

BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS (BOARS) ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) met ten times in Academic Year 2013-14 to conduct business with respect to its duties as outlined in [Senate Bylaw 145](#), to advise the President and Senate agencies on the admission of undergraduate students and the criteria for undergraduate status. The BOARS chair also charged two subcommittees – Enrollment Issues, and Articulation and Evaluation – with reporting to the parent committee about specific topics. The major activities of BOARS and its subcommittees, and the issues they addressed this year are outlined briefly, as follows:

REPORT TO THE REGENTS ON NEW ADMISSIONS POLICY

In November, BOARS submitted a [report](#) to the Regents about the impact of the new freshman eligibility policy implemented for students entering the university in fall 2012. The report notes that the “9-by-9” policy has removed unnecessary barriers, broadened access to California students, and allowed campuses to select a group of students who are more diverse and better prepared academically. It cites evidence that students who began at UC in fall 2012 have higher average first-term GPAs and retention rates and lower average probation rates compared to freshmen who were selected under the old policy and began in 2010 or 2011; that an increasing percentage of California high school graduates from underrepresented minority groups declared their intent to register at a UC campus between 2010 and 2013; and that more students are applying to UC now than under the old policy, suggesting that the expansion of ELC and the introduction of ETR have removed some of the barriers that may have discouraged students previously.

The report also expresses concern about evidence indicating that students admitted to UC through the ELC and ETR paths have poorer overall probation and persistence outcomes. It notes that broader demographic and economic changes and the transition to a single score individualized review admissions process that four UC campuses implemented simultaneous to the new policy make it difficult to attribute any academic or diversity outcome to the policy change definitively. Finally, the report anticipates an adjustment to the 9x9 eligibility construct BOARS would propose several months later, warning that the policy has overshot its original target for guaranteed students and that UC’s referral system is facing significant challenges that must be addressed to maintain UC’s Master Plan commitment to California residents.

FRESHMAN ELIGIBILITY AND REFERRAL

- *Proposal to Adjust the UC Eligibility Construct from 9x9 to 7x7*

When BOARS developed its eligibility reform policy, it projected incorrectly that the students in the 9% Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC) group and the 9% statewide group would combine to provide an admissions guarantee to approximately 10% of California public high school graduates. BOARS recognized the miscalculation in 2012, after UC admitted 12.1% of public high school graduates who met one or both of the 9x9 guarantees. BOARS also noticed that the referral pool was growing too large to be managed easily over the long-term. During the year BOARS explored solutions that would more accurately meet the 10% policy target and reduce the referral pool while maintaining the guarantee. After analyzing projections about the admissions patterns and the UC performance of students under a variety of scenarios, BOARS

voted to recommend an adjustment to the “9x9” eligibility construct to one that offers a guarantee of admission to the top 7% of high school students in each California high school and to the top 7% of students according to a statewide index, in order to more accurately meet the 10% policy target, and to reduce pressure on the referral pool. BOARS also approved a proposed methodology for calculating the percentage of “top” public high school students who are likely apply to UC, using ELC benchmarking information reported by high schools, to help in the construction of a new statewide eligibility index that will meet the 10% target. The “7x7” proposal will be circulated for systemwide Senate review in the fall.

- ***Proposed SAT Minimum for ELC***

BOARS considered, but rejected, a recommendation from its Enrollment Issues Subcommittee to require a minimum 1400 SAT score for Eligibility in the Local Context. The subcommittee recommended the change after reviewing data suggesting that an SAT score below 1400 is the approximate point at which students are much more likely to earn less than a “C” during the first year at UC, have higher probation rates, lower cumulative GPAs, lower retention rates, and lower graduation rates, compared to students with higher SAT scores. BOARS considered the argument that establishing a minimum SAT benchmark for ELC eligibility would help increase the likelihood of success, reduce UC’s referral pool, and remove from the referral pool many of the weakest students who are most likely to accept a referral offer, but decided that at least for now the ELC determination should continue to be based solely on weighted/capped GPA.

- ***Future of the Referral Guarantee***

BOARS discussed at length the capacity of the UC system to accept more students. As capacity decreases, and Merced, the only campus taking referral students, becomes more selective, the UC system may no longer be able to offer a guarantee of referral admission to every student defined as eligible for one through the “9-by-9” process. UC will cease to have “available space,” per [Regent’s Policy 2103](#), for students who are not admitted to a campus to which they apply. While BOARS is confident that the adjustment to 7x7 will address the need to align the guarantee pool with the policy target and reduce the referral pool, it does not believe that moving to 7x7 will fully address the ongoing challenges of space. Indeed, the university may be in a similar position again in a few years, particularly if enrollment pressures increase and the state fails to provide additional funding for enrollment. BOARS believes that UC will have to consider options for adjusting eligibility policy again and perhaps reconsider the referral concept. In fact, a minority of BOARS members spoke in support of eliminating “eligibility” and the guarantee concept and moving to a system in which all students are selected through comprehensive review. Indeed, this was BOARS’ original proposal for eligibility reform in 2008, which the Senate rejected. BOARS also acknowledges that ELC is a high value program for UC that obligates the university to recognize the best students in all California high schools, including those from lower performing high schools. BOARS will be monitoring these issues closely going forward.

- ***Senate Regulation 465***

BOARS considered, but rejected, a proposal to revise [Senate Regulation 465](#) dealing with the admission of UC-eligible applicants, to align with language in [Regents’ Policy 2103 C](#) by clearly qualifying the guarantee of referral admission described in SR 465 as valid only if space is available. BOARS asked the University Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction to advise BOARS about the extent to which it is within the Senate’s jurisdiction to define how eligible students will be treated in admission. UCRJ confirmed that it would be within BOARS’ jurisdiction to recommend changes to SR 465 and appropriate for Senate regulations to include language

defining how eligible students will be treated in admission; however, BOARS decided not to pursue the change.

TRANSFER ADMISSION

BOARS helped lead UC's response to a range of issues and concerns about community college transfer.

- ***Transfer Action Team***

Chair Johnson co-chaired with Vice President for Student Affairs Judy Sakaki a Transfer Action Team charged by the President with recommending ways to strengthen and streamline the transfer path, increase the transfer graduation rate, and expand UC's reach into a broader range of community colleges. He and Vice President Sakaki presented the [final report](#) to the Regents in May. It recommends upgrading UC's transfer message with a new communications and technology strategy; creating a stronger presence at every California community college to promote interest in transfer among a geographically, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse student body; upgrading support services to help transfers transition to and succeed at UC; and reaffirming UC's commitment to transfer students by engaging every campus to meet the Master Plan's 2:1 freshman-to transfer target. The report also recommends building on previous efforts to align lower division requirements for specific majors across UC campuses to enable potential transfer students to prepare for more than one UC simultaneously, and also aligning when possible, UC's major requirements with the Transfer Model Curricula developed by CCC/CSU for the Associate Degrees for Transfer. Finally, the report makes clear that UC cannot increase transfer enrollments at the expense of freshmen nor without additional state funding.

- ***Implementation of Transfer Policy***

BOARS representatives updated BOARS about campus efforts to implement the new transfer admissions pathways scheduled to take effect in 2015 – including their efforts to review existing lower-division transfer requirements and pathways in comparison to the CCC/CSU Transfer Model Curricula (TMC), define UC Transfer Curricula for appropriate majors, and examine the extent to which majors are aligning lower division major preparation requirements across campuses and with the corresponding TMCs.

- ***Universitylink***

In November, BOARS approved Universitylink, a UC San Diego program that gives transfer admission preference to low-income transfer students at nine designated San Diego area community colleges who fulfill specific academic requirements. The program responds to the reality that some community college students, especially low income students, view their local UC as the only viable transfer option due to work or family obligations that tie them to a community.

- ***Comprehensive Review Criteria for Transfers***

In December, BOARS added a new comprehensive review criterion for transfer students to the [Guidelines for Implementation of University Policy on Undergraduate Admission](#). It recognizes students who are on track to complete an associate of arts or science transfer degree offered by a California community college. The language will help put into operation the new transfer pathway in Senate Regulation 476 and ensure that admissions staff value the degrees appropriately when they are selecting applicants.

STATEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF WRITING

The chairs and vice chairs of BOARS and the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) drafted a "[Statement on the Importance of Writing at the University of California](#)," which references the redesign of the SAT, taking effect for 2016 admissions, and changes associated with the writing portion of the exam. The Academic Council endorsed the Statement at its April meeting and forwarded it to the President.

REDESIGNED SAT

In early June, three representatives from the College Board joined BOARS to discuss the [redesign of the SAT](#). BOARS also reviewed an updated UCOP study which confirmed an earlier finding that the SAT writing section, which includes an essay, is one of the best predictors of first-year UC GPA. Later in June BOARS voted unanimously to adopt the redesigned SAT as an acceptable admissions exam for 2016 admissions, and to continue requiring the Essay section of the exam. A [letter](#) articulating the decision was sent to Chair Jacob and forwarded to the President. In general, BOARS believes that the new SAT meets its objectives and principles for admissions tests and will be an improvement over the current exam to the extent that it aligns more closely with high school curriculum and college-level expectations than the existing SAT, one of the principles that BOARS articulated in its January 2002 [Testing Principles](#). BOARS also agreed that by continuing to require the Essay section for admission to UC, the university will send a strong message that writing, and specifically the essay form, is important for college-level work. BOARS will be monitoring the predictive validity of the Essay section and studying the extent to which the new test meets BOARS' goals and principles for admissions tests.

NONRESIDENT ADMISSIONS

BOARS continued to monitor the extent to which campuses are meeting BOARS' June 2011 [policy](#) that non-residents admitted to a campus must "compare favorably" to California residents admitted to that campus. BOARS' [evaluation procedures](#) ask campuses to report annually on the extent to which they are meeting the standard. The nine undergraduate campuses submitted their nonresident "compare favorably" reports to BOARS for the 2013 admissions cycle, and in April, BOARS issued a systemwide [report](#) discussing the variety of approaches campuses used to analyze their admissions, enrollment, and UC performance data, which indicated that all are admitting nonresident students who compare favorably to residents. BOARS also noted the difficulty of making a true comparison between residents and nonresidents, based on narrow academic indicators and in the absence of equivalent local context and achievement information for both applicant groups.

MATHEMATICS PREPARATION

In December, BOARS added a [cover letter](#) to its July 2013 [Statement on Basic Math](#), which clarifies the position taken in the statement in relation to alternative quantitative transfer course prerequisites and courses. The cover letter notes that the statement is not intended to encourage or discourage alternative pathways, but to ensure that the content of quantitative UC-transferrable courses is linked to college readiness standards of the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics (CCSSM).

HONORS POLICY

BOARS approved four policy changes associated with UC-approved high school-created "a-g" honors courses that are eligible to receive a one point GPA "bump." The changes do the following:

1. Remove all limits on the number of school-created honors courses that may be approved for the bump.
2. Allow any qualified school-created honors courses to be eligible for the bump in the college-preparatory elective (“g”) area.
3. Require high schools to offer a non-honors equivalent only at the same frequency, rather than *simultaneously* with the school-created honors course in the same subject area.
4. Extend eligibility for the bump to qualified school-created honors courses offered in 10th grade, in addition to those offered at the 11th and 12th grade-levels.

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR MAJORS

BOARS was asked to consider instances in which departments or colleges set conditions for freshman admission to a specific major – including a minimum SAT score – in addition to those required for admission to the general campus, during later stages of holistic review. BOARS concluded that it is consistent with systemwide comprehensive review policy to use a supplemental holistic review of applicants with low test scores, but that a single academic indicator cannot be used to admit a student into a major or redirect them to an alternate major.

AP, IB, AND OTHER PRE-UC UNITS AWARDED TO INCOMING FRESHMEN

BOARS reviewed data showing a recent increase in the number of Honors/AP units brought to UC by enrolled freshmen and the disproportionate and growing variation in the average number of units by ethnic background and high school API ranking. BOARS discussed the possibility of establishing a cap on the number of Honors/AP units students can bring with them and of eliminating or reducing the GPA bonus (“bump”) that provides extra points in the GPA calculation for completion of AP and UC-certified Honors courses. BOARS made no decision, but it plans to study the issue further next year.

JOINT MEETINGS

- ***February 7 Meeting with Legislative Staff in Sacramento***

For the second year in a row, BOARS traveled to Sacramento for its February meeting to give the committee a chance to discuss admissions topics with staff from the legislature, the Governor’s office, and the Department of Finance. The half-day session at the UC Center in Sacramento touched on the new admissions policy, nonresident admissions, the Transfer Action Team recommendations, and the future of the referral pool and the admissions guarantee.

- ***June 27 Meeting with the UC Admissions Directors***

In June, BOARS hosted its annual half-day joint meeting at UCOP with the UC campus admissions directors. BOARS and the directors discussed the ongoing transition to the new admissions policy, outcomes from the policy, views and concerns about the implementation plan for the new transfer admissions policy, non-resident enrollment, financial challenges, recruitment and outreach efforts of residents and non-residents, and future options for meeting the referral guarantee.

BOARS ARTICULATION AND EVALUATION (A&E) SUBCOMMITTEE

The A&E Subcommittee (*Ralph Aldredge (chair), Henry Sanchez, Robert Cooper, Vickie Scott, June Gordon, Charles Thorpe, and Monica Lin*) was charged with reviewing issues around high school preparation, the “a-g” requirements, and selected courses submitted for “a-g” approval where faculty input is required. The Subcommittee met monthly during regular BOARS meetings and held additional conference calls to conduct business. It provided input into four

proposed policy changes related to honors courses, discussed alternative transfer math course prerequisites and alternative transferrable courses intended for non-STEM majors, and approved proposed revisions to [“program status” policy](#) intended to clarify and streamline the criteria and review procedures for organizations applying for program status.

BOARS ENROLLMENT ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE

The Enrollment Issues Subcommittee (*George Johnson (chair), Lynn Huntsinger, Patrick Farrell, Jack Vevea, Mindy Marks, Lee Bardwell, Stephen Handel, and Michael Treviño*) met monthly during regular BOARS meetings. The Subcommittee led the effort to review options for adjusting the statewide admissions index to align UC admissions outcomes and the guarantee pool with Master Plan expectations, and related projected outcomes and effects on different populations of students. It also analyzed first-year UC probation, persistence, and GPA outcomes against high school GPA and SAT scores and recommended a minimum SAT 1400 for Eligibility in the Local Context as a working model.

RESPONDING TO LEGISLATION

On behalf of BOARS, Chair Johnson sent the Academic Senate legislative analyst views on several proposed state bills, including several intended to encourage students to take more computer science courses in high school and to increase the recognition of those courses in college admission. Chair Johnson and Associate Vice President Handel also testified at a November 12, 2013 State Assembly Higher Education Committee hearing on transfer admission.

OTHER BUSINESS AND BRIEFINGS

- **Treatment of Magnet Schools in the ELC Program:** BOARS agreed that UC should eliminate the practice of calculating separate 9% ELC benchmarks for students enrolled in individual magnet programs operating within high schools, and instead use a common ELC benchmark for all students within a school.
- **Virtual Schools and ELC:** BOARS considered a proposal to allow online (“virtual”) high school providers to participate in the Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC) program, but decided that virtual schools are by nature, not “local,” and do not fit into the ELC model.
- **Program Status Policy:** On the advice of the Articulation and Evaluation Subcommittee, BOARS approved policy revisions to the review procedures for organizations applying for “program status.”
- **UCSD Tribal Membership and Admissions Proposal:** BOARS reviewed a UCSD proposal for expanding the definition of membership in federally-recognized tribes in the context of comprehensive review procedures for admission. BOARS asked the Office of General Counsel for a legal opinion on the parameters of the “political affiliation” exception to Proposition 209 that allows the University to consider tribal membership in considering applications for admission. OGC indicated that it would respond early in the next academic year.
- **Computer Science:** BOARS discussed efforts by organizations that want to expand Computer Science (CS) education and access in high schools and are seeking UC’s recognition of such courses as satisfying a subject requirement other than the college-preparatory elective (“g”). BOARS agreed that a CS course can be approved for the mathematics (“c”) area, as long as it includes sufficient math content.

- **Revisions to “a-g” criteria:** BOARS reviewed and approved revised evaluation criteria for high school courses that satisfy the ‘a-f’ subject requirements for freshman admission criteria, generated by faculty workgroups convened by UCOP.

BOARS REPRESENTATION

BOARS Chair George Johnson represented the committee at meetings of the Academic Council and the Academic Assembly. He co-chaired the Transfer Action Team, and attended meetings of the [Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates](#) (ICAS), to discuss issues of shared concern to the three California higher education segments, and meetings of a joint Senate-Administration Enrollment Issues Work Group to discuss enrollment issues. He was also a member of the Systemwide Strategic Admissions Taskforce (SSAT), the National Governors Association Common Core Project – a statewide effort to help identify and coordinate higher education’s response to the Common Core, and he made a presentation on UC comprehensive review with UCSC Admissions Director Michael McCawley at the 2014 meeting of the Western Association of College Admissions Counseling (WACAC).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BOARS collaborated closely with UCOP and benefited from regular consultations with Vice President for Student Affairs Judy Sakaki, Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Admissions Stephen Handel, and Director of Undergraduate Admissions Michael Treviño, who updated BOARS about application, admissions, and SIR outcomes; transfer policies, initiatives, and legislation; the President’s Supporting Undocumented Students initiative; meetings with student groups; community outreach; admissions messaging; feedback from counselor conferences; campus-based concerns; and other issues. Associate Vice President Handel and Director Treviño also worked closely with the Data Analysis Subcommittee. Associate Director Monica Lin attended each meeting, worked closely with the A&E Subcommittee, and briefed BOARS on high school ‘a-g’ course certification issues, the UC Curriculum Integration Institutes, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, and other topics. BOARS also received valuable support and advice from Institutional Research Coordinator Tongshan Chang, who provided the committee with critical analyses, and Admissions Policy Coordinator Adam Parker. BOARS also thanks the faculty who attended meetings as alternates for regular committee members: Dorothy Wiley (UCLA), Richard Rhodes (UCB), Andrej Luptak (UCI), Thad Kousser (SD), Madeline Butler (SD), Juliette Levy (R), Yi Zhang (SC), and Minghui Hu (SC).

Respectfully submitted,

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