

BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS

Videoconference Minutes

Friday, January 5, 2024

Attending: Barbara Knowlton, Chair (UCLA), Deborah Swenson, Vice Chair (UCD), Nicholas Mathew (UCB), Tony Albano (UCD), Julie Washington (UCI alternate), Lynn Vavreck (UCLA), Charlie Eaton (UCM), Peter Sadler (UCR alternate), Akos Rona-Tas (UCSD), Joshua Berke (UCSF), Paul Spickard (UCSB), George Bulman (UCSC), Ani Adhikari (Chair, Area C Workgroup, UCB), Han Mi Yoon-Wu (Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director, Undergraduate Admissions, Graduate, Undergraduate, and Equity Affairs (GUEA)), Chase Fischerhall (Director, A-G and Transfer Articulation Policy, GUEA), Liz Terry (Senior Policy and Research Specialist, Undergraduate Admissions, GUEA), Tongshan Chang (Director, Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP)), Matt Reed (Analyst, IRAP), James Steintrager (Chair, Academic Senate), Steven W. Cheung (Vice Chair, Academic Senate), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst)

I. Consent Calendar

Action: Today's agenda was approved.

Action: The December 1, 2023 BOARS videoconference minutes were approved with corrections.

II. Area C Workgroup Phase I Report and Recommendations

- *Ani Adhikari, Chair, Area C Workgroup (UCB)*

Chair Knowlton welcomed the Area C Workgroup (ACW) Chair Adhikari to the videoconference and Chair Adhikari began with a review of the workgroup's membership and charge for phase I. The ACW consulted with Chase Fischerhall, the Director of A-G and Transfer Articulation Policy in Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs at the UC Office of the President (UCOP) because that unit would be responsible for executing any recommendations from BOARS and the Senate. Chair Adhikari remarked that it was a privilege to work with the group, noting that the members listened to and respected one another's perspectives. Of the three components of the phase I charge, the task of determining the content data science courses should contain to qualify as advanced math was challenging since it rests on the assumption that there is a shared definition of a data science class. The ACW decided to postpone addressing the question of data science course content until phase II, and instead looked at the three most commonly used data science curricula to determine if they should validate Algebra II. According to data provided by Director Fischerhall, these three courses make up well over 90% of "data science" courses approved as "advanced math" or "statistics."

The ACW was guided by systemwide Senate Regulation (SR) 424, which identifies the courses that constitute lower-level coursework in Area C, and by SR 428 which defines the process by which more advanced courses can validate the lower-level coursework. The workgroup recommended that, since the term "advanced mathematics" is not in Senate regulations and causes confusion, it should not be used in public-facing documents or internal UC discussion. In terms of the criteria by which advanced math courses can validate lower level Area C courses, the ACW determined that "more advanced courses" assume and rely on completion of the standard lower-level coursework, which implies prior study of the overwhelming majority of the content covered in those lower-level course sequences. Finally, the ACW found that the three courses labeled "data science" are not even close to the "more advanced" designation than the lower level Area C classes per SR 428, and supported the July 2023 BOARS decision that they do not validate Algebra II. The ACW's phase I report is available [here](#).

Discussion: Chair Knowlton thanked Chair Adhikari for shepherding the ACW's effort on phase I and meeting the tight timeline. Chair Knowlton suggested removing the references to 9th and 10th grade levels in the section about the data science courses and in the appendix because this is inconsistent

with the Common Core standards and might draw attention away from the practical and reasonable recommendations about validation. Chair Adhikari agreed that this reference is probably unnecessary but will ask the ACW members to weigh in and stated that this is related to questions about the recommended fourth year of math which will be discussed in phase II. A member commented that the importance of a course being approved in Area C as opposed to Area G is unclear and the implications if data science courses are approved in Area G should be explored. Students who take data science courses in their fourth year may not be competitive if they intend to go into Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. BOARS and the ACW do not want to suggest that data science courses have no value.

Director Fischerhall agreed that the term “advanced mathematics” can be confusing but to remove it without considering what UC should do with what is asserted in SR 428 may be problematic. The A-G team has built ways to assess courses that build on courses listed in SR 425 along with ways to assess courses that would be appropriate for the third and fourth years based on policy set by BOARS. It is important for the ACW to consider what is in place now and the group may want to review the advanced mathematics courses that have been grouped into other areas like statistics and data science. BOARS and the ACW are concerned that the various interpretations of the relevant Senate regulations over the years have resulted in confusion and deviation away from the clarity of the original regulations. The ACW is proposing that UCOP should review the specific language in the Senate regulations. Chair Knowlton commented that the ACW appears to assert that the advanced algebra component of Algebra II needs to be built on for validation of the Algebra II course, and that classes in the Calculus category are the only ones that currently meet this standard.

Associate Vice Provost Yoon-Wu remarked that decisions to move courses from one area to another would require reviews of each course. The Associate Vice Provost also noted that UC’s requirements have implications for California State University admissions because the differing requirements directly influence how high school counselors advise students. In phase II, the ACW might discuss how to communicate what qualifies as advanced mathematics and what courses belong in Area C versus Area G. Chair Adhikari will join BOARS on February 2nd to discuss ACW phase II. In light of the ACW’s observation that, per Senate Regulations, only courses that rely on knowledge of the overwhelming majority of Algebra II content can validate Algebra II, Associate Vice Provost Yoon-Wu will consult with Provost Newman regarding when the change in guidance to schools will take effect and the communications and messaging to the public. All present at the meeting agreed that it was essential that schools receive updated guidance as soon as possible, to minimize disruption to course planning.

Chair Knowlton proposed that BOARS vote on the ACW phase I report pending the suggested revision and Chair Adhikari agreed with this course of action. A member moved to revise the following sentence as indicated: “Furthermore, we find these current courses labeled as “data science” are more akin to data literacy courses., and are at a level generally more suitable for 9th / 10th grade than for 12th grade.”

Action: The motion to approve the report pending the recommended edits was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. Chair Adhikari will send a revised report to Chair Knowlton for transmission to Academic Council.

III. Consultation with the Academic Senate Office

- *James Steintrager, Chair, Academic Senate*
- *Steven W. Cheung, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

Chair Steintrager joined the videoconference during the tail end of the committee’s discussion about the ACW phase I report and was pleased that this matter is moving forward. The presidential task force on instructional modalities and UC quality undergraduate degree programs has been approved and the co-chairs have held preliminary meetings. Vice Chair Cheung, who will co-chair the task force, reported

that the membership is being finalized. The Regents are interested in fully online undergraduate degrees and Senate Regulation (SR) 630.E will be discussed during the Board's January meeting. SR 630.E is the only thing preventing fully online undergraduate degree programs and if the Regents vote to rescind the regulation, campuses will be able to implement these programs without systemwide Senate oversight.

The Regents have a small workgroup developing a policy regulating political statements being posted on departmental websites. The workgroup's current thinking is that political statements are acceptable within certain parameters when posted on an editorial page rather than a department's landing page. This policy would be in keeping with the Senate's recommendations on this matter. In December, Academic Council decided to establish a small joint Senate/administration workgroup on artificial intelligence (AI) and it will include a member of BOARS since the impact of AI on the admissions process will be scrutinized. The Senate is attempting to develop a structure to improve communications during future labor negotiations with graduate student researchers (GSRs). Faculty were not involved in past negotiations and the Senate should help inform UCOP's negotiators. One idea is that a faculty member on recall would have time to dedicate to the process and could participate directly in negotiations. Chair Steintrager commented that this individual would need to hear from numerous faculty in order to understand concerns across different fields.

Discussion: A member asked inquired about the Title VI investigations at a few UC campuses, and Chair Steintrager indicated that these have not involved the systemwide Senate.

IV. Chair's Announcements

Chair Knowlton shared that Academic Council's December meeting included a report from Academic Personnel about the number of grievances that have been filed by GSRs, and the chair noted that the representatives seemed unclear about how GSRs are paid during the summer. The Academic Council Special Committee on Transfer Issues (ACSCOTI) met on December 21st and discussed some of the changes being proposed by legislation that will fundamentally change how students are admitted. ACSCOTI's proposals on general education and on standardizing and streamlining transfer admission guarantees (TAGs) will be on next month's BOARS agenda. Although TAGs are not offered by UCSD, UCLA and UCB, they are a positive message to students about guaranteed admission to the system with completion of a TAG and a certain grade point average (GPA). TAGs show that UC is making a good faith effort to simplify the transfer process and make it more straightforward in the spirit of legislation.

V. Member Reports/Campus Updates

UCSD: The committee responded positively to an update about the work of the ACW. The committee is focusing on issues related to the admissions process including increasing funding for admissions staff. Preliminary enrollment numbers suggest a minor increase over last year.

UCR: The committee is concerned that home-schooled students who have taken California Community College courses and high school students who have taken UC courses are being shortchanged. There is a question about whether sufficient weight is given to these college courses which might be considered comparable to Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses.

UCSC: A data subcommittee is working with admissions staff on data analysis related to readers' scores and predicted GPA based on machine learning and considering the best metrics for predicting student success as well as dimensions to consider for future analyses. Admissions into the computer science major will be done separately.

UCI: The committee discussed factors that enter into decisions to admit students.

UCM: The number of applicants increased substantially this year although this may not translate into an equal increase in enrollment. The state wants the campus to grow and UCM has capacity. The committee is reviewing and approving new majors that could be attractive to students. Although there are incentives to create new majors, it is not necessarily the case that new majors will get new staff lines. This campus is trying to fix its financial management systems.

UCLA: The associate degree for transfer task force is fully staffed now and the representative will aim to provide a more detailed update to BOARS next month. There is a discussion about the goals related to being designated a Hispanic Serving Institution.

UCB: The executive dean of Letters and Science has proposed a new system for impacted and high demand majors at UCB. The new procedures have not been finalized but the system will involve a second comprehensive review to account for students who have not picked their majors.

UCSB: The committee is working with the School of Engineering to increase freshmen admissions.

VI. Area H – Ethnic Studies

The agenda packet included a draft memo to Academic Council on Area H prepared by the UCM representative and Chair Knowlton, and two members provided input by email before the meeting. The chair wants everyone to have the opportunity to weigh in and hopes the committee can reach consensus on the cover memo for the Area H proposal. If the committee does not reach agreement, the discussion can continue on February 2nd. The chair attempted to convey BOARS' actions to Council in a straightforward way, from the events in 2021-2022 to the efforts of the implementation workgroup, the favorable vote on the criteria in June 2023, and finally the November 2023 vote against transmitting the proposal. The purpose of this memo is to delineate the process and results of BOARS' deliberations over the past several years for the record. Chair Knowlton pointed out that today's discussion is not about the proposal and stated that Council will decide if the proposal should be sent out for systemwide review again. Members were asked to indicate if their concerns are not reflected in the draft memo.

Discussion: A member thanked the chair and UCM representative for trying to prepare a balanced memo, while another member was concerned that the memo was drafted from the perspective of one representative. Last year, some BOARS members felt that the implementation workgroup's report did not allow certain racialized minorities to be included in Ethnic Studies and this should be noted in the cover memo. Members disagreed about the language in the motion the committee voted on November 3rd, and it was asserted that this vote does not supersede the earlier two clear votes in favor of advancing the proposed requirement to Council. One member thinks the committee should take more time to work on the memo and attempt to resolve issues between BOARS members before finalizing the memo. The ability of high schools to implement the Ethnic Studies requirement may not be a significant concern because they have until 2029 to implement Assembly Bill 101.

Members suggested revisions to the memo which included reflecting all votes on the proposal. Chair Knowlton commented that each vote taken by BOARS was based on the information available at the time. It is imperative for the memo to be transparent about the disparate views. Council could handle this in a number of different ways, including requesting that BOARS do more work to make sure that Ethnic Studies courses will be accessible. The new Area H requirement will have to be approved by the provost and then by the Regents. While it is impossible to know what the Regents will do, some of them appear to be critical of the requirement. The chair emphasized the importance of moving this proposal out of BOARS, and a member observed that the committee's position on the Ethnic Studies requirement may change in the future. A member asked if submitting a minority report is an option. The analyst remarked that members can submit a minority report but perhaps further discussion is needed if individuals feel that their opinions are not reflected in the current draft. The committee decided a vote

on the memo was unnecessary and members will review the memo over the weekend. Unless additional concerns are raised, the memo will be transmitted to Chair Steintrager next week for placement on the January 31st Council agenda.

VII. Executive Session

Executive Session was not held.

Meeting adjourned at: 1:38 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Barbara Knowlton