

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION  
ENGLISH FOR MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS (EMS) ADVISORY GROUP  
MEETING MINUTES**

**April 14, 2017**

**Present:** Dana Ferris, Chair (UCD), Robin Scarcella (UCI), Margi Wald (UCB), Maggie Sokolik (UCB), Kelly Crosby (UCD), Kimberly Turner (UCR) (telephone), Paul Beehler (UCR Alternate), Jan Frodesen (UCSB), Belinda Braunstein (UCM), Kimberly Helmer (UCSC), Holly Bauer (UCSD), Liz Galvin (UCLA), George Gadda (AWPE Committee Chair/Chief Reader), and Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst)

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Ferris welcomed members to the meeting and reviewed today's agenda.

**II. Consent Calendar**

**Action:** The agenda was approved.

**III. Campus Reports**

**Berkeley:** The program is increasing collaboration with other departments including the Berkeley International Studies Department. Starting next summer the program may offer a summer-only minor in language education with an online session during the first summer and an on-campus session the following summer. The campus has significant budget issues and cuts are impacting the Writing Program, which is being pressured to offer just the required courses. Enrollments continue to drop in UCB's core course for a number of reasons. The summer program may be negatively impacted by the immigration ban.

**Davis:** The campus expects an increase in enrollments to just over one thousand students next year. The Writing Program will take over some graduate level programs next year and it is hoped that long-term lecturers from those programs will continue to teach them. Oral skills instruction is being offered. The program has eighteen lecturers who are being mentored by level-specific assistant directors. There is an intense focus on the courses for the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR). The program may be in the position to provide the ELWR course that has been outsourced to a community college and the structure of the program and its impact on students are being assessed. The ELWR program's director is a Senate member. A new challenge for the program will be the assessment of the International Teaching Assistants because of the new graduate programs.

**Irvine:** The program has seen its largest increase in international students this year. There are 47 lecturers and three staff. Five to 15% of the students fail the writing courses and these students receive three hours of professional tutoring by a lecturer. The Writing Program offers two discipline specific courses in History and Business/Economics, as well as a Tibetan Initiative for visiting nuns and monks from the Dali Lama and an Engineering/Computer Science summer program. The program expects to have approximately two hundred fewer international freshmen. UCI's Admissions Office keeps the program apprised of recruiting efforts so the program knows where students will be from but not their English proficiency. UCI is expecting zero growth of international students in the next few years. Several grants have been awarded to the program. Hiring qualified faculty continues to be a challenge and this is further complicated by the fluctuating needs of the program over the course of the year. One goal is to increase collaboration across the campus.

**Los Angeles:** Enrollments into the Writing Program continue to decline. Just over one hundred students and two hundred graduate students are in the programs for multilingual speakers. There are six full time and one part time lectures and a few Teaching Assistants (TAs). The program is working on articulation between the undergraduate courses and the training for multilingual students is of value to writing programs as a whole. Summer enrollment has been declining over the past few years and there may be a sharp decline this summer. Electives have been popular but this year the program could only offer one session because the funding was needed for required courses. It is difficult to get information about transfer students who often wait until their last quarter to come to the Writing Program for the placement exam and need to be accommodated at the last minute.

**Merced:** The campus now has 7,300 students and enrollment is expected to grow to 10k students by 2020 including one thousand graduate students. The representative is currently the only support for English language and there are no English for Multilingual Students (EMS) courses. More than two-thirds of the undergraduate students take the Writing 1 course, which satisfies the ELWR, and almost all students take Writing 10 in their second semester or sophomore year. Enrollment in the program's support course, Writing 11, has been decreasing so ways to change this offering are under consideration. Other support includes grammar workshops and an increase in achievement is related to an increase in the number of specialized centers, including Writing, STEM, and Math centers that provide tutoring on a drop-in basis. Last year, UCM's Graduate Council changed the requirement for admission to a score of 26 on the speaking portion of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) in order to be in the graduate programs. To date this has resulted in fewer but more highly qualified applicants and an increase in admission by exception. This past spring the program piloted a way to offer concurrent sessions of micro-teaching to help meet the growing population of international graduate students.

**Riverside:** Three classes are designed with multilingual students in mind and about eight percent of the students are placed into one of these courses. Most of UCR's multilingual students are placed into Basic Writing 3. The Writing Program's cap on the number of students in a class continues to be supported. Basic Writing 3 is limited to fifteen students per section, allowing for significant one on one instruction. Students who receive an E-designation on their Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) are automatically placed into Basic Writing 3. The placement committee reviews all the papers with the E-designation and some students are then moved to the Basic Writing 4 class, which is not an EMS class. The program has been working very hard on the placement process to ensure that students are appropriately placed. The first two classes have more units and more contact with instructors for students who are struggling the most. There are challenges related to studying student success in the first two writing courses compared to students in Basic Writing 3 but it has been hard to find comparative groups. These courses have to be justified for budgetary reasons. Another challenge for the program has been staffing, and new instructors will be trained in this fall.

Student surveys are one way the effectiveness of the programs is being evaluated. This year the Academic Resource Center hired a full time director of its writing program for the first time and the Center is interested in establishing a relationship with the Writing Program. Students have access to two one-hour tutoring sessions a week. Overall enrollment increased substantially this year while lower enrollment is expected next year. A series of orientation workshops will be offered to lecturers including one on the AWPE. Specialized tutoring for multilingual students will be offered through the Academic Resource Center. One challenge is that many students do not take the AWPE resulting in the program having to test students frequently.

**San Diego:** Last year the program tested a new curriculum and until June 2016 basic writing was contracted out to a community college. Last spring, a Senate member was hired to direct the program. The faculty who teach basic writing are now all at UCSD and there are twenty full time lecturers along with

the Associate Director. In the past, placement was based on the AWPE E-designation and students had to retake the course until they passed and then took an exit exam. The exit exam has been eliminated and a new portfolio based assessment is being used. The aim is to place students into a two-quarter stretch course instead of requiring them repeat the course until they pass. The program is considering ways to improve placements especially for students who are not multilingual, do not have the E-designation, but score very low on the AWPE. The name of the program has also been changed to the Analytical Writing Program in part to make it more attractive to students.

The program received a two-year Mellon grant that enables it to embed mentors into each of the stretch courses. Some of the existing campus tutoring resources do not train the undergraduate mentors to work with multilingual students so a practicum has been created that focuses on working with these students more effectively and ethically. Several graduate student mentors have also been embedded into classrooms. The program is in the process of developing an elective academic English course and two sections of this course offered in the fall filled up immediately. This year, the program has 1,250 first year international students and 650 transfer students. The campus offers summer programs for domestic students from underperforming high schools and international students, and there are concerns that students may be unable to get to UCSD early enough to participate in the international program because of changes to the visa application process. The Teaching and Learning Commons and International Center are collaborating on an effort to collect data on the language needs of international students. While there is anecdotal information about language needs, the administration would like quantitative data that the Writing Program will also use to help develop responses.

**Santa Barbara:** The program has four levels of EMS courses, three of which are below the ELWR and the highest level satisfies the ELWR. Enrollment growth has been very steady. Almost all students in the EMS programs are Chinese and the majority of students with the E-designation are placed into the writing program course. The staffing has changed with almost half of the ten instructors being new. The new instructors participate in weekly mentoring meetings and the course evaluations for the program are very positive. Two continuing lecturers received course releases in order to help with administrative tasks. The primary focus of the program this year is to articulate a detailed set of level outcomes. One of the biggest challenges has been providing course instruction and curriculum across the levels. Many of the instructors are teaching three writing courses a semester and each instructor can teach different levels.

This campus has not offered summer courses in the past but this summer it will offer the ELWR course for students completing their freshman year. An oral communication class for new international students will also be offered during the summer. The program continues to offer an international transfer student course, primarily in Economics, which is taught by an EMS instructor. Next year the program will revive its language academic support course for students who are not in the program including transfer students. The executive vice chancellor has provided the program with extra funding. Curriculum development is one of the biggest challenges for the program and the program was given tutors who have since been taken away. There are concerns related to academic integrity across the campus.

**Santa Cruz:** Last year a new curriculum was piloted and the program changed from a four-course to a three-course sequence that is content-based and situated within disciplines. Students who had low scores on the AWPE wrote excellent ten-page essays at the end of the second course. The third course focuses on writing studies and involves rhetoric and composition and asks students to think about the writing process. The program compared students in the Multilingual Learning Curriculum with a score of five or lower on the AWPE to students in the ELWR writing course with a score of six and found that students satisfied the ELWR at a much higher rate if they had taken the former course. At UCSC, the ELWR course and Composition 1 are combined so students may pass the latter while still not satisfying the ELWR. The Writing Program has just been notified that it must cut \$400,000 from its budget and the first course in the new level will be eliminated. The program will try to shift at least one course for

international students to the summer and it may be obligatory for students with a certain score, but this may be problematic in terms of the visa process.

Chair Gadda noted that it is helpful to think of the ELWR and AWPE first in terms of whether the standard for entry level writing is met or not. For essays that do not meet that requirement, the E-designation (which was recommended by the two individuals in the EMS programs many years ago) is intended to be additional information for the campus. Especially since campus practices have varied significantly, it is important to understand that the E-designation was never intended as a directive to the campuses that students must take specialized courses. It is information that can be used at the campus level, along with other information, to make individually based placement decisions. At UCLA the essays of everyone who scores below a six and everyone with an E-designation are reviewed. The program typically has about ninety students with the E-designation and about one-third of them are not placed in specialized courses. Many of these students are bilingual, Spanish-speaking domestic students. The scores do not mean the same thing for every paper, for example a paper with a score of six with the E-designation could have more language feature problems than one with a score of 4 and the E-designation.

#### **IV. Challenges and Problems**

Chair Ferris summarized the challenges mentioned during the campus reports. Placement continues to be a challenge across the campuses. Some programs are experiencing declining enrollments and summer shortfalls may have implications for financial shortfalls for the academic year program. Members also touched on tutoring and support outside of regular course offerings. Finding and hiring instructors is an issue as is curriculum and materials development, which may or may not be centralized. A common issue for many campuses is budget. Some campus administrations are asking the programs to justify their existence with data.

**Discussion:** The number of meetings instructors need to attend can be a problem especially if instructors teach more than one level. One campus uses cohort meetings but is thoughtful about limiting the number of meetings. UCSB has a transfer center primarily serving students from community colleges. The Economics Department at UCSB has an upper division writing requirement and UCI has upper division writing for all students which is advertised by the upper division writing instructor. At UCD there are GE upper division writing courses that are very rigorous and international transfer students do not perform well in them. The campus has a disproportionately high number of international students in the Business courses and more specific information is needed about these students including their pathways and the specific problems. Only 40% of UCD's students in the upper division took writing courses before being in the upper division.

The group discussed services for transfer students and there are questions about the anticipated growth in this population at UC. It is often hard to identify transfer students in need of services. Some of the colleges at UCSD require transfer students to take an upper division writing course. UCLA has guidelines for identifying transfer students who need the EMS placement exam. In terms of tutoring, there are issues related to training. Tutoring might work better if writing programs trained and deployed their own tutors, and tutoring courses might be offered for credit. UCSC has a three credit course for tutors. UCB found that only one in seven students seeking tutoring is able to receive it. UCI has used lecturers as well as peer mentors for tutoring. Funding for tutoring services is challenging to secure. One question is whether there is a correlation between academic integrity and the amount of support students can receive. It was noted that some campuses may under report cheating. Course Hero and similar websites were discussed.

## **V. Analytical Writing Placement Exam**

- *George Gadda, AWPE Committee Chair/Chief Reader*

Chair Gadda reported on this year's administration of the AWPE and provided an update on the newly revised SAT. It is anticipated that between 17-18k students will take the AWPE this May. UCOPE has not decided how the new SAT will be used because the College Board has not provided concordance tables to show how the scores on the new test will equate to the old scores. The SAT's new essay asks students to read a passage and show how the writers use evidence and rhetorical features to present a viewpoint.

**Discussion:** It was noted that the Common Core may have influenced the changes made to the new SAT. If more students are required to take the AWPE and higher numbers of them fail, there is a concern about the number of students who will need to be tested on campus and how writing programs will provide classes for all of them. There have been questions about the administration of the SAT overseas and to what degree this test is a good predictor. It may be better for international students to be locally placed by the campuses. The ACT is available in Hong Kong five times a year but there are no spaces available for next year's scheduled dates. If any Advisory Group members know of people who would like to be readers they should notify Chair Gadda.

## **VI. Placement and AWPE/Entry Level Writing Requirements**

- *Bradley Queen, Chair, University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE)*

The chair of UCOPE joined the meeting by telephone to discuss the committee's request for analysis of the AWPE to the Office of the President's Institutional Research (IR) unit. Chair Queen clarified that the co-signors of the memo are subject matter experts, not members of UCOPE. The data may be useful for campus decision making.

**Discussion:** The purpose of the memo is not entirely clear, and it was suggested that if there are questions about the validity and predictive value of the AWPE perhaps the same questions should be asked about the SAT, ACT and the AP. The AWPE is not intended to predict student success after the first year writing class at UC. Depending on the data that is available, IR should be able to analyze the reliability of the reads. Campuses may need to consider different placement mechanisms. One question might be if a six point rubric is needed since most of the scores cluster around certain scores and if a pass/fail exam might be used instead.

Several campuses reported re-reading the essays, especially those that do not have a passing score, rather than just using the score provided to make placement decisions. Members look forward to seeing the data on international students. The holistic combined score is used to determine what to look at for each individual student. Each year UCOP has to submit a report to the state about how students have satisfied the ELWR, so there are significant implications for making any changes. It was suggested that UCOP should connect formally with writing program directors across the campuses to discuss any proposals related to assessment. Advisory Group members thanked Chair Queen for his work on the memo.

## **VII. Follow-up on Previous Items**

The UCM representative reported on support for undocumented students, some of whom may be in the AB 540 category. Resources include legal support, advising, ally training for friends and faculty, networking, socials and events, various types of funding, information about relevant legislation, resource lists and links to other UC services. Many of the resources were found to be for all students. Campuses have submitted reports to UCOP on how funding for undocumented students from President Napolitano

was utilized and the analyst will try to locate this information. The analyst will also inquire about the data that UCOP has on the academic needs of undocumented students.

Chair Ferris reminded members about the other short and long term projects suggested last year which include creating a curriculum bank, hiring and orientation of new instructors, and TA training for graduate students across the disciplines. The analyst will make and distribute to the group a digital copy of the 1989 report on EMS students.

**Discussion:** Members agreed that working on the curriculum bank seems to be an important effort. This will include curriculum outcomes from the various campuses. Next year's meeting could include a discussion about how programs can collaborate. The Consortium on Graduate Communication (CGC) is a new professional organization that works with graduate students on writing and speaking. Chair Ferris will organize folders in Box for the curricular information as well as professional development resources. There is interest in learning about what others are researching or presentations they have put together.

#### **VIII. Date for 2018 Advisory Group Meeting**

Members agreed on April 20, 2018 for next year's meeting from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

#### **IX. New Business**

There was no New Business.

Meeting adjourned at: 3:05 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Dana Ferris