



FILE PHOTO: JOSH NAULT

THEY DON'T SERVE PI HERE Arts has opened up their doors students who still count on their fingers and sleep in labs.

Faculty of Arts subtracts math and sciences from admission equation

NATALIE CLIMENHAGA
Senior News Editor

Grade-twelve students currently struggling to pass their high school science or math courses will be happy to know that they no longer need them to gain access into the University of Alberta's Faculty of Arts.

A proposed change to the faculty's admission policies to remove the math and science requirement was officially passed by the Arts Faculty Council on 30 November, 2006 and will come into effect Fall 2007. With the new requirements, Arts applicants will need English and four other subjects—with a maximum of only one fine arts course.

Faculty of Arts Dean Dr Daniel Woolf explained one of the benefits of broadening the admission requirements is that it has the potential to increase access for out-of-province students wishing to study at the U of A.

"We're not expecting great numbers [of out-of-province students], but we have relatively few for a national level university—we would like a few more applicants from outside into the mix," Woolf said, adding that the new system will also help international students, many of whom don't necessarily have the background needed under the old requirements.

However, Arts Student Association President Tim Schneider doesn't share Woolf's enthusiasm with the changes.

"I'm sort of disappointed in the Faculty of Arts for making this move, that's really all I can say. I think it's a disservice to students who are coming into the faculty," Schneider said, explaining that not all students may realize that there are still some programs within the Faculty of Arts,

such as Economics and Psychology, in which students will continue to require a math and science background in order to be successful.

"Students will have to read fairly carefully the requirements not just of the Faculty but of particular disciplines within Arts and think carefully about what they take in high school," Arts Executive Committee member Alan Cliff noted.

"We're still going to have competitive students."

**ALAN CLIFF,
ARTS EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE MEMBER**

However, Cliff also highlighted the fact that not all jurisdictions can offer all the courses that the Faculty of Arts had previously required and that there's no reason to believe the changes will decrease the quality of Arts applicants.

"We're still going to have competitive students," Cliff said. "If you have a student who comes in with a 90 per cent average [in] English, Social, Latin, Greek, History, Geography or something but doesn't have math or science that's probably still going to be a pretty strong history student or philosophy student."

According to Students' Union Vice-President (Academic) Amanda Henry, one of the benefits of the new requirements is that it makes it easier for a student whose aptitude is in non-mathematical disciplines to still get into university.

"It doesn't disadvantage students who aren't in science for a reason," Henry said, adding that students still

need to be aware that if they don't have Pure Math 30 there's no remedial course offered at the U of A.

"The University's said on a number of occasions that they're not going to go into the business of remedial training for masses of students," Henry said.

"It's not actually necessary that people have those other [science and math] courses in order to succeed," Cliff said, adding that the Faculty of Arts has decided to put some trust in students to have individual responsibility and make sure that they take the courses that they may eventually need.

Acting Associate Dean of Student Programs Dr Raleigh Whiting, who noted that the old requirements had been around since the early '90s, also stressed that high-school students shouldn't view this as a green light to abandon their math and sciences courses.

Whiting explained that the Faculty of Arts will make every attempt to put a lot of clarity in the University Calendar alerting students at several points that, though they are theoretically capable to take a pass on things like Pure Math 30 or a science course, they should very much keep their options open and retain their own flexibility.

But while the first batch of applicants under the new system is yet to come, student representatives have said they will have to wait and see what the long-term effect of these changes may be.

"I'm looking at it hesitantly and we'll see where it goes. I'm really not too happy about it," Schneider said.

"This is one of those things where we're going to have to wait four or five years to see if there's any ramifications or not," Henry concluded.

ARTS REQUIREMENTS: NOW & THEN

Previously, high-school graduates applying to the Faculty of Arts were required to present a variety of courses, which, aside from English or Language Arts 30, included:

- Pure Mathematics 30 or a 30-level language other than English
- Social Studies 30 or a 30-level language other than English
- One 30-level from either Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Pure Mathematics, or Mathematics 31
- One 30-level course not yet used from of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Pure Mathematics, Mathematics 31, a 30-level language other than English, Social 30, or a Fine Arts Subject.

Under the new approved admission standards, applicants are required to present, aside from English or Language Arts

30, four courses chosen from three groups. These groups include Humanities, Fine Arts and Sciences, where only one selection may be made from Fine Arts. This means that students need not apply with any 30-level science course or Pure Mathematics 30.

However, students wishing to transfer into Business are still required to present Pure Mathematics 30. Also, students wishing to pursue majors or minors in Psychology or Economics are suggested to do the same.

Compared to other universities across Canada, the U of A's Arts admission standards are now significantly less academically diverse, as most other schools require at least an equivalence of Pure Mathematics 30 and at least one 30-level science course.

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- 2004/2005 - Dr. Gerda deVries, Mathematical and Statistical Science
- 2003/2004 - Dr. Ted Lewis, Mathematical and Statistical Science
- 2003/2004 - Dr. Edward Lozowski, Earth and Atmospheric Science
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- 2002/2003 - Dr. M. Shirvani, Mathematical & Statistical Science

Nomination Procedures: A letter of nomination signed by at least 10 undergraduate students plus any supporting material, which is thought to be appropriate, should be submitted to the Chair of the Award for Excellent Teaching Committee for each nominee. The appropriate science department will ensure that all nominations are fully documented before submission to this Committee.

Eligibility: Nominees for the Faculty of Science Award for Excellent Teaching must have held a full time Faculty appointment in the Faculty of Science at this University for at least five years prior to nomination. Previous Winner(s) of the award are excluded from further competition.

Students can also nominate Professors from a Faculty other than Science to receive a Certificate for Excellent Teaching (details are available from CW223 Biological Sciences Building).

Contact the Chair of the Faculty of Science Award for Excellent Teaching Committee:
Dr. Brenda Leskiw, Associate Dean
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