

**BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS (BOARS)  
ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20**

**TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:**

The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) met eleven times in Academic Year 2019-20 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 major activities of BOARS and the issues it addressed this year are outlined briefly, as follows:

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE REGENTS ON UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS AND COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW**

BOARS' annual [Report to the Regents on Undergraduate Admissions Requirements and Comprehensive Review](#) discusses freshman and transfer application, admission, and enrollee outcomes under comprehensive review for the years 2014–2019; first-year UC performance outcomes for students who entered UC in fall 2018; efforts by BOARS to enhance the transfer admission path and to ensure that admitted nonresidents compare favorably to California residents; diversity outcomes; a summary of each UC campus's comprehensive review process; and challenges associated with the future of the referral guarantee. The report notes BOARS' concern that annually increasing enrollment expectations from the state, absent funding for additional academic facilities, could have deleterious educational outcomes in the long run.

- ***Policy on Augmented Review in Undergraduate Admissions***

[Regents Policy 2110](#) outlines guidelines and criteria for an additional review of select applicants who fall in the margins for admission, but whose initial application yields an incomplete picture of their qualifications or presents extraordinary circumstances that invite further comment. It outlines three types of supplemental information a campus may request from up to 15% of applicants in a given admissions review cycle: 1) a questionnaire inviting the candidate to elaborate on special talents, accomplishments, extraordinary circumstances, and their school/home environment; 2) 7<sup>th</sup> semester grades; and 3) up to two letters of recommendation. The policy states that campuses may solicit letters only from applicants selected for augmented review, applicants considered for admission by exception, or applicants given a special review in other specific situations.

BOARS received reports from the campuses that utilized augmented review, and encouraged those campuses to look closely at the information requested and perhaps find other ways of deriving that information, such as an additional or revised Personal Insight question or another dimension of comprehensive review.

**NONRESIDENT ADMISSION**

- ***Annual Systemwide Compare Favorably Report***

BOARS issued its [annual "Compare Favorably" report](#) on 2019 nonresident admissions. The annual report summarizes systemwide and campus outcomes for the policy, focusing on comparisons of high school GPA, SAT score, and first-year UC GPA and persistence for residents, domestic nonresidents, and international nonresidents for each campus. The report notes that based

on those limited measures, the University is largely meeting the standard on a systemwide basis, although outcomes vary on specific campuses. The report emphasizes that GPA and test scores are narrow, imperfect measures for the assessment, given campuses' use of 14 comprehensive review factors. Further, in light of the Regents' decision to phase out standardized tests pending development of a new one, how to demonstrate that non-residents Compare Favorably is the subject of new scrutiny.

### **COVID-19 RESPONSES**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, BOARS approved several interim actions designed to promote flexibility in admissions procedures this fall. Guidance included how to assess Pass/No Pass or "Credit" grades in GPA evaluations, deadline flexibility, recognition that some documents may not be available, and similar recommendations for transfer applicants.

### **AREA D WORK GROUP AND PROPOSED REVISIONS TO SENATE REGULATION 424**

In January 2017, BOARS charged a UC faculty work group with proposing revisions to the area "d" (laboratory science) requirement for freshman admission ([Senate Regulation 424.A.3.d](#)), to better align UC's expectations for high school science preparation with the expectations for high school science curricula based on California's adoption of the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for K-12.

In February 2018, BOARS proposed the following policy revisions:

1. Rename the area D requirement from "Laboratory Science" to "Science."
2. Broaden options for science disciplines that fulfill the third year area D requirement, including (but not limited to) earth and space sciences, interdisciplinary sciences, computer science, engineering, and applied sciences.
3. Increase the course requirements for science from 2+1 recommended, to 3, in keeping with the NGSS.

In October 2018, after the Provost's Office response to the proposed area D revisions, several, the Assembly eventually approved the three items in separate motions in April 2019:

1. Rename the area D requirement from "Laboratory Science" to "Science."
2. Endorse the expanded course list approved by BOARS.
3. Encourage the administration to increase the course requirements from 2+1 recommended, to 3, in keeping with the NGSS.

The systemwide review conducted in 2018 and the 2019 UC commissioned study by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) revealed some areas of concern relating to access and equity for under-represented groups. Although both the PPIC report and UC data findings provide useful insight and guidance, additional empirical research is necessary before any increase to the area D subject requirement is made, including examining the effects of BOARS' January 2019 action to expand the range of science disciplines, as well as the role or impact that K-12 education and outreach can play.

## **TRANSFER ADMISSIONS**

BOARS helped lead the University's response to create pathways that better prepare CCC transfers for success at UC.

- ***Transfer Guarantee***

In spring of 2018, President Napolitano and CCC Chancellor Ortiz Oakley signed an MOU obligating UC to expand its transfer pathways and accept more CCC transfer students. Many in the Academic Senate raised significant objections to the lack of shared governance in the process that led to the MOU. Nevertheless, BOARS and the Senate agreed to work to realize the goals of the MOU. A joint administration-Senate task force was formed, and BOARS evaluated their recommendations in the fall. After extensive discussion focusing on academic preparation and student success, enrollment management, admissions staff workloads, and impacts to specific majors, BOARS recommended an expansion of the Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) program. The Academic Council endorsed the recommendation, which then received systemwide support through normal review procedures. The University will have the guarantee structure—named Pathways+ (Pathways Plus)—in place by Fall 2020 to accommodate entering CCC students who plan to transfer in Fall 2021.

- ***Pathways+***

Under the Pathways+ program, prospective CCC transfers who complete the specified courses in one of the UC Transfer Pathway majors with a satisfactory GPA, and who submit a Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) agreement to one of the six TAG-participating campuses (Davis, Irvine, Merced, Riverside, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz) will be guaranteed admission in the Transfer Pathway major at the TAG campus. CCC transfer students may also apply for non-guaranteed admissions to any other UC campus offering their intended Transfer Pathways major.

## **JOINT MEETINGS WITH THE UC ADMISSIONS DIRECTORS**

The Admissions Directors and Associate Vice Chancellors for Admissions and Enrollment Management joined BOARS by videoconference in November 2019 to discuss the “Compare Favorably” policy implementation, augmented review implementation, and transfer issues. BOARS and the campus Admissions Directors also held their annual half-day joint meeting in June to discuss outcomes from the 2019 admissions cycle; issues and challenges associated with nonresident admission; continuing transfer admissions issues, including achieving the 2:1 freshman-to-transfer enrollment ratio, transfer access to impacted majors, and the role of the UC Transfer Pathways in comprehensive review; implementation of the Augmented Review policy; strategies for expanding student diversity in the context of increasing selectivity; new tools for transfer students, such as UC ASSIST; COVID-19 planning; and the future use of standardized tests.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Last spring, the Academic Council empaneled a task force of subject matter experts to evaluate UC's use of standardized tests in the admission process. At the time, President Napolitano lauded the effort, and subsequent high-profile public scandals underlined the timeliness and goals of the effort. Former BOARS chair Henry Sánchez co-chaired the task force with current BOARS Chair Comeaux. UCSF Representative Hasenstaub also served on the task force as a BOARS representative. The task force was charged with evaluating undergraduate admissions

only, and to support any recommendations with compelling data. The task force's recommendations were issued over the winter, and the systemwide Senate evaluated them on an expedited basis, advancing them with the additional request to repeat the analysis using identical metrics in a few years. President Napolitano, however, submitted her own recommendations to the Regents; her recommendations went further than those of the task force, calling for elimination of the standardized testing requirement in admission decisions in 4 years unless UC could develop and deploy a better assessment during that time. The Regents unanimously adopted the President's recommendations. The Provost will soon convene a group to study the feasibility of creating new assessments that can be implemented beginning with fall 2025 admissions. BOARS, meanwhile, developed and shared with the campuses additional guidance for implementing a test-optional or test-blind approach to admissions for the short-term.

### **ADMISSION AUDITS**

BOARS, like the rest of the University, was taken aback by the admission scandal that broke nationwide during 2019. Multiple UC campuses were implicated by federal officials, and both the Office of the President and the state announced audits of UC admission procedures. BOARS encouraged campuses to increase transparency in Admission by Exception (ABE) processes, and standardize practices as much as possible. Recommendations from the Office of the President were met with some skepticism since workloads do not seem to have been considered. The state audit is still pending, but BOARS will carefully scrutinize their findings and recommendations when available.

### **OTHER BUSINESS AND BRIEFINGS**

**Campus Reports:** BOARS set aside a portion of each meeting for updates from faculty representatives about issues being discussed on their admissions committees and campuses. These briefings touched on a wide range of topics, including local holistic review processes; best practices for increasing diversity and enhancing outreach to underrepresented populations; individual campus strategies for meeting the 2:1 freshman:transfer enrollment ratio; strategies for addressing impaction in majors and boosting enrollment in under-enrolled majors; the effects of the ongoing enrollment surge on campus infrastructure and faculty workload; local analyses of student success factors; the effect of potential new federal immigration policies on undocumented students; strategies to ensure strong English language skills in international admits; the role of athletics admissions committees and admission-by-exception; application fee usage policies; admissions staff turnover; and over-enrollment in STEM fields.

**Senate Leadership Briefings:** The Academic Council chair and vice chair attended a portion of each BOARS meeting to brief the committee on business from Council and Regents meetings, and other systemwide issues of particular interest to BOARS or of general interest to the faculty. These briefings included the status of negotiations with the state around the budget and enrollment funding; proposed legislation affecting the University; the Regents' nonresident enrollment policy; and the impacts of the State and internal audits of UCOP and UC admissions.

**Graduate, Undergraduate, and Equity Affairs:** The Office of Student Affairs was re-organized into a new administrative unit, now called Graduate, Undergraduate, and Equity Affairs. Consultants from that unit provided regular briefings throughout the admissions cycle on application, admissions, and SIR outcomes for freshman and transfer students from different demographic groups and residency categories. They also provided valuable information to

BOARS about transfer policies, initiatives, and legislation; admissions messaging; feedback from counselor conferences; high school and online A-G course accreditation issues; the Next Generation Science Standards; recruitment programs targeting the ELC cohort and other specific populations; the status of UC campus implementation of the UC Transfer Pathways; California high school accreditation; and other topics.

**OTHER REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In addition to the above, BOARS issued recommendations and opinions on other topics of interest, including changes to Open Access for Theses and Dissertations and revised Sexual Violence/Sexual Harassment policies.

**BOARS REPRESENTATION**

BOARS Chair Comeaux represented the committee at meetings of the Academic Council, the Assembly of the Academic Senate and the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS), and UCLA Representative Knowlton served on the ICAS IGETC Standards Subcommittee. Chair Comeaux and UCSF Representative Hasenstaub represented BOARS on the Standardized Testing Task Force (STTF), and BOARS Vice Chair Sorapure served as liaison to the University Committee on Preparatory Education.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

BOARS collaborated closely with UCOP and benefited from regular consultations with Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions Han Mi Yoon-Wu, and Director of A-G and Transfer Policy Analysis & Coordination Monica Lin. BOARS also received valuable support and advice from Institutional Research Coordinator Tongshan Chang and Institutional Research and Planning Analyst Matt Reed, who provided the committee with critical analyses and data related to the Report to the Regents and the Compare Favorably analyses.

Respectfully submitted,

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