

Simon Fraser raises standards

by Derek Craig
VANCOUVER (CUP) — Above average won't be good enough at Simon Fraser University next year, as another western university opts for upping the standards to cope with over-crowding and underfunding.

The Vancouver university's senate approved a proposal on January 11 to limit the number of first year students entering courses this fall by raising the minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.5 on a 4 point scale.

"We are left with too few instructors, too large class size and a significant overload on support services," said Vice-President Academic

George Ivany.

But critics of the GPA-based cutoff said the grade point limit is an inappropriate solution to overcrowding problems.

"It doesn't work, it's a poor predictor of ability to learn. A mark below C+ doesn't mean a person can't learn," said Stephen Scott, executive officer for the Canadian Federation of Students — Pacific.

"Colleges as well as universities have reached the bursting point. We need an increase in funds, increases in buildings and teachers," Scott said.

K.D. Srivastava, vice president of student and academic services at

the University of British Columbia agreed, saying the problem cannot be approached on the level of a single university.

"The province needs to make a decision," said Srivastava. "This is not something one university should handle."

SFU's undergraduate body of 12,400 increased 8.7 per cent last fall.

Student Council president Nelson Quiroga says overcrowding is affecting students' performance.

"It's pissing (students) off — there's lineups for everything, even food and books. The overcrowding here makes it like a zoo."



Overcrowding causes Simon Fraser to raise its requirements file photo

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