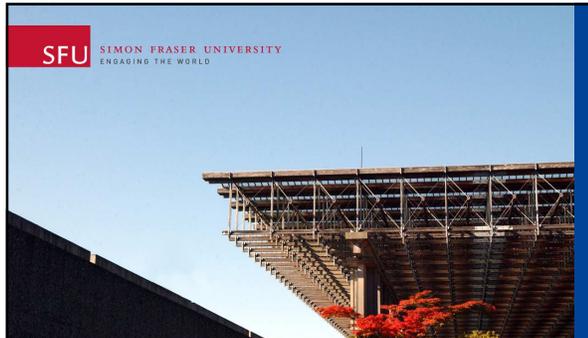


**SFU** SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
ENGAGING THE WORLD



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ARUCC 2014

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- Research university located on the West Coast
- Established in 1965
- 3 distinctive campuses with 30,000 students
  - Burnaby
  - Surrey
  - Vancouver

**SFU Overview**

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- Undergraduate Academic Policies generally apply across the university, rather than each faculty having its own set of policies
  - E.g. Grades, withdrawals, appeals, course repeats, academic probation, Writing, Quantitative and Breadth Requirements
  - Provides flexibility to students in their studies
  - Students can freely mix majors and minors in any combination they wish

**Background**

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- Academic Advising Community
  - Student Services Advisors
    - Part of a unit called Student Success
    - Advise students who have not declared their major
  - Faculty Advisors
    - Some faculties have centralized advising in the Dean's Office
  - Departmental Advisors
    - Usually for students who have declared a major

## SFU Environment

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- Advisor's Forum
  - Started by the community of advisors to talk about issues
    - Common interest
    - Policies
    - Best practices
    - How to implement parts of institutional policy
    - How to interpret institutional policy

## SFU Environment

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- SIS training
  - IT ownership
  - But didn't deliver
- University Academic Policy training
  - Calendar
  - Senate minutes

## Training at SFU

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- Multiple systems and practices in place
- No formal training
- Students not receiving consistent and accurate information
- Staff not communicating with each other
- Degree Audit Reports not used
  - Don't understand how to use features or functionalities in SIS

## Issues

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- Policies not enforced
  - Advisors not enforcing because not fully understanding
  - Staff misinterpreting the policy
- Increase in exceptions to degree requirements
- Lack of understanding of severity
- Lack of accountability

## Issues

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## What's happening

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- Tier 1 SIS support moving
  - February 2013, moved to Registrar's Office
- Recognition of a major problem
  - Saw an increase of exception request to academic policies
  - Increase in errors on records in SIS

## What Changed/The Context

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We need to fix this!  
What should we do?

- Need to do something
- One-time training
- Ongoing support
- RO staff & academic unit staff – separate but overlap

## What Now

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- Ensure students get a consistent experience and consistent answers
- Ensure staff interacting with students are always up-to-date

## The Objectives

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- Summer 2013, conducted for the first time a staff training survey
- Survey was conducted to gain insight from staff members around their experiences with using SIS, and university policies
- Representation from several student-centred roles
  - Faculty advisors
  - Departmental advisors
  - Student Services advisors
  - Registrar & Information Services
  - Staff in Registrar's Office

## Training Survey

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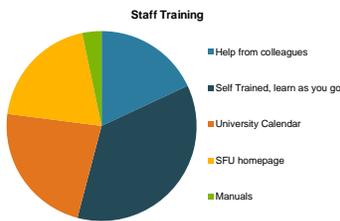
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- All respondents indicated that they did not receive any type of formalized training



## Survey Told Us....

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- 92% of staff reported that they did not receive any formalized SIS training
  - On the job
  - Used online training materials
  - Watched coworker perform procedures and took notes
  - Built on knowledge from previous role or role as a student



## Survey Told Us....

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- *"I feel scared to make a mistake, I cringe at the thought of having to call someone to tell them I don't understand something. We have a culture of pointing out when something is done wrong."*
- *"I am tired of professional development being such a low priority and attending mickey mouse seminars, time to start walking instead of always talking about it. Teach staff how to be resourceful."*
- *"Important for more communication to occur, feels as if we all work in silos that are disjointed, we are all here to serve students but it often doesn't feel this way. Even when you work in Burnaby you are isolated."*
- *"I don't feel that the Burnaby campus is concerned with what happens at the other campus. We are told when we make mistakes but never offered help or training."*

## What we heard....

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- Hired someone full time for 1 year
- Identified top 5 policies the University community needed clarification or better understanding of
  - Collected from Survey
- Work with SMEs on materials
- Delivered workshops to the University community
  - Delivered workshop to all 3 campus

## What we did

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- People were excited to hear about the workshops
- Many registered and actually showed up
- Some showed up and didn't register
  - Turnout at our other campuses weren't very high

## Community Buy-In

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- Impossible to do things in a coordinated manner when everyone's trying to do it off the side of their desks
- Territoriality/silos
- Old guard vs. new guard
- Dealing with one-time vs. ongoing

## Challenges

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- Putting together a LMS course
- Continue to create new modules
- Putting together a timeline of when training modules should happen
  - Training Fatigue
  - Peaks

## Next Steps

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- Train staff when in new role
- Access to SIS isn't granted until staff has completed training
- Deliver virtual training modules

## Future Goals

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- What is the advising structure at your institution?
  - Is it centralized, decentralized or a hybrid?
  - Does Advising roll up to the Registrar's Office?
- How is SIS training delivered?
- Who is responsible for the training?

## Discussion

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Questions?

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## Contact Information

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