

SFU Press Releases Collection

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French culture and language come alive at SFU

Contact Danielle Arcand, [Phone removed], darcand@sfu.ca
Yolande Grisé, [Phone removed], ygrise@mail.sfu.ca
Carol Thorbes, Media & PR, [Phone removed]

February 18, 2005

Burnaby Mountain will be alive with French culture, language and festivities during the week of March 2 to 10 at Simon Fraser University. The Office of Francophone and Francophile Affairs (OFFA) opens its new space, and a new frontier in SFU's academic research and student recruitment.

The new space (suite 198-B) is in UniverCity's Cornerstone Building where the campus borders a blossoming residential neighbourhood. The OFFA formally opens with a ceremony presided over by SFU President Michael Stevenson at 11:15 a.m., Wednesday, March 2. SFU associate vp-academic Bill Krane and the deans of arts and social sciences, John Pierce, and education, Paul Shaker, and the OFFA's new director Yolande Grisé, now a West End resident, will attend the opening. Grisé and the OFFA are shepherding SFU's growth into a West Coast bastion of French culture and post-secondary education. "BC has shown a great interest in French language studies," says Grisé, a former Ontario Arts Council chair and French professor at the University of Ottawa. "Francophone language and culture extend worldwide. Through French BC, they are linking to China, India and other Asian nations." Grisé's immediate goal is to triple the number of students in SFU's first Francophone program in a discipline other than French—a Bachelor of Arts in political science.

The OFFA will host public activities year round aimed at highlighting the existence of Francophone culture throughout BC. SFU's Francophone week will feature cultural, culinary, literary, musical and cinematic events. Craig Holszchuh, artistic and general director of Théâtre La Seizième will give a workshop and lecture (March 8, 2:30 p.m.) on playwriting in French in BC. The week includes mask making and a dinner hosted by the French Student Union and the BC Youth Council for Francophones and Francophiles (March 9, 4:30 p.m.). The film Monsieur Ibrahim et les fleurs du Coran (March 9, 7:30 p.m.) will be screened. Events will take place primarily in the OFFA's multipurpose room, specially equipped to stage multimedia artistic, cultural, academic and community activities. For more information about SFU's Francophone week contact: Linda Mackrous, [Phone removed], mackrous@sfu.ca.