SFU Board of Governors. And the Society sent **student representatives** to various other forums and ad hoc committees such as the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Student Outreach Committee, BC Transit President's Advisory Council, the Student Union Development Symposium, and Canadian Federation of Students National and Provincial General Meetings.

The Graduate issues Committee (GIC) sent reps to the various Canadian Federation of Students and National Graduate Council meetings and to Canadian Association of Graduate Schools (CAGS) meetings.



## The Ombuds Office

The Student Society funds the operations of the Ombuds Office, thus this Report covers the period from May 1, 1998 to April 30, 1999, which is in accordance with the Simon Fraser Student Society reporting year. The Report includes explicative and functional information and in addition, includes some statistical information on the casework, contacts and types of cases.

The Ombuds Office at Simon Fraser University was the first of its kind in Canada and next year will celebrate thirty-five years of operation. The Office is staffed by two part-time Ombudspersons: the Ombudsperson (Student) and the Ombudsperson (Staff). While the functions of the Ombuds Office have changed over time, the aim of advocating for fairness at SFU remains central. The Ombuds Office is not an advocate for any individual or group on campus, however where either Ombudsperson determines that a complaint is justified the Ombudsperson makes recommendations to remedy the solution. The Ombudspersons are therefore advocates for fair administrative process and timely and courteous decision making.

In cases where an individual brings matters to the attention of the Ombuds Office that are determined as confidential or delicate in nature, the Ombudspersons are able to provide confidentiality where needed. Those who are the subject of a complaint are also entitled to the same.

The Ombudspersons must be impartial. Occasionally complaints are made by or concern an individual who has some prior relationship outside the Office with an Ombudsperson. When this occurs the Ombudsperson in that case declares a conflict and the matter is handled by the other Ombudsperson.

As with the monthly reports to Forum, the following categories will be used to report on the activity at the Ombuds Office: (1) Case Work, which refers to cases brought to the Office worked in by either Laurine Harrison, Ombudsperson (Staff), the Ombudsperson (Student),<sup>1</sup> or both; (2) Office Administration, which relates to office management and bureaucracy; (3) Policy Analysis, which includes analyzing and offering suggestions for SFSS and University policies, procedures, and regulations; and, (4) External, which refers to contacts outside of the Simon Fraser Student Society and the University.

### **1. Case Work**

The Ombuds Office handled three hundred fifty-six cases last year and more than seventeen hundred contacts. These cases and contacts vary in scope, complexity, time commitment, and degree of Ombuds Office involvement. For example, a contact can be a simple inquiry from a student or instructor about a policy or it can be a case requiring several hours of appointment and research time as well as follow-up.

The following is a general list of the types of cases handled by the Ombuds Office:

- requests for information on the procedures for submitting appeals to the: Senate Appeals Board, Committee to Review Undergraduate Admissions, Residence Appeals Committee, Library Penalties Appeal Committee, University Board on Student Discipline, Senate Committee on Disciplinary Appeals
- concerns and complaints on matters administered by the Office of the Registrar, including financial assistance and awards
- information and advice concerning grading practices and grade appeals
- assistance with requests for accommodation in specific and extenuating circumstances, such as waivers for graduation requirements, compassionate pass, retro-active withdrawals for extenuating circumstances
- queries regarding entry, withdrawal and re-entry in professional and competitive

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- programs
- concerns about transfer credits
- problems with eligibility for graduation
- graduate issues, such as supervisor–graduate student relations, unsatisfactory progress
- evaluations, departmental funding allocations for graduate fellowships and other funds, intellectual property rights
- complaints against faculty members, staff, administrators and students
- issues related to on and off campus employment
- inquiries about the rights and responsibilities for living in residence and landlord and tenant issues
- off–campus issues other than employment and landlord–tenant matters
- access to and quality of SFU and SFSS services
- Simon Fraser Student Society policies and operations
- requests for information on registration in courses where denied
- queries on matters of academic standing when special circumstances are present
- queries on admission or re–admission when special circumstances are present

The time required to handle cases varies substantially depending on a number of factors. These factors include: the extent of the complaint; commitment of the client; the willingness of SFU staff or SFSS executive to work with the Ombuds Office to identify and resolve the concern or complaint; and, the ability of the client. Because of the significant repercussions of the issues presented on the lives of our clients, the Ombudspersons make every effort to ensure that accurate information and thorough assistance is provided in each case. Individuals approach the Ombuds Office in a number of ways. The primary method of contact is by telephone. Tables 1.1 and 1.2 offer information on the number of calls and e-mails received by and replied to by the Ombuds Office. In addition, the Ombuds Office is required to be available for four drop–in hours per week beyond any booked appointment time and scheduled meetings. Table 1.3 sets out the drop–in usage.

**Table 1.1 Telephone Contact**

<i>May 1, 1998 to April 30, 1999</i>		<i>May 1, 1997 to April 30, 1998</i>	
Incoming	1291	Incoming	1520
Outgoing	2507	Outgoing	2142
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3798</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3662</b>

There was an 15% decrease in the number of incoming calls over the last reporting year. Over the same period there was a 17% increase in the number of outgoing calls. All telephone calls are returned, most within the same day.

**Table 1.2 E-Mail Count**

<i>May 1, 1998 to April 30, 1999</i>		<i>May 1, 1997 to April 30, 1998</i>	
Incoming	397	Incoming	302
Outgoing	551	Outgoing	193
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>948</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>493</b>

There was a significant increase in the number of outgoing e-mail messages related to case work. Given that e-mail is not a secured form of communication, detailed discussion of sensitive matters is usually not sent by e-mail. Nonetheless, all e-mails are responded to in a timely manner.

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**Table 1.3 In Person Drop-In**

*May 1, 1998 to April 30, 1999*

**TOTAL 76**

*May 1, 1997 to April 30, 1998*

**TOTAL 126**

Individuals regularly stop by the Ombuds Office for information. Individuals may stop by to pick up information on the Office, to ask whether their case can be handled by our Office, or to make an appointment with one of the Ombudspersons. When possible, the Ombudspersons deal with the queries immediately.

Generally, the Ombudspersons prefer to make an appointment for the individual to come by the Office. The Ombudspersons allow plenty of time for reviewing materials, examining policies and procedures, and for suggesting options. The Ombudspersons have found that in-person appointments, rather than phone calls, e-mails, and drop-ins, create a far more comfortable and productive environment. In situations when individuals such as Cooperative Education students, are unable to make it to the Office between regular working hours, the Ombudsperson (Staff) will arrange to meet at a time convenient for the individual. For users of the Office who are Distance Education students or are in programs located outside of the lower mainland, telephone appointments are made with the long distance costs charged to the Ombuds Office.

As part of case work, various committee and board meetings are attended, and meetings with faculty members are held. The following chart offers an idea of what these committees and boards are and who, in general, attends them. This is a general list only, and is meant to illustrate that case work involves communication with committees, boards and individuals within the wider SFU community.

**Attendance at Case-Related Meetings**

Type of Meeting	Attended by Whom
Residence Appeals Committee	Ombudsperson (staff), Ombudsperson (student)
University Board on Student Discipline (UBSD)	Ombudsperson (staff), Ombudsperson (student)
Meetings with Registrar	Ombudsperson (staff)
Meetings with staff members from Campus Community Services <sup>4</sup>	Ombudsperson (staff), Ombudsperson (student)
Meetings with Faculty Members <sup>5</sup>	Ombudsperson (staff), Ombudsperson (student)
Meetings with campus union representatives	Ombudsperson (staff)
Meetings with staff and executive members from the Simon Fraser Student Society	Ombudsperson (student)

As is shown through these charts, the commitment to case work is very high and professionalism is taken very seriously by the Ombudsperson (Staff) and the Ombudsperson (Student). Flexibility in terms of hours and days worked is a requirement of the positions. Every effort is made to assure that those who contact the Office have their concerns dealt with quickly and fairly. As many have told us, this ethos has lead to the granting of a great deal of respect and cooperation to the Ombuds Office by the University community.

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## 2. Office Administration

This section will address the following issues: (i) Equipment; (ii) the Ombuds Office Coordinating Committee; (iii) Staff Meetings and working conditions; and (iv) the Simon Fraser Student Society Forum meetings.

### i) Equipment

We are pleased to report that the Ombuds Office received approval from Forum to purchase a much needed facsimile machine at the end of April 1999. We are now able to receive confidential information via fax. There remains one outstanding request made over several budget submissions for a second, networked computer. A second computer would improve efficiency in the Office.

### ii) Ombuds Office Coordinating Committee (OCCC)

The OCCC met seven times during the last year. The composition of the Committee includes the Ombudspersons, a Forum member and an Executive member. Members of the Committee in the last year have provided the Ombudspersons with thoughtful advice on operational and administrative matters. In addition, the Committee serves as the Ombudsperson (Student) Selection Committee. The service of the following members of the OCCC is appreciated and we would like to acknowledge their contribution to the provision of service to the Ombuds Office.

- Bevin Worton, Executive Representative, 1998–1999
- Jade Burnside, Forum Representative, 1998–1999
- Scott Byrhe, Forum Representative, 1998–1999

### iii) Staff Meetings and Working Conditions

The Ombudsperson (Staff) is required to attend bi-monthly staff meetings. These meetings require approximately two to three hours per month. The Ombudsperson (Staff) has been in discussion with the Student Society over the last year on safety and workload issues as they affect the work of the Office. These discussions have resulted in an increase in hours from 28 to 32 per week effective May 1, 1999.

### iv) Simon Fraser Student Society Forum Meetings

The Ombudsperson (Student) attends each Forum meeting and the Ombudsperson (Staff) attends on occasion. Attendance at these meetings provides information to the Ombudsperson (Student) on issues of concern to the student body and on the policies and procedures under review or consideration. Since the Ombudsperson (Student) is assigned the task of reviewing issues of concern related to the Simon Fraser Student Society, attendance at these meetings is important.

## 3. Policy Analysis

The following are details on the four types of policy analysis conducted by the Ombuds Office.

### i) Policy analysis which takes place as a result of a case:

There are many times when a case brings about a critical analysis of a University policy or procedure. Sometimes the policy analysis is very minor, and simply involves a quick examination and a letter or phone call to the individual who is responsible for applying the policy. In this scenario, the analysis of the policy or procedures may be limited exclusively to the case in question.

Repetition of a concern over a policy or procedure, or a major concern over the policy or procedure may lead to a more thorough examination. The result may be a major study which details the concern, possible remedies, and methods for implementing these remedies.

# Ombuds Office Annual Report

The Ombudspersons made several recommendations to academic and non-academic units in this area of policy analysis.

- ii) Policy analysis of proposed University policies and procedures:  
When the University proposes a new policy or procedure, the Ombuds Office makes an effort to review it in great detail. In these cases, there are usually forums where concerns or questions can be forwarded. Because of the high case demand, response to proposed policies and procedures is not always possible. When a response is made, issues such as fairness, due process, administrative repercussions, and the effects on students and the University community are analyzed. In the Fall of 1998 the Ombuds Office made a submission to the Ad Hoc Committee to Review the Student Conduct Policies. The Ombudsperson (Staff) also met with the Committee in January to further discuss the submission. The current University policies have been in place since 1994 and over this period the Ombudspersons have provided assistance and advice to many students and several instructors on matters of student conduct and academic honesty. Through this work we gained a unique perspective on the fairness and effectiveness of the policies and were able to offer the Ad Hoc Committee an analysis of the existing and proposed policies.
- iii) Policy analysis of proposed SFSS policies and procedures:  
This type of research is done exclusively by the Ombudsperson (Student). Research on SFSS policies and procedures would emerge based on previous cases, the nature or the proposal, and the possible consequences of its adoption. Prior to Forum, all proposed policies and procedures are reviewed in detail.
- iv) Researching potential policies and procedures:  
This type of research takes place where a policy or procedure is absent and the Ombudsperson (Staff) or the Ombudsperson (Student) feels one should exist. In these situations, a report is drawn up for the relevant authority detailing the problem, the reason a policy would remedy the problem, suggestions for the proposed policy, and information on implementing the proposed policy.

## 4. External

The Ombudspersons meet regularly with individuals and groups outside of the Office. These include officials from various departments, presentations to University classes, seminars, and conferences, and attendance at regional and national meetings. These meetings take place to explain the activities of the Ombuds Office, to discuss specific issues of concern, and to make contacts. Between May 1998 and April 1999, the following external activities took place.

- i) Meetings with Individuals  
The Ombudspersons, particularly the Ombudsperson (Staff), meets regularly with members of the University administration and staff. Sometimes the meetings are to cover general concerns, other times the meetings are case specific. Members of the administration and staff have been very helpful over the last year and as with previous years are prompt to respond to requests for meetings.
- ii) Presentations  
Throughout the year the Ombuds Office is called upon to participate in panels and workshops offered on campus for members of the University community. The following is a partial list of our outreach and educational endeavors over the year.
  - September 1998: TA – TM Day Panel Discussion: “So You Want a Resolution”
  - November 1998: Political Science 151, presentation with the Deputy Ombudsman from the BC Office of the Ombudsman

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## iii) Training, Memberships, and Conferences

In September 1998 the Ombudsperson (Staff) attended the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Canadian College and University Ombudspersons in Toronto. Both Ombudspersons attended the BC Council of Administrative Tribunals Annual General Meeting in early November in Richmond. The Ombudsperson (Staff) was scheduled to participate in a national conference on student discipline hosted by the University of Alberta in mid-October, but was unable to attend because of a family illness. Bevin Worton, the executive member on the OCCC attended in her stead.

As you can see by this Report, the work engaged in by the Ombudspersons is extensive. Even so, the positions of Ombudsperson (Staff) and Ombudsperson (Student) are incredibly rewarding. The individuals who approach the Office lend varied perspectives to the University and to its policies and procedures. It is wonderful to have the opportunity to provide even a small amount of assistance to others. It should be noted that these positions would be made far more difficult without the assistance and good humour of numerous people throughout the SFSS and SFU.

Thank-you for taking the time to read this Report. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Laurine Harrison, Ombudsperson (Staff) or Jerome Francis, Ombudsperson (Student) by phone at 291-4563 or by e-mail at [ombudsoffice@sfu.ca](mailto:ombudsoffice@sfu.ca).

## **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> During this reporting period the Ombudspersons (Student) were Alexandra Flynn (until December 31, 1997) and Jerome Francis (from January 1, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> This does not include over-the-phone conversations with staff of Campus Community Services.

<sup>3</sup> This does not include over-the-phone conversations with staff in the Office of the Registrar.

<sup>4</sup> This does not include over-the-phone conversations with faculty members, sessionals, tutor-markers, or teaching assistants.

# Treasurer's Report

## May 1998 - April 1999

As the treasurer of the Simon Fraser Student Society, my job is to oversee financial matters pertaining to the society and report this to Forum and to the membership (principally done through the Annual General Meeting). I am happy to report that the society has received an unqualified audit for the seventh year in a row. This means that the accounting practices for the 1998-99 fiscal year continue to meet standards set by the Societies Act, under which we operate. This year's audit was completed in a timely manner. While our membership dues continue to provide steady, reliable income for the Society's multi-faceted operation, at this time the society is facing many financial challenges which will require hard work, creative problem solving and commitment if they are to be overcome.

### Members Equity

We have a members equity deficit of (318,687) which is larger than last year's figure of (169,557). Profound changes will be required in order to reduce this deficit. In particular, serious attention needs to be devoted to Retail and Food and Beverage Services.

### Mortgage

Two years ago our mortgage for the Maggie Benston Centre was negotiated through the University. Students' building fees are paying the mortgage down by about \$413,000 a year. The building will be paid off in five or six years.

### Operating Budget

In the 1998-99 fiscal year, fee revenues were over budget by about \$87,000. This can be mainly attributed to about \$80,000 in back fees which were recovered from the University. Almost all non-retail areas of the society came in on target or under budget. The Finance Office, Grad Issues Committee and Forum line items closed the fiscal year significantly under budget.

### Service Areas

Both Quad Books and the Printshop both suffered a loss at the end of the year. Small profit margins on non-text items and unexpected staffing costs (during a staff change over) created financial barriers for Quad Books this year. Printshop revenues were up by about \$4,000, but also suffered from unexpected staffing costs during a leave of absence. On a positive note, the Quad Books buyback program continues to be both profitable for the society and convenient for Simon Fraser University students. Significant changes in the structure of Quad Books and the Printshop have occurred in order to turn them into viable income generating businesses.

### Food and Beverage Services

The Society operates three food and beverage services; The Highland Pub, Higher Grounds Coffee Bar, and a Catering service. Food and Beverage Services ended up with a loss of \$228,820. This loss represents a serious setback from previous years. Changes have been implemented in order to rectify this situation (complete restructuring of management, full review of the services conducted by KPMG Consulting, closure of the Atrium Cafeteria, new advertising/promotions and entertainment initiatives). Most of these improvements required up front costs which had a negative impact on the bottom line, but were necessary to require \$ for the society and beneficial to that in creating Food and Beverage Services that can sustain itself. Higher Grounds coffee bar and SFSS catering continue to be strong and profitable services. Highland Pub continues to present marked difficulties for the Society. The 1998-99 financial statements clearly show that a turnaround in the operation of the Highland Pub will be required if these services are to continue. I would like to note that the statements of FBS losses are somewhat inaccurate due to the fact that the Society is involved in an ongoing lease dispute regarding operating costs. About \$30,000 of the loss can be attributed to

## *Treasurer's Report*

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increased lease costs, which we are disputing through legal channels (and hope to resolve in the near future).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our Financial coordinators and auditing team for producing accurate and concise statements of the Society's financial affairs. Each of the individuals involved in producing the financial statements have been a joy to work with (and I am consistently surprised at their ability to spend 8 hours crunching numbers and still have a smile on their face).

Respectfully submitted  
Angela Viktoria Hold  
Acting Treasurer