

**BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS (BOARS)  
ANNUAL REPORT 2002-2003**

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

During the 2002-2003 academic year, the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) convened twelve times including a joint meeting with the UC Admissions Directors. Additional business was conducted in subcommittee meetings. Highlights of the committee's activities and accomplishments are noted in this report.

**Admissions Tests**

As a follow-up to last year's discussion paper on admissions tests, BOARS submitted a second paper in September 2002 addressing supplemental tests in specific subjects areas. The University's current testing policy requires that applicants submit scores from SAT II achievement tests in three subject areas: Writing, Mathematics, and a third area of the student's choice. In light of the development that writing would now be tested as part of the "core" requirement, BOARS recommended that the requirement for the subject matter test be reduced from three to two tests. BOARS specified that these tests must be taken from two different areas of the six subjects covered in the University's "a-g" requirements: History/Social Science, English, Mathematics, Laboratory Science, Language other than English, and Visual and Performing Arts. BOARS also recommended that, pending future research on the predictive validity of the different exams, the three components of the core test and two additional subject scores be weighted equally relative to one another in the Eligibility Index. In May 2003, the Academic Council endorsed the "core-plus-two" concept and BOARS' recommendations with respect to the subject matter tests. These recommendations were subsequently reflected in a change in Senate Regulation 418 and approved by the Academic Assembly in May 2003.

Although the new core tests are not yet sufficiently developed for BOARS to ascertain whether they satisfy BOARS testing principles, the committee recognized the need to begin informing current high school students of the details of the new testing requirement. In April 2003, BOARS presented a transition plan, which recommended that beginning with the entering freshman class of 2006, the University would accept, on an interim basis, scores on the ACT with Writing and the new SAT examinations in satisfaction of the core test requirement. These interim approvals will be in effect for two years. BOARS will complete an in-depth review of the new admissions tests and their alignment with the testing principles no later than 2008. In the intervening years, BOARS will collect data on the new tests that will enable this evaluation. This plan was approved by the Assembly in May and by the Regents in July 2003.

In May 2003, the Academic Council also reaffirmed BOARS' continued work with ACT, Inc. and the College Board in the development of new tests. The testing subcommittee actively interacted with the two testing agencies by reviewing blue prints and test specifications. In March 2003, members of the testing subcommittee visited the ACT office in Iowa and learned about ACT's test development process. In June 2003, the entire BOARS committee met with College Board and Educational Testing Service representatives and reiterated the importance of basing the tests on the college preparatory curriculum and their ability to provide diagnostic feedback to students and schools.

ACT, Inc. will offer an optional writing test along with its existing national test beginning in 2005. The College Board will add a mandatory writing exam to its existing core test and make substantial content changes to the SAT I. The College Board will begin administering this test in March 2005.

### **Comprehensive Review**

At the November 2002 Regents meeting, BOARS presented its report "First-year Implementation of Comprehensive Review in Freshman Admissions: A Progress Report from the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools." In the report, BOARS made several key findings and concluded that comprehensive review was implemented in conformance with UC policy and BOARS principles; academic achievement remained predominant, and high academic standards were maintained; and access was preserved for students of all demographic backgrounds. In the report, BOARS also identified several issues for further study including the relationship between the selection process and UC success, ensuring students provide accurate information on the application, the role of hardship in the admissions process, and the clarity of the admissions process.

The report was well received by the Regents, but three follow-up items resulted from Regents' requests for additional information.

- 1) The Regents requested that faculty reviewed some applicant files to determine whether the admissions decisions made for those files were reasoned, consistent, and defensible. In response, faculty members on each selective campus conducted a review of a sample of Fall 2002 applicant files. Across all campuses, BOARS members reported that comprehensive review was implemented in full compliance with University policy, that the processes developed to implement the policy are characterized by a high degree of integrity and consistency, and that the admission decisions resulting from these processes were reasoned, consistent and defensible.
- 2) Regents also requested that BOARS review the clarity of systemwide and campus documents to ensure that the public's understanding of the comprehensive review process. A subcommittee examined both Universitywide and campus-specific admissions documents and found considerable variety in the information presented about admissions

processes. The group made several recommendations on how to improve communications and make publications more consistent, complete, and current.

- 3) One Regent was concerned that UC is losing top students to other institutions as a result of comprehensive review. In response, BOARS initiated a matriculation study to analyze the college destinations of high-achieving students who were denied admissions at UC. The study will be completed next year.

A joint meeting of BOARS and the UC Admissions Directors was held in July 2003. Admissions Directors reported on the Fall 2003 admissions processes and the outcomes. The six selective campuses reported that the second year of comprehensive review went smoothly and processes continue to be refined. UCSC reported that it would implement comprehensive review for fall 2004, making it the seventh selective UC campus. Common issues concerning all of the campuses included the increasing volume of freshman applications, the need for increased resources, staff workload, and the impact of budget cuts. The systemwide verification process of applicant information also went very well and no student was canceled directly as a result of the verification process.

#### **Other Admissions Process Issues**

Outreach programs in admissions consideration. Some BOARS members participated in a joint BOARS-administration subcommittee to consider how participation and achievement in outreach and other academic development programs should be evaluated in the admissions process. The subcommittee developed principles to guide admissions offices on this issue.

Personal statement on the application form. BOARS reviewed and approved a proposal from the Admissions Processing Task Force to change the format of the personal statement on the application. In an effort to make the personal statement more helpful to the comprehensive review process, the proposal recommended three specific prompts to which applicants would be asked to provide two short responses and one extended response. Each prompt will also include a rationale statement that captures the basis for the question. BOARS agreed that the new format will give applicants a better opportunity to provide information that will support and augment the admission review process. The new format will be printed in the next application.

Electronic application. Plans are underway to implement a fully electronic application process. Beginning in Fall 2005, students will be required to complete the UC application online. BOARS continues to receive updates on the progress of the planning process and provide input.

### **International Baccalaureate Courses**

A BOARS subcommittee reviewed the policy for International Baccalaureate (IB) courses and how IB courses should be considered in the admissions process. After reviewing curriculum guidelines and comparing them to Advanced Placement (AP) guidelines, the subcommittee made specific recommendations on which high-level and standard-level IB courses should receive honors credit.

### **High School Issues**

Eligibility path for non-traditional students. BOARS reviewed a UCOP proposal to clarify the eligibility path for students educated through non-traditional schools and programs (e.g. charter schools, magnet schools, etc.). The proposal recommended defining guidelines for non-traditional schools to establish a-g course lists. BOARS discussed and approved a policy requiring all public and private schools to be WASC-accredited in order to establish an a-g course list thus creating a clear and viable path to UC eligibility for students from non-traditional schools. For students who do not attend schools with UC-approved courses lists (e.g. home schooled students), eligibility could still be attained through the Eligibility by Examination Alone policy or Admissions by Exception.

Sheltered, SDAIE, ELD/ESL courses. BOARS also reviewed the policy on Sheltered, SDAIE (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English), and ELD/ESL (English Language Development/English as a Second Language) courses. The committee agreed that these courses should be accepted for the b-English requirement.

### **Review and Updates of Other Issues**

During the course of the year, the committee also discussed and/or commented on the following proposals and issues: Part-time enrollment, CRESCO Initiative (RPI), Subject A, Master Plan, Proposal to Streamline the Course Major Articulation Process, and bylaw revisions. BOARS also monitored and received updates regarding the implementation process for the Dual Admissions Program, outreach activities, long-range enrollment issues, and UC Merced.

### **BOARS Representation**

The Chair, Vice Chair, or members represented BOARS in various other committees including the Academic Council, UC Merced Task Force, UCEP, UCOPE, ICAS, ICC Transfer Committee, UCCP, and the Admissions Processing Task Force. Members also participated in the counselor conferences.

### **Acknowledgments**

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Planning; Nina Robinson, Director-Policy and External Affairs; Judy Kowarsky, Associate Director-Admissions; Roman Stearns, Special Assistant to the Admissions Director.

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