

## **SFU Press Releases Collection**

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## **University access pressures recognized**

Contact:Warren Gill, VP University Relations, [Phone removed]

February 19, 2004

The provincial government 's recent budget points to a renewed emphasis on advanced education in British Columbia."With a new student access strategy and restored funding to the research universities, the government has delivered a strong message that advanced education is a priority," says Simon Fraser University president Michael Stevenson. In step with the government's intentions, the university will use these funds to relieve pressure on tuition fee increases. Stevenson says SFU also plans to beef up its own student assistance programs to ensure that academically qualified students will not be turned away from SFU for financial reasons. The university is already engaged in discussions with the government to devise ways to offset the announced cancellation of the student grant program. "We're eager to explore alternatives, such as loan remission and completion grants, as ways to reduce student debt and extend access," says Stevenson. Targeted access growth in the Fraser region also is positive news, according to Stevenson, who says it will give real momentum to SFU's plans for growth in response to community needs.