

Senate Question Period
30th April, 2013

Question from Senator Aulthouse:

Among the upcoming enrolment plan's recommendations for 2015-2016, is a provision for the Faculty of Arts and Science to add up to 450 additional first year students. This significant increase would occur in a faculty where it is widely understood that there already exist significant capacity challenges that restrict access by students to certain departments and courses. What specific steps will be taken to ensure that this proposed increase does not exacerbate these current capacity issues?

Provost's Response:

It should be noted that the numbers for 2015-2016 that are included in the first report of the Strategic Enrolment Management Group (SEMG) are not "recommendations". They are, at this point, simply an early indication of what Faculties are considering for 2015-2016. If they were recommendations, the SEMG's endorsement would have been sought. It was not. The SEMG will spend considerably more time considering these numbers before a recommendation is made a year from now.

The Faculty of Arts and Science has provided the following description of the process it would follow before implementing such an increase in enrolment.

"Each year the Arts and Science Faculty Office reviews enrolments in each Department Plan in all courses offered by the Faculty of Arts and Science. The regular review assesses the capacity of Departments to offer their Plans and the courses acting as core, option, supporting or elective credit in these Plans. As part of the planning for a significant increase in the overall enrolment, the Faculty Office would take the current enrolments and develop a set of projections based on a proportionate increase in each plan. The addition of 450 students, if implemented, would represent an increase of approximately 20 per cent of the first-year incoming class. This percentage increase would be applied to all Plans with allowances made for potential extra increases in Plans facing increased demand. Discussions of these numbers and increases would then take place with Heads and Undergraduate Chairs in each Department who review the resource implications of these changes and the impact on curriculum. These discussions would keep in mind the potential challenges in providing access to Plans and to the courses supporting these Plans. Distribution of added resources (in the form of TAs, adjunct support and tenure-track positions) would be taken into account as part of this process.

"Further consultation would take place with the Timetabling team in the Office of the University Registrar to assess the effect of growth on the development of a timetable. The Timetabling staff would provide models showing areas of challenge in the production of a workable timetable and the Faculty Office would use this information in the deployment of resources."