



To President Petter and the Vice-Provost, Wade Parkhouse:

I write on behalf of the Graduate Student Society at SFU to express our concern for the future of the Simon Fraser Public Research Interest Group (SFPIRG). As you are aware, the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS) and SFPIRG are in the midst of a protracted discussion about whether or not SFPIRG can be accommodated in the new SUB. SFPIRG requires a secure, accessible space with enough room for its library, permanent staff, and student interns, and is unwilling to accept space without assurance that other independent student groups like CJSF 90.1FM and Embark are provided for. The GSS has its own hopes and fears with regard to tenancy on the Burnaby campus, and understands how difficult it is to ensure that the needs of the expanding SFU community are met. However, our members recognize and deeply value the work that SFPIRG performs for students, staff, and faculty. More to the point, SFPIRG's mission and history are tightly interwoven with the mission and history of this university; none of us wants to see an SFU without SFPIRG.

Upon the completion of the new SUB, the Rotunda space that SFPIRG currently occupies will again be under the jurisdiction of SFU administration. Should SFPIRG find themselves locked out of the SUB, we ask that the university help them find an alternative home, preferably by leasing space to them directly. This may seem an unorthodox solution, given that SFU has hitherto avoided interfering directly in negotiations that it sees as existing solely between student groups. However, it is a viable solution, and one that will allow SFPIRG to continue delivering services and programs that are not duplicated elsewhere in the university. Programs like Letters from the Inside, Work Study, and educational workshops on topics as diverse as decolonization and disability justice make SFU a better place to work and study: a more inclusive place, diverse, forward-thinking, community-oriented, and, in a word, engaged. The space shortage currently threatening SFPIRG is an opportunity for the university to join hands with students, and to demonstrate that it shares in the values of equity and social justice. On behalf of graduate students, I ask SFU to take this opportunity.

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This letter has been endorsed by Executive Committee and the Council of the Graduate Student Society.
