

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA **ACADEMIC SENATE**
BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS
Minutes of Meeting
March 7, 2014

I. Consent Calendar

- BOARS Minutes of February 7, 2014

Action: BOARS approved the February minutes.

II. Announcements

- *George Johnson, BOARS Chair*

Content Expert Workgroups: Chair Johnson recently wrote to campus department chairs asking them to provide faculty nominees for one of eight standing content-expert workgroups that will advise BOARS, the University Committee on Educational Policy, and the University Committee on Preparatory Education on specific issues that require deep subject matter knowledge.

Senate Regulation 465: Chair Johnson has asked the University Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction to advise BOARS about how language in Senate Regulation 465 about the admission of UC eligible applicants should be interpreted in the context of language found in Regents Policy 2103, and the extent to which it is within the Senate's jurisdiction to define how eligible students will be treated in admission.

State Constitutional Amendment 5: A proposed California constitutional amendment would remove public universities from the provisions of Proposition 209 for purposes of admission. If approved by the Legislature, SCA 5 will appear as a referendum on the November 2014 ballot. The measure is controversial among groups who say it could reduce their access to the university.

SAT Study and Redesign: A new [study](#) of student performance at colleges where the SAT is optional in admissions suggests that the SAT adds little predictive power and plays a less important role in predicting success than high school GPA. In addition, the College Board recently announced that it will implement significant changes to the SAT in 2016, which include making the essay portion of the SAT writing section optional. BOARS members noted that the committee will need to respond to the SAT changes after careful study. It was noted that BOARS' 2009 [report to the Regents on Admissions Tests and UC Principles for Testing](#) references a UCOP study showing that the SAT writing section, first introduced in 2006, is one of the best predictors of first-year UC GPA. It was suggested that UCOP should update that study to assess the current predictive power of the SAT writing section.

III. Announcements from the Senate Chair

- *Bill Jacob, Academic Senate Chair*

At the February Academic Council meeting, Vice President for Institutional Research and Academic Planning Pamela Brown presented an analysis of factors associated with bachelor degree completion rates and time-to-degree. She will discuss the findings at the March Regents meeting. UCOP will also be presenting systemwide results of the UC Campus Climate Survey at the March Regents meeting and posting individual campus survey results on a central website.

The Academic Council recently sent comments to the Provost about proposed revisions to UC policies on [self-supporting graduate professional degree programs](#) and [professional degree supplemental tuition](#). The comments reflect concern about the growth of high fee professional degree programs and their impact on access and UC's public mission. The California Open Education Resources Council has secured funding and is moving forward with its mandate to identify or develop 50 open source digital textbooks that can be adopted for use at the three higher education segments.

IV. Consultation with UCOP

- *Judy Sakaki, Vice President, Student Affairs,*
- *Steve Handel, Associate Vice President, Undergraduate Admissions*
- *Michael Trevino, Director, Undergraduate Admissions*

SAT Redesign: The College Board will release sample items for the redesigned SAT on April 16. The redesign is intended to increase the test's emphasis on evidence-based college and career readiness standards. The College Board will also be emphasizing its commitment to opportunity and equity by offering free test preparation through the Khan Academy website and college application fee waivers to low-income students.

California Learning Resources Network: In May 2012, BOARS approved a [new policy](#) for the review of online high school courses that satisfy the "a-g" pattern for UC eligibility. The policy outlines a process for course submission, review, and approval involving a partnership with the California Learning Resources Network (CLRN), which pre-reviews online courses proposed for "a-g" and assesses their content against relevant state standards and assess the quality of the online instructional framework against national quality standards. CLRN has informed UC that it will lose its state funding on June 30 unless steps are taken to create a special line item in the May budget revision. BOARS should provide guidance about how the policy should be revised to account for the loss of CLRN.

Other Announcements: Vice President Sakaki and Senate Chair Jacob are interviewing finalists for the Vice Provost for Educational Partnerships position, and President Napolitano is assembling two systemwide advisory groups to consult her on veteran student and undocumented student issues. UC is involved in a new project, funded by a National Governor's Association grant, to help identify and coordinate higher education's response to the Common Core in the areas of K-12 teacher preparation, assessment mechanisms, and undergraduate education. The Transfer Action Team will present its final report at the May Regents meeting.

V. Subcommittee Breakout: *Articulation and Evaluation*

Honors Policy: Per Senate Regulation 424.B.2, UC applicants may earn a one point GPA “bump” for completion of AP, IB, or UC-approved high school-created honors level courses, up to a maximum of four courses/eight semesters. UCOP has established separate restrictions on school-created honors courses that are eligible to receive the bump. Associate Director Lin asked the subcommittee to consider four policy changes related to honors courses.

1. Under current policy, the bump may be applied to a maximum of one school-created honors course in a given “a-g” subject area, unless the school offers no AP/IB courses in that area, in which case a maximum of two school-created honors courses in each area are eligible for the bump. UCOP is proposing to remove all course limits on the number of school-created honors courses that may be approved for the bump.
2. Under current policy only AP/IB courses can be approved for the bump in the college-preparatory elective (“g”) area. UCOP is proposing that school-created honors courses be eligible for the bump in “g.”
3. UCOP is proposing to remove the requirement that schools offer a non-honors equivalent to any school-created honors course.
4. Under current policy, 10th grade AP courses are eligible for the honors bump, but only 11th and 12th grade school-created honors courses are eligible for the bump. UCOP is proposing to extend eligibility to qualified 10th grade school-created honors courses.

Associate Director Lin noted that the original rationale behind these restrictions is unclear, but they limit opportunities for students at schools offering no AP courses in a given area. Students attending those schools are restricted to choosing from just two school-created honors courses per “a-g” discipline (the maximum number of school-created courses currently allowed for approval under policy), while students attending a school that offers numerous AP courses within a particular subject area have more options for the bump. She noted that school-created honors courses that exceed the two-course limit may still be approved for “a-g,” but not for the UC honors designation, which carries the GPA bump.

A BOARS member noted that the guidelines reflect a preference for AP courses over school-created honors courses. There may be a sound pedagogical reason behind this preference—for example, a higher level of confidence in the quality and rigor of AP courses compared to those of a school-created course—but it would help to have more information about why the policies were established, as well as what factors might limit a school from developing AP courses. There was some sympathy toward the view that the preference could disadvantage students at certain schools, although it was noted that honors courses are still recognized in comprehensive review even if no bump is given. There was a question about whether a student could receive a bump for both an AP and a school-created honors course in the same subject. A member also expressed concern that not providing a non-honors version of an honors course could isolate the course material to an elite group of students.

VI. Subcommittee Breakout: *Enrollment Issues*

The subcommittee reviewed several UCOP studies analyzing first-year UC probation, persistence, and GPA outcomes against high school GPA and SAT scores. The first study illustrates the predicted probability that freshmen entering UC in fall 2012 will be on probation or persist to the next year. The second is a linear regression comparison of three models

predicting first-year UC GPA. The studies provide evidence that the SAT score is a better predictor of UC performance (first-year GPA, probation, and persistence) compared to high school GPA.

The subcommittee also reviewed a sensitivity analysis of first-year UC GPA, probation, and persistence outcomes as a function of high school GPA and SAT score, across six ethnic categories. The analysis indicates that there is not a strong effect of race/ethnicity on student performance relative to their incoming SAT score. A similar analysis indicates race/ethnicity has a larger effect when examining first year performance at UC relative to high school GPA.

The study indicates that almost 25% of students with SAT scores below 1400 and 30% of students with SAT scores below 1300 were on probation after their first year at UC. The subcommittee found the 25% chance of probation to be unacceptable for a cohort of students who are guaranteed admission. It agreed unanimously to recommend a minimum SAT 1400 for Eligibility in the Local Context as a working model for which additional analyses will be conducted.

VII. Compare Favorably Report

A short report summarizing systemwide outcomes in the context of the compare favorably standard has been drafted. BOARS will review the report at a future meeting. Members agreed that the compare favorably policy sends an important message to the public about UC's commitment to the fair treatment of California residents in admissions.

VIII. Subcommittee Report Back: *Enrollment Issues*

Minimum SAT Recommendation: The Enrollment Issues Subcommittee summarized for BOARS its recommendation that a minimum 1400 SAT score be required for ELC eligibility. Chair Johnson emphasized that the minimum would apply only to the referral guarantee, not to admission. ELC-eligible-only students with SAT scores below 1400 would still be visible to campuses in the Entitled to Review pool, and many would still be admitted by campuses through comprehensive review. Based on current data, it is projected that a 1400 SAT minimum would reduce the ELC pool by about 1,200. Last year, campuses enrolled 6,000 students from the ETR pool, including 1,500 students with SAT scores 1400 or below.

Discussion: Some BOARS members expressed concern about the proposal, noting that the 1400 SAT score and 25% probation risk benchmark are, to some extent, arbitrary cut-offs. There was also concern that the change could disproportionately impact disadvantaged populations. It was also noted that probationary status is evidence only of a struggle, not of failure, and that the lowest-scoring ELC cohort still has a relatively high graduation rate. UC probation rates tend to improve significantly after freshmen adjust to life at UC and complete their first year. Moreover, the SAT is a single, three-hour test, while GPA tracks achievement over several years. UC should enhance services that help students succeed rather than implement policy changes that narrow opportunity.

Members speaking in favor of the proposal noted that UC is already exceeding its Master Plan obligation, and campuses are already devoting significant resources to student success programs. There are too many low performing students in the guarantee pool and Merced should not be required to accept referral students who have a high risk of failure. A minimum SAT score of 1400 is a modest floor for an elite institution such as UC—the College Board’s own national college-readiness benchmark is 1500. There are other public higher education options for lower performing students, including the transfer path. The data show that SAT scores are indicative of how students will perform at UC, but the SAT score will remain only one factor in the admissions decision, and campuses can still admit well-qualified students with lower SAT scores through ETR and comprehensive review. The student representative also expressed support for moving to an SAT minimum if it is necessary to maintaining the guarantee/referral policy.

BOARS members agreed that it would be useful to examine longitudinal data on UC probation, persistence, and GPA outcomes; data projecting how an SAT minimum would affect the demographic composition of the referral pool; and data projecting which students from the cohort affected by an SAT minimum would likely be admitted through ETR. It was suggested that BOARS could establish a composite score for ELC eligibility, based on GPA and test scores, similar to the statewide index. It was noted that BOARS will need to consider the planned changes to the SAT, and that those changes are likely to include a methodology for translating the old system into the new.

Action: It was agreed that BOARS will request additional analyses.

IX. Transfer Action Team

BOARS reviewed an advance draft of the Transfer Action Team report that Chair Johnson and Vice President Sakaki will present to the Regents in May. BOARS members thanked the Action Team for crafting a well-considered, comprehensive document. They discussed one of the ideas the report lists as meriting further study—an “ELC” program for transfers that would guarantee admission to a set number of transfer prepared students at each of the 112 community colleges. It was noted that the “ELC” program would show that UC is serious about admitting transfers from all CCCs, although it was also noted that the community colleges that advertise the large number of transfers they send to UC may resist efforts that could reduce their status as transfer-focused institutions, and that some colleges that send few transfers to UC serve more as transfer pipelines to specific CSUs. It was noted that the Action Team does not intend to weaken existing ties between UC and its high volume community college partners, but to strengthen ties to other community colleges.

BOARS also discussed a recommendation in the report that UC do more to align lower division requirements for specific majors across UC campuses when possible, so that potential transfer students can prepare for more than one UC simultaneously, and also to align when possible, UC’s major requirements with the Transfer Model Curricula developed by CCC/CSU for the Associate Degrees for Transfer. It was noted that UC faculty will need to see evidence that changing major preparation requirements will have educational benefits, such as improved preparation of transfer students.

X. Subcommittee Report Back: *Articulation and Evaluation*

Honors Policy: Vice Chair Aldredge summarized for BOARS the Articulation and Evaluation Subcommittee’s discussion about four proposals related to high school honors policy and the approval of “a-g” courses that may be taken by students to earn the GPA “bump.” Before making any recommendation, the subcommittee wants to better understand the basis for current policy restrictions on school-created honors courses as distinct from AP and IB courses. It also has questions about the review process for school-created honors courses.

It was noted that UCOP staff could not determine the original reason for the policy distinction between AP/IB and school-created honors courses, but they believe that removing the two-course restriction on schools that do not offer AP/IB courses in a given subject area would level the playing field for those schools. For example, a school that offers no AP/IB courses in a subject area may develop ten honors courses in that area; however, under current guidelines, only two are eligible to give students the bump, while a school that offers ten AP courses in that area may qualify all ten for the bump. Schools have less incentive to develop home grown honors courses as a result of these limits.

Discussion: A member noted that the policy preference for AP courses is well-founded because AP is a standardized curriculum with strong quality control measures, including teacher certification. It was noted that students have an incentive to take honors courses apart from gaining a GPA bump, because the number of and performance in honors courses is a recognized comprehensive review criterion. A member expressed concern that removing the disincentive to create additional honors courses could strain staff resources. It was noted that schools may in some cases be better than AP at developing forward-looking honors courses in specific areas. In addition, some members spoke in favor of the proposal to extend eligibility to qualified 10th grade school-created honors courses, and one spoke in favor of eliminating the honors bump altogether.

Associate Director Lin noted that UC has direct control over the quality of school-created honors courses and would welcome faculty input into the honors review criteria if it would strengthen their confidence regarding the quality of approved “a-g” honors courses.

Action It was agreed that BOARS will revisit the honors policy questions at the April meeting,

Revisions to “a-g” criteria: Last summer, the Office of Admissions convened six faculty workgroups to review and clarify the evaluation criteria for high school courses that satisfy the ‘a-f’ subject requirements for freshman admission. BOARS reviewed the revised criteria generated by the workgroups, which have also been reviewed by other high school, UC, and CSU faculty groups.

Action: It was agreed that BOARS will vote to adopt the revisions at the April meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm
Minutes Prepared by Michael LaBriola
Attest: George Johnson