

English Language and Culture (ELC)
&
Interpretation & Translation Programs (ITP)
@ SFU

**Life-Long Impacts on Students,
Instructors, and the Public**

Compiled by ELC/ITP Instructors, and their Union, the Teaching Support Staff Union, May 2024 for VP Academic and Dean of Life-long Learning.

Summary

For over 30 years instructors in what was then continuing studies and now life-long learning at SFU have formed a key part of the community at SFU's Harbour Centre Campus. On April 29th in completely shocking news, the TSSU was informed a decision had been made to close both the ELC and ITP programs by the end of Summer 2024. This decision came without consultation and without involvement of any of the instructors, program staff, students or stakeholders in the decision making process. These two programs are the only two in Life-long learning with unionized instructors, and are the only two programs slated for closure.

The English Language and Culture (ELC) program is an intensive training program in written and oral English that helps students put language into both social and cultural contexts. Over the decades, specific programs for undergraduate students, graduate students, working professionals, and incoming students have helped thousands of students obtain the skills and confidence to succeed in English and in Canadian Society. In recent years instructors have come to form a crucial support and mentorship network for students, spending up to 35 hours / week with the young newcomers. Similar programs run at both UBC and UVic, with no indication of pending closure.

The Interpretation and Translation (ITP) program is one of very few programs across the country to help fill critical skills gaps that affect the medical system, legal system, and private industry. The intensive program prepares students to become certified professionals and to impact the world. Currently there are only programs for Mandarin/English and Japanese/English but with the ever growing diversity of Metro Vancouver, programs in Punjabi/English and Tagalog/English provide opportunities for expansion. That such programs are rare and SFU's existing reputation and relationship with the Society certifying such workers positions SFU well to grow the program.

In the days since learning of the decision to close, the Instructors have been collecting the stories of students, and others affected by this decision. As word spreads, the fact that the decision was made without considering the impacts, nor considering alternatives, becomes more and more clear. Stakeholders such as Fraser International College (FIC) and the Society of Translators and Interpreters of BC were unaware, and the closure of ELC/ITP will have deep impacts on both. The impacts do not stop there, as FIC is a critical pathway for international students to SFU, and Interpreters and Translators perform a critical role within both the public and private spheres, including both in both the medical and legal systems.

Our request is to put the decision to close the programs on indefinite pause, and to continue recruitment of students for future semesters. The instructors, stakeholders and the Union are all available and interested in ways to discuss growing, restructuring, and adjusting the programs to ensure they are successful for decades to come. Rather than continue on this pathway in haste, let's move forward in collaboration, following in the guiding principles of collegial governance.

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May 12th, 2024



Dear the SFU Executives,

My name is Lenny Zhou, Vancouver City Councillor. As a proud alumnus of the English Language and Culture (ELC) program at Simon Fraser University July-December 2005, I write to express my heartfelt concerns regarding the potential closure of this invaluable program. ELC holds immense significance for me, both personally and professionally, and its continued existence is paramount for the prosperity of our community, the newcomers to Canada and the university's reputation.

I came to Vancouver, Canada in June 2005. From an international student coming to a different country, barely speaking the language, without knowing anyone, to finishing my master's degree from UBC, to contributing to our public healthcare system for 15 years, to being recently elected as a Vancouver City Councillor in 2022 as the first Councillor in the history of the City grew up in mainland China, in essence, my journey in Canada all began at ELC. I can confidently assert that it was a pivotal stepping stone in my integration into Canadian society as an international student and the first generation immigrant, and for that, I am forever grateful!

It was ELC that offered the essential tools and experiences that shaped my personal and professional trajectory; it was ELC that provided me a deeper understanding and appreciation of the story of indigenous community, Canadian arts and culture and Canadian values through supportive environment, dedicated instructors, and culturally enriching curriculum; it was ELC that made me a hockey fan (Go Canucks Go!)! Moreover, it was ELC that ignited my passion for public service and political engagement, through the exploration of Canadian history, social justice and the intricate structure of Canadian democracy and politics.

ELC not only afforded me the opportunity to learn English but also served as a gateway to higher education and professional development opportunities. Following my time at ELC, I pursued and successfully completed a Master's program at UBC, Sauder School of Business. This academic achievement, made possible by the foundation laid at ELC, propelled my career in healthcare for 15 years, including 10 years of service as a Senior Manager at BC Children's Hospital. Notably, I had the privilege of contributing to the province's efforts in managing the COVID-19 pandemic. Again, the ELC program is what made my journey possible in Canada. I still remember many great teachers who taught me before: Scott, Heather C, Heather D, Veronica, Beth, Jacqueline, Alma, Andrea, etc. I am still in contact with some of them on social media.

On a personal level, ELC played a transformative role in my life. It was within the nurturing environment of ELC that I met my future wife Norah Xu, who is also an ELC alumnus and together, we are blessed with a beautiful son born in Canada. These cherished moments, rooted in the bonds formed at the ELC, underscore the program's profound impact on my personal life.

In light of these deeply ingrained connections and the invaluable contributions of ELC to countless individuals like myself and my wife, I implore you to reconsider the decision to close this vital program. Let us work together to preserve the legacy of ELC and uphold its mission of fostering cultural understanding, academic excellence, and global citizenship.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Lenny Zhou
Vancouver City Councillor

P.S. I still cherish some of the old ELC photos in my memory (we were so young back then!)





May 15, 2024

Peter Hall, Vice-Provost and Associate VP Academic
Julia Denholm, Dean of Continuing Studies

Dear Mr. Hall,
Dear Ms. Denholm,

I am writing on behalf of the Society of Translators and Interpreters of BC (STIBC) regarding the recent decision by Simon Fraser University to discontinue its translation and interpreting programs. We were both shocked and saddened to learn of this sudden development.

There is a significant and ongoing need for professional training in interpreting and translation within British Columbia. Many individuals contact us on a regular basis, seeking pathways to become certified translators and interpreters. We had anticipated collaborating with SFU to expand these essential programs, aiming to provide comprehensive training and certification opportunities. While we had yet to make contact, this is something that our board had been thinking about and we were very much looking forward to working with local institutions to provide more options for residents of BC interested in pursuing a career in translation and interpreting.

British Columbia is home to a growing number of immigrants who rely on skilled interpreters to integrate and thrive within the community. The role of interpreters is crucial in facilitating effective communication and access to services for these individuals.

We kindly ask you to reconsider the decision to terminate these programs. Please also note that STIBC is fully committed to supporting and promoting your existing programs and is eager to assist in developing new ones to meet the increasing demand for professional translation and interpreting services. I would be more than happy to arrange a meeting with you at your earliest convenience to see how we could best support you and make a success of your existing programs. We sincerely hope you will reconsider this decision, as it is crucial to our community and the profession.

Thank you for considering our request. We look forward to the possibility of working together to enhance the availability of these vital programs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Silvia Xalabarde", is written over a thin diagonal line.

Silvia Xalabarde,
President

Jiadong Guo 2010—Commis Chef

Since I arrived in Canada in 2010 and enrolled at ELC for studying, it has been nearly 15 years. I am very grateful to ELC for helping me to establish many close relationships that I still have until today and for elevating my English proficiency to a high standard, which greatly contributed to my work and life in the following dozen years.

Many thanks to all the teachers at ELC. Your dedication to this institution is commendable. ELC has changed the trajectory of many students' lives in a good way, enabling us to receive better education and job opportunities.

**Xiao Han, MFA USask, BFA TRU—artist. Sessional Lecturer,
University of Regina & Univ. of Saskatchewan, Criticism and
Curatorial Practice OCAD University**

www.xiaohanart.com

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my full support for the English Language and Culture (ELC) department at Simon Fraser University. My name is Xiao Han, an artist based in Saskatoon originally from Wuhan, China. As an alumna of the ELC program dating back to 2008, I can attest that my experience went far beyond mere English language proficiency.

During my time in the program, I formed invaluable friendships with individuals who shared not only a similar level of English proficiency but also a deep understanding of culture. From an international perspective, the program provided a supportive community that nurtured confidence in communication, engagement, and networking. It played a pivotal role in my smooth transition into further studies at the university, creating a safe, welcoming, and enriching environment that allowed me to feel truly connected to both the community and the environment.

Reflecting on my journey, I cannot overstate the importance of the experiences I gained through the ELC department during my first year in Canada. Language and culture are fundamental for newcomers, and the ELC's support was instrumental in shaping me into a confident international student and later, an immigrant who could effectively bridge futures between communities.

Please consider the continuation of the ELC program to provide essential support to more international students who undoubtedly require assistance in assimilating into the culture and fostering a healthy environment for everyone in this land.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,

Xiao Han
May 12, 2024

Mengmeng Wu Sønderkov—public school pædagog (teacher & after school care)

Dear Senate and the Board of Governors of Simon Fraser University
I attended ELC program in January of 2006 and became a M.Ed. student at SFU in the fall of 2006. I now live in Copenhagen and work in a public school.

I was really surprised to hear that the ELC program at SFU is about to be closed, because the time I spent at ELC has been one of the most memorable and meaningful periods for me.

I enrolled in the ELC program to sharpen my English skills for applying to M.Ed. program at SFU, but at the end of the program, I felt that I had received much more than just a boost to my English at all levels. The culture richness and the progressiveness of the program offered me a chance to explore much deeper levels of Canadian society. Some of the issues we learned and talked about back then are still affecting Canada and Canadian life nowadays. I felt that the ELC program has equipped me with tools to have a better understanding of Canadian society.

Critical thinking is one of the most important things I took with me from ELC. It was woven into different subjects and curriculum, from “Critical Writing” and “News and Media” to “Literature” and “Culture studies”. I was presented with materials and topics that improved my critical thinking skills. I was always inspired and encouraged to be more self-reflective.

Another thing I really appreciate about the ELC program is that I’ve had a chance to meet a group of professional, knowledgeable, funny and inspiring teachers. They were always well-prepared and tried to diversify their pedagogies. The teaching environment was very engaging. We also got a lot of amazing field trips, such as Bard on the Beach and the trip to a non-profit organization for homeless people in Vancouver. The diverse backgrounds of the teachers not only added variety “spices” to their teaching, but also reflected the colorfulness of Canadian culture and society. My teachers at ELC were friendly and supportive. They made it easier for me, as a newcomer, to adjust to my new life in Vancouver.

I think that it will be a big loss both for students who are seeking education in Vancouver and for SFU. Students who just arrive in Canada will be deprived of many benefits from a program like ELC. At the same time, SFU can potentially lose many excellent students. I know that many students who attended the ELC program chose to continue studying at SFU.

I really hope that you will reconsider your decision and I hope I can still visit ELC when I travel to Vancouver in the future.

Sincerely yours,
Mengmeng Wu Sønderskov

Jiajie Aida Shen, 2015—Jewellery sales associate, Vancouver.

I hope this message finds you well. I was deeply saddened to hear about the potential closure of the ELC program at SFU. ELC has been more than just an educational institution to me; it has been a cornerstone of my journey in Canada and a significant contributor to my personal and academic growth.

ELC not only equipped me with the necessary language skills to thrive in a new environment but also provided invaluable life lessons and a supportive community that made my transition to life in Canada smoother. Through your guidance and mentorship, I not only learned English but also gained confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging in this multicultural society.

I firmly believe that ELC's nearly 30 years of service have been instrumental in fulfilling SFU's educational goals and enhancing its reputation as a welcoming and inclusive institution. The dedication and passion of the ELC faculty have undoubtedly left a lasting impact on countless students like myself, shaping us into global citizens capable of contributing positively to society.

I'm truly grateful for the chance to speak up for ELC. Your commitment to excellence and student success is truly commendable. I stand with you in solidarity and hope for a positive outcome.

Warm regards,
Aida Shen

Peng Philip Zhang —Chinese Wine merchant

Dear SFU ELC faculty members. Having heard that SFU was planning to remove the ELC community recently, I felt very sad about this news. As an international student studying abroad is a very challenging journey in my life. I appreciate the time and commitment that your team did for all of our international students. Learning and studying the culture in Canada is the foundation for international students who want to succeed in a new area. Even really talented students will suffer a hard time when being accepted by SFU as a freshman. After graduating from ELC, I did the program in FIC. I remember those courses were really challenging and some classmates complained about the course difficulties. Beedie School of Business is more challenging for those who officially got accepted by SFU.

From a previous student's perspective, I think it is important to continue running the ELC program. Students will have chance of having a full culture immersion chance to fully understand Canada, and those lifelong friendships will create more value for them.

SFU is Canada's leading university, and also the Beedie School of Business gave me a remarkable career. I grew up in a business owner's family, and lots of commerce group members' kids did ELC, FIC, and then SFU. Our alumni in Asia Pacific area is really connected and powerful, with lots of successful graduate students in business area.

Engaging the world is SFU's mission, and ELC is like a bridge of culture communication. Now I have returned to my homeland, I have started my own business. I think there will be lots of business cooperation opportunities with Canada. What I will do is that I will highly recommend international student participate in ELC program if they want to succeed in SFU and living in Canada. ELC is a lifelong study place, even backed to China I still keep the good study behavior that ELC brought me.

Sincerely,
Philip Zhang

Alex Yang, PhD, FSA—director at Aon

I hope this message finds you well. I was shocked and disappointed to hear about the impending closure of the English Language Center (ELC) at SFU. It is with a heavy heart that I reflect on the immense value this program has brought to my life.

The ELC was not just a language program to me; it was a gateway to understanding and embracing a new culture. When I first arrived in Canada, the language barrier and culture shock seemed unbeatable. However, through the dedicated instruction and

immersive environment provided by the ELC, I not only learned English but also gained invaluable insights into Canadian culture. The program equipped me with the tools to navigate and thrive in my new environment.

Beyond language and culture, the ELC served as a crucial bridge during my initial days in Canada. As a newcomer, the transition can be overwhelming, but the community (classmates, professors, staff, etc) at the ELC made me feel welcomed and empowered. The fellow students and faculty created a nurturing environment where I could grow both academically and personally.

Perhaps most significantly, it was within the walls of the ELC that I met my wife. Our shared journey of learning and adaptation brought us together, and the friendships forged in the program have continued to enrich our lives to this day. We have been living in Canada for 14 years and now we have a beautiful family with two kids.

For decades, the ELC has been a flagship program of support and learning, contributing not only to SFU's educational goals but also to its reputation as an inclusive and welcoming institution. As SFU considers the fate of the English Language and Culture program, I urge the Senior Administration to recognize its profound impact on students like myself.

In closing, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated staff and instructors at the ELC. Your unwavering commitment to student success has left an indelible mark on my life, and I am eternally grateful for the opportunities afforded to me through this program.

I sincerely hope that the Senior Administration will reconsider their decision and continue to invest in the invaluable resource that is the English Language and Culture program at SFU.

Warm regards,
Alex

Chantal Schoch 2010

As I sit down to reflect on my time at Simon Fraser University's English Language and Culture program (ELC), my heart swells with gratitude for the incredible journey we've shared together.

ELC wasn't just a program to me—it was a family, a community of connected spirits who uplifted and supported each other through every challenge and triumph. From those

early days of nervous introductions to the bittersweet farewells at graduation, the bonds we grew were nothing short of magical.

Through ELC, I not only peaked my language skills but also discovered a gold mine of friendships that have enriched my life in countless ways until this day. Whether it was the late-night study sessions filled with laughter and companionship or the quiet moments of shared understanding, each interaction was a testament to the power of connection and belonging.

These friendships have been a source of strength and inspiration, guiding me through the ups and downs of life and shaping the person I am today. As I now pursue my career at the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA), I carry with me the lessons learned and the memories cherished from our time together at ELC. The ability to navigate diverse environments and collaborate effectively with colleagues from various backgrounds has been essential to my success in a dynamic and multicultural workplace.

The closure of ELC weighs heavily on my heart, knowing that future students will miss out on the transformative experiences and lifelong friendships that defined my university journey. I urge the Senior Administration of SFU to reconsider this decision and recognize the immeasurable value that ELC brings to our community.

To my ELC family, thank you for being a beacon of light in my life. Our bond transcends distance and time, and I am forever grateful for each and every one of you.

Miyu Sadakata 2015

I was studying at SFU ELC for about 8 months from April to December 2015. I learned so many things from ELC teachers, from the basics to advanced English through classes. The class was always unique, and even though I spent 8 months studying in ELC, I never learned the same thing and never got bored. The teachers always put students first and thought about how we could deepen our understanding of English. I can testify that they did their best as ELC teachers.

Erjin Liu 2011

My name is Erjin Liu (Apple), and currently, I am a graduate student at the University of Toronto. I was an ELC student at SFU in 2011. I am unfortunate to hear that ELC will be closed. I want to take a moment to express my gratitude and appreciation for the memories, experiences, and lessons learned from the teachers in ELC.

ELC plays a significant role in my life. I came to Canada as an ESL student and got an offer from the ELC from SFU. The teachers here are super nice and very welcoming to the students like me. They taught me how to survive in Canada which was a new world for me. I learned not only English from them but also I learned how diverse Canadian culture too. I have an amazing memory of my ELC learning experience. ELC helps international students adapt to Canadian society a lot.

I'll always cherish the time spent with friends, teachers, and staff who have shaped me into the person I am today. I hope for the new opportunities that await us. Again! Thank you to every teacher who has made this ELC school a special place. You would be deeply missed!

Best Regards,
(Erjin Liu) Apple

Yingshan Hou 2011

As a student of the ELC program at SFU in 2011, I can attest to the invaluable experience and preparation these classes provided. The program not only equipped me with essential language skills for navigating life in Canada but also fostered a sense of community and support. The teachers were not only educators but mentors, always ready to offer guidance and assistance with a friendly smile. Thirteen years have flown by, yet every so often, I still reminisce about the days I spent with the Belcarra class and the beautiful weather of Vancouver. Good memories do last forever. It's truly disheartening to hear of the program's closure, as it has been a great experience for newcomers to learn about Canada and has provided many, including myself, with a great start in this country.

Best Regards,
Yingshan Hou

Sumire Morinaga Sept 2019-June 2020

I'm Sumire Morinaga. I took ELC program from September 2019 to June 2020. After taking the ELC program, my TOEIC score has increased by 250 points! ELC is special for me because it gave me not only language skills, but it has given me the ability to learn and think about different opinions of people. Please don't close down the ELC program where I met irreplaceable teachers and friends!

Minseok (Holden) Kim & Eunhee (Anna) Shin May-October 2015

I am Minseok Kim(Holden), who completed SFU ELC course with my wife Eunhee Shin(Anna) from May to October 2015. Since returning to Korea November 2015, I have returned to work as a prosecution investigator (a Korean public official), and have been working until now. Now, I am preparing for official training in a foreign country supported by the government, and this was also greatly influenced by ELC.

Yesterday, I heard that SFU is going to close the ELC.

I am writing this because I wanted SFU officials to know the ELC influence on me and why the ELC should be run. Of course this writing like is not perfect, but I can write it because the writing classes where I learned in ELC were the basis.

First, the ELC consists of a curriculum that teaches the culture of English-speaking countries, including Canada as well as English, allowing international students to fully experience the background knowledge and culture necessary to learn and understand the language while studying in Vancouver.

One example is when I traveled to Alberta to see the Rocky Mountains with another Korean couple, Jacob and Crystal, who were also friends at ELC.

Due to a vehicle failure issue, the holiday season planned schedule could not be completed due to the heavy travel time. After consideration and discussion, I sent an e-mail from Banff's accommodation to the ELC office to explain the situation and ask for understanding that we were forced to be absent, but the office said that everything we experience is education, and they asked us to finish the trip as planned and come back safely, and to present the episodes during the trip in class.

When I was a student in Korea, absenteeism was treated as very serious infraction, so for me, educated until adulthood in Korea, the response of the ELC office was so amazing, and I still mention it to my colleagues when I talk about Canadian culture. What I learned from that trip and the teaching style of ELC was the experience of not being able to learn in school or library, and realizing what has more important value.

Secondly, after I finished ELC, I made sure that I didn't have any more fear about English. From the age of 12 to 25 in Korea, I learned English for exams at school or academy, and when I got married at the age of 33 and went abroad on my honeymoon, it was my first time abroad, I was afraid to talk in English, and I was resentful of my language ability that I could not communicate with foreigners. That memory eventually led to admission to ELC.

After finishing the ELC, I came back to Korea and have been working public official until now, so I don't use English often, but even if I travel abroad or meet English-speaking foreigners in Korea, now I can communicate without much difficulty, and even if I encounter English documents when I work, I have better ability to solve them because I am familiar with English. Of course, I am not fluent in English, but I feel free enough when I encounter English in travel or work. I appreciate the ELC teachers for making my life richer.

Lastly, I have a good relationship with my teachers and friends I met at ELC. We live in another country, so we don't see each other often, but we have a good relationship with them (I see what's been up to on Scott's SNS in Canada and communicate through comments; I often enjoy chatting with Chinese Alexa, and I even met Khalid, a Saudi Arabian, in person in Korea.)

Of course, I wouldn't be able to stay like this if I had only been trained in the classroom with these friends. Through trips, picnics, barbecues, cultural experience classes, we feel very close internally, we support each other, and take care of each other from a distance. These are the things that ELC taught us. For me, ELC is not just a place to learn languages, but I am sure that the cultures of Canada, China, Japan, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, the Dominican Republic, and Korea are mixed, and many memories are made there, and eventually I was able to learn important things such as respect for human beings, equality, and love.

I want a senior SFU official who can determine the existence of the ELC to know how much my view of life has changed since I experienced the ELC program, and how rich my life has become.

I hope these good courses will not disappear in the future, and I sincerely hope that this will allow students around the world to experience more.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely
Minseok Kim(Holden)

P.S. This is a common opinion between me and my wife Anna that we hope ELC will continue, and we still admire the warmth and sincere way of teaching ELC teachers.

Carolin Santana de Mejia 2015

My name is Carolin Santana and I attended the ELC program at SFU in the fall of 2015. This program has helped me tremendously, the teachers were amazing and patient with me even though I was behind compared with my other classmates.

My English speaking and socialization skills would not be far without this experience. I take great pride to say that this program helped me to become a Canadian citizen. I hope the teachers and staff get what they need and deserve for the amazing work they have been doing for years.

Marynna Sampaio MA (Law), PhD (Law)

Hello, my name is Marynna Sampaio and I was a student at SFU. Having an experience at a college is a dream, not to mention the structure and networking with students and professors. I have been taking the learning with me since yesterday, not just from the classes, but from the correlation of English with various current topics in the world and in Canada.

The group of teachers was fundamental to my learning, I managed to have a good night on IELTS and TOEFL, which opened the doors for me to win scholarships at the Universities of Lausanne and St. Gallen. It's about the world opening its doors and you leaving your comfort zone and bubble. Today, I have a master's degree and a PhD in Law, in the area of digital and international Tax Law, and part of my approval was due to the teachings I learned from SFU and I also dedicate it to the excellent group of professors who were an essential foundation for my achievements.

I thank the group of teachers and SFU for the opportunity and achievements and I promise not to stop here, as I learned at SFU that we are the ones who create opportunities and we must be open to the world, giving our best, embracing challenges and giving our best, without being afraid to ask for help.

Best regards,
Marynna Sampaio

Joanna Gao 2010

My name is Joanna Gao and I was enrolled in the ELC program for 1 semester before heading to Ontario for further education in 2010. I am saddened to find out that the plan of closing ELC Programs.

Vancouver was the first stop when I came to Canada. The ELC program really helped me to overcome the culture shock and settle down in Canada. The educators were always there for us. To this date, I still remember many events we did together, such as visiting the Steam Clock, convention centre, Stanley Park, the quiz we did at the introduction (prime minister was Stephen Harper at the time and feels like decades ago now). I am very grateful to spend 3 months with the program as it gave me a soft landing as a new immigrant to understand what Canada is before the busy academic study later on. Please reconsider the plan with ELC as I believe it has helped a lot of students/immigrants like myself in the past years.

Vivian Tang 2009

To the Senior Administration of SFU,

I am writing to express my profound appreciation and support for the English Language and Culture (ELC) Program at Simon Fraser University, which I attended upon my arrival in Vancouver in 2009. As a testament to the program's exceptional impact, I am saddened by the news of its potential closure and would like to share my personal experience.

Joining the program as an international student, I faced challenges in adapting to a new life in Canada. The program's comprehensive approach to language education and cultural integration facilitated a smooth transition, enabling me to thrive in my new environment. The curriculum was thoughtfully designed to enhance our English skills and our understanding of Canadian culture, which helped me improve my confidence and competence in English.

The instructors at SFU were nothing short of extraordinary. Their patience, expertise, and dedication created a nurturing, engaging, and fun learning environment. They were mentors who genuinely cared about our well-being and success.

Moreover, the program offered a platform where I connected with fellow students from diverse backgrounds. These interactions enriched our learning experience, fostering a sense of global community and mutual respect that has led to enduring friendships.

I hope the SFU administration will continue this program for the benefit of new coming international students.

César Fukuma 2015

As I said when finished my course in 2015, ELC was so important to me for many reasons, professionally and personally.

I worked in a few tech companies such as IBM, Siemens, and nowadays at Oracle and living in Brazil and working for a global company, English is very important to career development and to achieve my personal goals. Also, as I said in the very first day in Simon Fraser, I really love to travel. That's the reason to work so hard and make money! Today I have the opportunity to work in a great tech company and I have the opportunity to travel around the world - visiting places I've never dreamed before and what makes this possible is the second language: English.

So, I can tell you: my time at Simon Fraser in an ELC course was primordial to improve my English, but also the way the teachers shared the other important things like culture, opinions and point of view from different aspects were so important to my own development as a citizen.

I had an opportunity to study English in San Diego, California in 2010 at English school chain... and it's completely different in so many ways. The methodology and teachers' skills are different in Simon Fraser ELC because you are trying to educate beyond the language and this makes the difference.

I really hope that you and others can maintain this important course because like I said: any other English school chain could teach English to foreigners, but ELC Simon Fraser teaches beyond English. You teach values, culture and a different vision to your students - many of whom are still graduating as adults and citizens of the world.

I hope to see you guys again and keep in touch!

Regards,
César Fukuma

Fernanda Pereira de Souza 2011

Dear Teachers, and Administration of ELC

I would like to express my deep respect for all knowledge I have acquired at ELC / SFU. I attended ELC512-VA11141 - Four-Week Immersion English in 2011, and I had the most helpful experience in my English learning journey. This educational institution proved to be serious, consistent and focused on teaching a second language.

Fernanda Pereira de Souza / from Brazil

Sam Jira 2005

My name is Sam Jira, I attended ELC classes at SFU waterfront campus back in 2005. The program helps me improve my language skills and also helps me understand Canada cultures and Vancouver way of living.

I remember that all the faculties and classes are fun, educational and very diverse; I learn so much through Canadian media, books, mini field trips. The thing I'm most grateful for is that the program gave me chance to meet classmates and teachers who I'm still keeping in touch with till this day.

I hope the ELC program would stay and be available for the future generations of students.

Riona Hisachi 2015—flight attendant

I've been working as a flight attendant for almost 8 years. Now that I've gotten used to my job, my responsibilities have increased.

I don't want them to close ELC. I learned so many things from ELC. It is not only language school but also gave us irreplaceable experiences. Through the ELC classes, my English skill has greatly improved. And I learned not just about Canadian cultures, I learned different points of view from students who from various countries and backgrounds. Thanks to ELC, I was able to communicate with people without hesitation. After I graduated from ELC, I got a job as a flight attendant. ELC gave me a big confidence, and made a great impact to my life. I desire to keep ELC and I want future students to be able to experience that incredible thing that I experienced.

Saki Iwatsubo (Shimazaki) 2014

In ELC, I learned Canadian culture and its history by the lessons and the field trips. They were really exciting for me, and I came to like Canada more than when I had arrived there for the first time.

Writing English report in literature class was a chance to improve my English skills.

I was a student who didn't know anything, but the teachers in ELC taught me all important through the classes. All the students can focus on the lessons thanks to the teachers, because they communicate with each students.

After graduating from university in Japan, I had worked for a trading company. There were a lot of opportunities to use my English. My experiences in ELC helped me many times.

More than 10 years have passed since I left ELC, but they have given a great deal of influence to my life.

I hope that ELC continue for international students who want to improve their skills through communicating.

Masaki Nakamura 2014

Hi, I was in SFU taking ELC class for a year in 2014.

It is very shocking to me that ELC class is closing. I can't even express how much my English skill improved during that time. But ELC taught us not only English, but also how to think deeply(critical thinking) and still active on my mind.

I was thinking when my children grow up, I will get him in ELC class just like I did.

I did meet some friends there who I'm still keep in touch with.

For me, ELC class gave me countless gifts.

I hope the ELC class lasts forever.

Shiva Shahpouri 2011

My name is Shiva Shahpouri. I arrived in Vancouver with the hope of one day becoming a Canadian citizen and doctor. In order to pursue my career, it was essential to first improve my English. In 2011, I attended evening classes at ELC. I quickly saw how lucky I was to have Suzan and Richard as my teachers. They always came to each class well prepared and with a smile on their faces. Our teachers carefully selected practical topics that we could use in everyday life. Richard and Suzan also made the subjects interesting by incorporating fun activities, such as games and role plays. My teachers were also very interested in learning about our various cultures and language barriers. They made a genuine effort to get to know us and helped us feel comfortable and connected to our lessons. We were taught that making mistakes was nothing to be embarrassed about and instead a vital part of language learning. We were encouraged to take risks using new words and expressions. In conclusion, I wholeheartedly recommend SFU's ELC Department for ESL students seeking both effective education and enjoyable learning.

Khalid Almalki 2015

My name is Khalid Almalki. A Saudi graduate of ELC. I have studied at ELC from April 2015 till December 2015.

I have been lucky enough to spend that time at ELC which has given me the best impact in my daily job. I am flight attendant thanks to ELC.

ELC is not just a school full of classes to attend. It has become a community. The atmosphere is indescribable. I met great friends not to mention the teachers who taught me great lessons. They are my idol and good friends.

The quality, flexibility, and benefits are what makes ELC special. I wish to continue as I always do to recommend it to my friends and my people to study at ELC.

Best regards
KHALID ALMALKI

Jiwong David Choi 2010-11

I studied at ELC at SFU from 2010 to 2011.

I have been told that the ELC is going to be closed. I am shocked about that, because I believe it has great language courses and culture programs.

Let me tell you how it gave me a lot of influences for my life, and what I learned at the ELC.

First of all, my English has been improved through the ELC language program. When I arrived in Vancouver for the first time, I had a lot of problems with my English. I couldn't speak English in more than one sentence, and couldn't catch what others said. But when I left Vancouver after finishing the whole program, people said my English had improved a lot. I think it is because not only the teachers taught me English enthusiastically but also the programs were perfect. The teachers were waiting for my answers to their questions even though I didn't speak fluently and accurately, and they didn't let me give up on answering, always cheering me up.

What I have learned from the teachers is that the confidence to speak out is more important than grammatical corrections.

These things made me confident to speak English so that I could meet up with many friends from different countries when I was in Canada and even when I was traveling

alone. Also I got great marks from an English test in Korea, and I believe that helped me to get a job in Korea.

Secondly, the ELC supported various cultural programs for me and the students. I could understand the history, the geography of British Columbia and Canada, and even current issues and problems such as the homeless people problem, marijuana issues. The best culture program for me was "News and Culture". I learned the power of words and sentences on the news and how they are different between conservative media and liberal media on the same topics. Even the words they wrote were totally different. I was feeling that I had gotten wide and deep perspectives by the class. In Korea, I had never taken these classes before. Now I often have to communicate with others from different countries at work, the wide perspective helps me to communicate.

Also, I remembered "literature" class was fun. To be honest, it wasn't easy for me to learn literature from a totally different country in English which isn't my mother language. But it was a special and amazing experience for me to learn the meaning of words in poems. I felt the knowledge of English words and structures of sentences got enriched by the class.

I met some friends in Vancouver from other countries who took language courses from other schools, they said their schools don't have these kinds of programs.

Consequently, my time in Vancouver changed my life a lot, and the center of it, there was the ELC of SFU. I wish other people who want to learn English and culture there could take these courses and change their life just like I did.

Megumi Matsuo 2019-2020

I'm Megumi Matsuo from Nakamura Gakuen University. I took that program for 8 months starting in September 2019.

I enjoy English movies and music and can communicate with people who do not speak Japanese. I deal with foreign customers at work. I met a lot of friends and teachers and had a great life in Canada. My English skills have improved, and I can use it in my work. There are many Japanese students who want to learn English and live abroad. I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for the ELC program. I definitely want the ELC program to continue!

Keita Umezu September 2019 – Jul 2020

I gained a lot from studying abroad in Canada and the ELC program.

First, my English skills improved. In Japanese English education, we basically learn grammar and vocabulary as sentences, and we don't learn much English for speaking. As a result, many Japanese people have a very low level of speaking, and I was one of them. However, the ELC program gave me English on a daily basis, and my English skills improved dramatically. In addition, the teachers were very kind and understanding, and I learned the fun of communicating in English and to challenge myself without fear and failure.

Secondly, learning about different cultures gave me a new perspective. The ELC program brings together people from many countries. By understanding and respecting the cultures of various countries, I was able to think and see things in a way that I had never thought of before. The reason I think the ELC program is special is because I don't just learn English, but I can learn about culture, history and art. In the ELC program, I can experience a wide range of things, including poetry, yoga, movies, history, media, essays and activities.

It's an experience that I can never get just by studying abroad, and I think we need the ELC program to get that wonderful experience. My experience in the ELC program had a big impact on my career. With my improved English level, I can work in a company that uses English in their work, and I can choose to work abroad. For these reasons, I hope that the ELC program will continue.

Please leave this necessary place for students to grow.
Thank you.

Aika Yanaka Feb. 2020 - Jul. 2020

I heard that the university was considering closing the ELC program. I would not like the university to decide to demolish the program. It helped me a lot to actively join the academic classes in my university after the ELC program. I had not been able to ask and answer questions in class before I took ELC. Talking to teachers was one of the hardest things for non-native speakers. However, I could overcome my fear by communicating with many unique teachers in ELC.

One of my teachers taught English grammar to me. However, I learned the more important essence of speaking English. I understood speaking English was communicating with people in English. Students must learn grammar and vocabulary to speak, but they do not have to be afraid of speaking English due to poor skill. I noticed that I could communicate with teachers and other foreign students even though I sometimes made mistakes. Another teacher accepted that I submitted some work to her to improve my skill even though it was after I finished the program. Another teacher lent students books and gave them to us. I also know the great history of Canada because I

learned a lot in ELC. I feel close to Canada because of that. Students had a lot of opportunities to speak English in class, which quite helped us to speak and discuss in academic classes we took in our university.

After I took ELC, I got confidence in learning academic contents in English. Therefore, I could join another study abroad program and went to Kenya. I might not have experienced it if I did not join ELC.

I hope that the university understands the ELC program expands students' potential and helps them to achieve their goals.

Hana Yamabe Feb 2020 - Jul, 2020 (Back to Japan in April, due to the pandemic)

Studying abroad is good opportunity for me to be accustomed to native English and foreign culture. When it comes to weather, people, and foods, Canada and especially Vancouver are very suit for Japanese. We students could take various types of class to learn in English. Those are very interesting. I remember lots of them. Classes are taking active learning style, so we were able to use English a lot. Teachers are kind and let us speak a lot. These environments give me confidence to talk in English. Not studying abroad in Canada, not raising up English skill.

Especially at that time, we faced the COVID pandemic, and we could not study and stay in Canada as we wanted. However, teachers kindly held classes online with fixed time (take balance with Japan time). I can't forget the favor. While the time of studying abroad online, we experienced and felt a lot of things, but teachers in ELC supported a lot. They presented current Vancouver news or street views. Even though we study online, we could sufficiently learn all contents with Vancouver sight. We did not just study, learn English, but feel humanity among the time. I grew the spirit of Never Give Up for learning English. Finally, I got high score at TOEIC. Both experience and TOEIC score must affect my career.

(One more thing I want to thank ELC staffs) In ELC program, there is a Japanese staff to support our study and living. After 5 days passed, I suddenly felt bad at campus. At that time, a manager and the Japanese staff warmly helped me. They called an ambulance with my friend at first. They accompanied me to a hospital which is far from the campus. Finally, the manager sent me to home (because my host family does not want to take me home). In the situation of COVID, they supported very kindly. I could not forget the favor.

I don't know the reason why the university wants to close the program, but I think there are many many students who will feel sad about the fact. Many students were helped by ELC teachers and staff to learn English, feel foreign culture, and stay in foreign country. I hope this message will help some way in the meeting. Thank you.

Miho Matsuda September 2019 – Jul 2020

I got a lot of things by learning English and studying abroad.

First, before going to Vancouver to study English, I got TOIEC test. I only got about 500 points at least. After getting back to Japan, I got test again. I got 805 points. It was very good in Japan. I have another test including a speaking test. I also passed it. I was shy to speak English before studying abroad. I understand it is not important how correct pronounce and grammar. I think English is one of method to communicate with people. I really understand why I'm studying English. I could find meaning.

Second, of course we can learn English in Japan, but studying abroad is important to learn cultural differences. I talked to many teachers and friends from other countries (China, Korea, Thailand, Saudi Arabia). I'm happy to know various perspectives. And also, I could accept those.

My company has a condition about English skill. It is 800 points in TOIEC test. And my company's common language is English. There are a lot of English speakers. I'm working as IT support counter member. I helped to PC setup or breakdown so on. I helped English speaker's PC in English with confidence. I'm happy to help.

In Japan, students learn English from elementary school. However, it was not practical. I learned real English skill in Vancouver. ELC program gave me many opportunities to learn. I went field trip a lot with Tracy, Beth, and Richard to know Vancouver and history. In Japan, homeless people are not common and few, but Vancouver has a lot. I didn't know why. But I learned history of Canada, I can understand it. I remember Veronica taught us sad history with crying. Now I know many things about Vancouver (Canada) because my teachers taught me eagerly.

I think they taught English, and also gave me opportunity to get interest to know in English. As a result, I got English skills, but I didn't feel forced. I was so happy to learn many things. I think ELC program's most attractive point is teachers. I don't know why ELC program must be close. I hope don't take away an opportunity to meet wonderful teachers and the best place of learning for future students.

Kamonwan Ongarjphanchai

My name is Kamonwan Ongarjphanchai, also known as Mint. I was one of the ELC program students back in 2020—I took the course for 8 months and then moved on to another college. I gained a lot of experience and knowledge from the ELC program at SFU, which included academic English, cultures, histories, and social relationships.

At first, my thoughts on this program would be the same as some other English school that I experienced before. However, this program is more than that from my perspective, I had a very good time in my class while I could improve my English as the class was quite diverse in nationalities. So my speaking skills quite improved after a couple of months because I had to communicate in English with my classmates and instructors, along with other skills that dramatically improved as well. Moreover, rather than learning about Canadian cultures and histories I also had a chance to learn about other cultures from my classmates and instructors as well. Also, I gained lots of vocabulary from this program too, as they taught lots of common phrases, words from movies, jokes, etc. I loved how the class was relaxed and fun but in the meantime, it was full of pieces of knowledge to learn from.

The ELC program has had a good effect on my life lately. After I finished my course, I moved on to achieve my diploma in another college while I studied there I also worked in a restaurant as well. As I mentioned above I experienced a diverse classroom before it was easy for me to blend in with my classmates and colleagues. The ELC program somehow changed my attitude toward my confidence, I loved to interact more in class compared to my high school life, and also I had the confidence to do some public speaking which was impossible for me to do in the past. In my workplace, I had the confidence to communicate with customers and understand some of the customer jokes or even some vocabulary that I hardly used in my everyday life.

Lastly, I received lots of help from instructors and staff from the ELC program both inside and outside the classroom. There was one time during the pandemic when I somehow gave my bank information to a scammer. Judy, who was the program coordinator at that time, personally helped me a lot on what I should do next after that tragic situation. Luckily I did not lose anything to that scammer. Moreover, I had a good relationship with some instructors, sometimes I desperately needed some advice on my education path, life, future, etc. and yes they were always there for me, gave me good advice, or even suggested good resources. I am truly grateful for everything that they gave me

All of these experiences, knowledge, and relationships could not have happened if I had not chosen to study in the ELC program at SFU in the first place.

Best Regard

Kamonwan Mint Ongarjphanchai

Kyoko Takeuchi 2010—healthcare worker

I enrolled in the ELC program in 2010 with a great hope to become a successful newcomer to Canada, but my English was poor as I had only basic knowledge so it was a very difficult transition for me. The instructors all patiently encouraged me to pursue my studies in many different ways. The ELC program offered me a variety of classes and topics that improved my English for both academic study preparation and daily living needs. What I loved most about ELC was learning about Canadian culture and history. I appreciate that I had a chance to learn about Tommy Douglas in one of the ELC classes. Now I work in healthcare and I have many coworkers who are internationally educated professionals, but very few coworkers know the Canadian healthcare history. What makes Canadian multiculturalism successful, I think, is when people are able to communicate with the same language and share the values and knowledge. The ELC program definitely was very different from other ESL schools and it gave me the opportunity to learn Canadian life and history. ELC was a great introduction to the transition to life in Canada for me.

I would highly recommend ELC program to anyone who is preparing to study and work in Canada.

Schumann Xia, FRM 2010—Amazon

Fourteen years ago, I arrived in Canada, experiencing a significant culture shock and worrying about passing my IELTS exam, which was crucial for starting my studies at SFU. Today, I am celebrating my 14th year in Canada and am working at Amazon, where I focus on delivering products that move humanity forward. I have the confidence to express my ideas and myself in English.

ELC was instrumental in my integration into Canadian culture, building my confidence and equipping me to succeed at SFU. The sense of community at ELC made me feel at home, and thanks to their dedicated teaching, I passed my IELTS and was admitted to SFU without delay. I still remember celebrating my first Christmas with classmates and teachers together. It was truly amazing. Unlike the official curriculum at SFU, ELC provided a nurturing environment that eased my cultural transition and boosted my confidence, allowing me to be close to my classmates while pursuing my studies.

I am deeply grateful to ELC for this amazing program and hope it continues to offer its valuable services to future students.

Daisy Zhao, 2008

I am writing to you with a heavy heart upon learning about the potential closure of the English Language and Culture (ELC) program at SFU. As a former student who experienced firsthand the immense benefits of this program after arriving in Vancouver, I implore you to reconsider this decision and explore alternative solutions to ensure the continuation of this invaluable resource.

When I first arrived in Vancouver in 2008, I was faced with the daunting task of adapting to a new culture and language. The ELC program provided me with not only the language skills necessary to navigate daily life but also a supportive community where I felt welcomed and encouraged to thrive. Thanks to the dedicated faculty and staff, especially my former instructor Scott Yano, for their dedication, passion, and unwavering commitment to student success.

Through engaging coursework, cultural activities, and immersive experiences, I was able to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the rich tapestry of Canadian society. The friendships I forged and the memories I made during my time in the program will forever hold a special place in my heart.

The closure of the ELC would not only be a loss for current and future students but also for the wider community. This program serves as a beacon of hope and opportunity for individuals seeking to improve their language skills and integrate into Canadian society.

I kindly request you to consider the far-reaching implications of this decision and explore alternative solutions to keep the ELC program operational.

As a proud alumna/alumnus of the ELC program, I am willing to offer my support in any way possible to help preserve this invaluable institution.

Thank you for considering. I have provided my contact information to the instructors and Please do not hesitate to reach, if there is anything I can do to assist in this endeavor.

Cagla Suzan Altintas— Instructor since 2006

My name is Suzan Altintas, and I have been teaching at ELC since 2006. I have spent the majority of my career teaching at ELC. ELC houses a number of qualified teachers with diverse ethnic and educational backgrounds. Most teachers have master's degrees and teaching experience abroad. I have a Bachelor of Arts (UBC), a Bachelor of Education (UBC), and a Master of Education (SFU). Prior to teaching at ELC, I taught children and adults in both Vancouver and Turkey. Having taught overseas is especially helpful because we teach students from different parts of the world. Being trilingual and qualified to not only teach ESL (English as a Second Language) but also FSL (French as a Second Language), I know the struggles of learning a second language.

ELC is a unique program that values diversity and promotes active learning in a comfortable, student-centred environment. Our reputation for student satisfaction rate is exceptionally high, as can be seen by student evaluations and testimonials. Many of our students want to stay in Vancouver and attend SFU after their wonderful experiences at ELC. Should you indeed decide to close ELC, you will lose a number of prospective undergraduate and graduate students. We instructors at ELC have devoted our lives to our students and the program. There is a reason why many instructors have been teaching at ELC for over 16 years; we believe in and stand by the program. We have seen how ELC has changed so many students' lives, from refugees to immigrants to international students. Through our partnership with FIC, many students go on to fulfill undergraduate studies at SFU. Should ELC be closed, you will lose valuable business not only at ELC but also with FIC and future SFU students. Closing ELC puts FIC at risk; our partnership promotes both programs and SFU at large. ELC brings in a lot of business to Harbour Centre. Throughout the years, we have been told that ELC brings in the highest number of students and the most money to Harbour Centre. We not only bring in money to Harbour Centre through tuition but also by renting out several classrooms each year.

I have always felt respected and valued at SFU. The decision to close ELC was a big shock to all of us instructors. As you may know, seniority is a vital part of a teacher's career. I spent eighteen years building my seniority through great physical and financial hardship. I have been diagnosed with a number of illnesses and suffer from chronic pain. You may think that your instructors can simply find work elsewhere, but things aren't that simple. Some of our instructors are too close to retirement age to be able to find work at another university or college. Others, like me, are too ill to be chosen because new employers are looking to fulfill full-time positions. I dedicated years to SFU and stayed despite lay-offs over the years. I thought I would be rewarded for my sacrifices with my seniority. When I developed chronic illnesses and chronic pain, I was happy to have worked so hard to earn my seniority while I was still healthy. I knew I had

proven my worth with my excellent student evaluations and dedication to my students. I happily stayed after school helping students who were not even in my class. Now I feel as though my sacrifices are meaningless. A new employer will not see the years I have spent devoted to my students and employers. Wouldn't you like to keep teachers like me who will do anything for their students? I implore you to reconsider your decision. Please consider the damage that will be done to the university at large. Canada is a country of immigrants. Half of the population is made up of people who are not native speakers of English. There is a great need for this department now, and this need can only grow as Canada accepts more international students and immigrants. Please consider the future, a future with ELC students going on to study undergraduate and graduate degrees at SFU.

Alma Krilic—Instructor since 2004

Instead of planning a celebration of ELC's 30th anniversary next year, the plan is to shut down the program, letting us go and letting all of us down. I have committed 20 years of my professional life to this program and this closure will significantly affect my finances, my everyday reality, my relationships, my mental health, my sense of purpose. I have been loyal and committed to ELC for two decades, working hard to make a difference in my students' lives, and judging by my course evaluations, which have consistently been positive, I know that I have. I am heartbroken, scared and truly disappointed by this decision. I am also a cancer survivor. During my chemo-radiation treatment, I couldn't work and I can't emphasize enough how much disability pay meant to me. My illness would have spelled financial ruin for me. I do not know what the future holds for me and whether I will ever need further treatment again. With this closure, I am certain that I am facing financial uncertainty and that another round of chemotherapy and/or surgery will be a financial nightmare. I have no additional incomes and rely solely on myself for financial stability. On top of it all, my mortgage payments are about to increase between \$550 to \$700 per month, in addition to what I am already paying so I could have a roof over my head, and you are telling me I will be laid off at the worst time possible. Please reconsider your decision and understand that the closure of ELC will have a profound impact on the lives of people who have committed decades of work for you.

Angelina Van Dyke—instructor since 2010

Dear Mr. Dilson E. Rassier (VP Academic and Provost),

Thank you for the work you do managing the academic programs at SFU, my professional degree Alma Mater. With the proposed cuts to English Language and

Culture Centre (ELC) and the Interpretation and Translation Programs (ITP), we as continuing instructors are concerned. For a quarter century, the ELC program has provided the university with students, international partnerships, community involvement, branding visibility, and revenue, adding important value and liveliness to SFU's downtown campus.

Adding to ELCs value is the introduction of an advanced program with direct pathways to university undergraduate and graduate programs. ELC teachers and staff are highly equipped and specialized in additional language instruction, having curated a program that is enviable in Vancouver's EAL industry. To close such a program would be short-sighted, analogous to a Brexit-type reaction to perceived financial strains rather than a clear, long-term vision. The alternative, the out-sourced Fraser International College (FIC), may not be prepared to take on the students ELC would normally receive. Major departments across the university, such as Economics, are discovering that students are entering SFU undergraduate courses from FIC with IELTS scores as low as 4.5, taking advantage of a system that promises educational success in return for payment. ELC is an in-house operation that SFU needs, especially considering the exploitative practices of Navitas and its connection to the university through FIC (Ross, 2023; Hune-Brown, 2022; Robertson, 2021; de Wit, 2016; Devitt, 2023). In contrast, ELC's high success rate gives international students a personal, as well as an academic start in Canada.

In short, I am concerned with the direction the university seems to be taking when it comes to realizing its vision to engage. Vision requires a comprehensive view of financial constraints within a workable model before deciding to amputate one of its own programs. As an alumni, donor, instructor, and research partner with the interests of the university at heart, I am saddened by the recent decisions to shut down ELC/ITP and wish for them to be reversed.

Scott Yano—instructor since 2004

Universities do three things: create knowledge, teach how to gather, consume, and further that knowledge, and return value to the community by connecting with people at all levels. Thousands of people struggle hard to create knowledge: That research activity brings a lot of money into the university, and enhances its reputation. The other functions are realized by connecting the right students with the right teachers. A huge network works to do that, but the fundamental interchange is through the relationship between students and teachers.

The ELC program's goal is to facilitate those relationships, and to provide the practice and ability to participate in the larger academic conversation at SFU and beyond. The

program has successfully moved thousands of people from all over the world into the unique Canadian educational journey. Hundreds of those people moved through our university, SFU, to different levels, and participated in the tri-partite reality as undergraduate and/or graduate students. Other students have continued through other institutions in the province and country, and carried their SFU experience at ELC on into higher ranks of Canadian and international businesses and society.

All of this enhances our university's reputation, and solidifies its place in different communities, academic and otherwise. The Advanced and Basic Interpreter programs in ITP had the same function, beyond just interpreting skills. The pandemic hit the world hard, but the programs are recuperating, and enrolment is growing. The ELC program and the Interpretation and Translation programs can return to their former glory with focus, and understanding of from where that success arose. Teachers have always shouldered the burden of economic downturns and cannot be seen as a budgetary load: they are half of the primary relationship of a university, but need a program within which to grow that relationship. The university administration at all levels should reassess what the value of programs such as ELC and ITP bring to the university beyond simple monetary value. Closing the programs would be to disrespect thirty years of building connections with, adding value to, and, dare we say, engaging with the world. We are SFU: Thinking of the World.

Questions and Information Requested by Instructors

On May 6, the instructors, through their union, sent a number of questions and requests for information to SFU. To date there has been no response or even acknowledgement of this email. The instructors and their union again request provision of this information and answers to these questions.

Regarding the overall closure itself

1) Please provide the detailed the decision making timeline regarding the closure

- what were the steps in the process
- when did those steps commence
- when was a decision made

2) Are any other programs in Lifelong Learning being closed? The instructors understand that no other programs are being closed, therefore we request comparative enrollment, statistics, particularly for ITP versus other Life Long learning programs.

ELC Specific Questions

1) We request disclosure of the financial performance data, enrollments, and projections, including instructional, room rental, and administrative cost breakdowns, as budget cuts and financial constraints have been publicly stated as a reason for the ongoing layoffs.

- Has the reduction in revenue for MECs from room rentals been considered in the financial analysis?

2) What alternatives were considered regarding restructuring the program?

- was the option of returning administrative work to instructors (as in normal departments) considered? If so, what was the outcome?
- was the option of attaching ELC to an academic department (e.g. the Faculty of Education) to reduce administrative costs considered? If so, what was the outcome?

3) What is the role of FIC in this decision, was the pathway considered?

- Will FIC be expanding its offerings so that it can enroll the students previously sent to ELC directly?
- what about the newly implemented direct articulation to SFU, now that exists and how will it be affected?

ITP

1) We request disclosure of the financial performance data, enrollments, and projections, including instructional, room rental, and administrative cost breakdowns, as budget cuts and financial constraint have been publicly stated as a reason for the ongoing layoffs.

2) What alternatives were considered regarding restructuring the program?

3) Was the Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia consulted on this closure? If so, did they raise any concerns?