

Doctoral FAQ's (Frequently asked questions)

Q. I have just decided to apply for graduate study and missed the deadline. Are the deadlines firm?

A. Yes, applications must be postmarked or delivered to Graduate Programs office, Faculty of Education, room EDB 8655, no later than January 15, 2009.

Q. When will I know the selection committee's recommendation to the Senate?

A. A letter will be mailed to you in April.

Q. If I am admissible but unsuccessful in being admitted due to lack of space, will I receive priority in the event an accepted student is unable to attend?

A. Yes, a rank-ordered waiting list will be established, as necessary.

Q. I have exceptional grades and other qualifications, and I filled out the Application for Consideration for a Graduate Entrance Scholarship form. Will I be notified if I am unsuccessful?

A. Only the recipient of an award is notified by the Dean of Graduate Studies Office.

Q. How long does it take to complete a doctoral degree?

A. Normally the first year and a half is the completion of coursework, followed in the third year by the comprehensive exam and finally by the thesis research and defence in the fourth or fifth year.

Q. As a registered doctoral student, would it be possible to complete my course requirements by taking one course a semester?

A. Yes, most doctoral students in Education are employed full-time. It is normal practice for registered students to take one or two courses in the fall and spring semesters and one during the summer semester. During the fall and spring semesters, most graduate courses are offered in the late afternoon/evening. During the summer semester courses are offered during the day and/or evening.

Q. My former institution will not send a transcript directly to me. What should I do?

A. Ask the postsecondary institute to send the transcript directly to Graduate Programs, Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, B.C., V5A 1S6. Please note this in your application package so Graduate Programs can watch for the transcript(s).

Q. If I decide to take more than one course a semester, will the fees be higher?

A. No. Students pay full-time fees each semester. A student may register for one, two or sometimes three courses per semester with no change in fees.

Q. What if there isn't a core course offered in my program?

A. Register into a directed readings course for research or preparation for the doctoral comprehensive examination, or go on-leave.

Q. If I need to go on-leave for one semester because work is too demanding, what do I do?

A. Apply for an on-leave semester with reduced fees and secure your supervisor's approval.

Q. If I need to go on-leave because I am ill, or for parenting reasons, what do I do?

A. Apply for an on-leave semester and secure your supervisor's approval. The on-leave fee may be waived in exceptional circumstances, such as those resulting from accident, illness or parenting responsibilities. A doctor's note must be provided.

Q. If I need to go on-leave can I do this indefinitely?

A. Students who need to enroll on leave for more than three sequential semesters must submit a written explanation for all subsequent on-leave enrollments. These applications require approval from the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Q. Do you approve transfer credit at SFU for work completed at another institution?

A. Once admitted, graduate courses taken at another recognized post-secondary institution may be considered for transfer. An official transcript, course outline and syllabus will be required as supporting documentation. The transferred courses must meet the program requirements and have been recently completed. The final decisions on transfer credit rests with the Director of Graduate Programs and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Q. If I still have questions after reading the literature on graduate study, is there an advisor I may contact?

A. We suggest that you contact the coordinator of the program concerned (names and email addresses are included with each program description on the web) or contact individual faculty members for information relating to specific academic content. www.educ.sfu.ca/gradprogs/

Q. I do not live within commuting distance of the University and will have to move to Burnaby if accepted. Who do I contact for housing information?

A. A current listing of all types of housing available to students in the neighbouring community is available on the web at <http://www.sfuoffcampushousing.com/>. In addition, there is on-campus residence accommodation information at www.students.sfu.ca/residences/. Call 778.782.4201 or fax 778.782.5903 for details.

Q. What is Graduate Programs looking for in the writing sample?

A. Ideally, the writing sample (5–10 pages) should be a recent academic paper which develops one focus to a logical conclusion and expresses ideas in clear and appropriate language. If you do not have a recent paper to submit, an older paper (no more than 5 years old) or an educational or work-related report is acceptable, or you may write a new paper on a subject of your choice. This writing sample remains the property of SFU.

Q. Will there be a campus orientation?

A. Yes, Graduate Programs offers three orientation formats.

(1) In July, a 'Graduate Student Orientation to Campus Life' booklet will be mailed to each admitted student. The publication outlines the administrative structure of the program and provides information on specific logistics such as parking, computer access, housing, registration, fees, etc.

(2) On-campus, Graduate Programs, Faculty of Education orientation will take place on Saturday, September 12, 2009. The format includes an introduction to faculty members, presentations by faculty and students, and library and computer workshops.

(3) Before the start of the Fall semester, the Dean of Graduate Studies offers a general orientation for graduate students from all faculties.

(4) A graduate newsletter is produced towards the end of each semester and is found on line at www.educ.sfu.ca/gradprogs.

Application Deadline January 15, 2009