

BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS

Videoconference Minutes

Friday, December 1, 2023

Attending: Barbara Knowlton, Chair (UCLA), Deborah Swenson, Vice Chair (UCD), Nicholas Matthew (UCB), Tony Albano (UCD), Yuri Shirman (UCI), Lynn Vavreck (UCLA), Charlie Eaton (UCM), Frank Vahid (UCR), Akos Rona-Tas (UCSD), Todd Kemp (UCSD alternate), Joshua Berke (UCSF), Paul Spickard (UCSB), George Bulman (UCSC), Jeremy Vargas (Undergraduate Student Representative), 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. Consultation with the Academic Senate Office

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

Chair Steintrager shared that a focus of the most recent Regents' meeting was the Israel-Hamas war. President Drake announced funding for educational programs about antisemitism and Islamophobia. Today's Inside Higher Ed reports on the complaints from some faculty about President Drake's use of the term "viewpoint neutrality" although Chair Steintrager does not believe the president intended to step on academic freedom. The Regents are concerned about political statements on department websites and it is possible a regental policy will be created to address what is posted on websites. The presentation by Chair Steintrager and Chair Knowlton to the Regents Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC) on Area C concentrated on the role of the senate in admissions policy. Vice Chair Cheung reported that the Regents feel employees should pay more into the UC Retirement Plan (UCRP) but Chief Financial Officer Brostrom firmly pushed back. The Finance Committee decided against increasing the employee contribution and there will be a slow ramp up of the employer contribution. The vice chair reported that the new head of UC Health is aiming to improve health care access in the central valley.

Chair Steintrager announced that President Drake has approved convening a joint Senate and administration task force on instructional modality and online degrees. The chair explained that Senate Regulation 630.E, the campus experience requirement, protects the accreditation of UC programs, however some Regents are intent on having fully online undergraduate degree programs (OUDPs). Provost Newman wants campuses to have the opportunity to mount fully online undergraduate programs if they want. The task force will look at a variety of issues related to these programs. BOARS will not be represented on the task force, but the committee will be able to provide input related to admission into OUDPs. The Senate has produced multiple reports on OUDPs over the past 20 years but the landscape has changed.

Discussion: Although Chair Steintrager thinks the guidelines for posting political statements on department websites created by the University Committee on Academic Freedom in 2022 are sufficient, departments are not following them. Chair Knowlton will update the Regents on the Area C Workgroup in July but sensed that the Regents are satisfied with the efforts. A member remarked that the presentation to the Regents leaned heavily on the Area C Workgroup and asked if Senate leadership will accept the workgroup's recommendations. Both Chair Steintrager and Chair Knowlton agreed they are confident in the workgroup. BOARS members discussed concerns about OUDPs. It is possible that fully online undergraduate degree programs will seriously harm the California State University (CSU)

system yet it is not clear that the Regents understand this. These programs may also harm other UC campuses. A member noted that OUDPs have terrible retention and graduation rates.

II. Chair's Announcements

Chair Knowlton's goal for her presentation on Area C to the ASAC was to show that the Senate's process is working as it should and to distinguish between aspects of the admissions policies over which the Regents have authority and those under the purview of the Senate. Significant changes such as adding a new subject area or changing how many years of Math are required would need regental approval whereas looking at standards for advanced Math courses or whether an advanced Math course would validate a lower course are decisions the Senate can make. The chair wanted to underscore that the Senate has activities related to Area C under control, and the Area C Workgroup is the mechanism for considering any changes. The Regents want to make sure that the Senate is effectively balancing the need for innovation and the standards for preparation that faculty want for students at UC, and these two things are not in opposition.

Academic Council's November meeting included a discussion about OUDPs. The outcomes for students who drop out of OUDPs are worse than those for students who do not attend any college, so there are red flags about these programs. The Regents always mention access and see OUDPs as a way to enroll more students. Chair Knowlton acknowledged that online programs make sense at the master's degree level for working professionals who want to improve their skills but they are very expensive. Arizona State University's online courses have large numbers of students and almost all are taught by contingent faculty. The Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS) recently met and discussed Assembly Bill (AB) 928 and challenges related to transferring from the California Community College (CCCs) system. AB 928 requires CCCs to utilize a common course number system to facilitate articulation of these courses when students transfer. For some courses, the process of assigning the same number to courses at different CCC campuses requires a thorough review of the course content. The common course numbering project is an ongoing effort, and it is difficult to engage UC faculty in this work. The Academic Council Special Committee on Transfer Issues (ACSCOTI) and ICAS are concerned that the project will be taken over by administrators of the three segments, thereby limiting faculty input. Faculty may not feel this is a worthwhile use of time, but UC faculty may be asked to participate in order to have some control over specific courses taken by students who transfer to UC.

Chair Knowlton attended ACSCOTI's meeting yesterday which featured a discussion of AB 928 report. The chair provided immediate past Senate Chair Cochran with a summary of BOARS' concerns about the recommendation for students with associate degrees for transfer (ADTs) receiving UC admission priority in light of data that show that students with ADTs who transfer to UC take longer to graduate in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields compared to other transfer students. Since ADTs were specifically developed for the CSUs, they are not matched to the lower division needs of students who enroll at UC campuses. As a result, some ADT transfer students take CCC courses they do not need for UC transfer, and instead learn that they need to take alternate and additional courses that match the preparatory needs for their major at UC. In addition, while ADTs complete a transfer student's general education (GE) requirements, many transfer students are better served by focusing more heavily on major preparation while at the CCC, and completing the GE requirements at UC. An added benefit of taking some GE courses after transfer is ability to lighten the academic burden of an otherwise STEM-filled course schedule. Pressure on UC from the legislature and lobbying groups to change the transfer process are unlikely to increase the number of transfer students and may seriously impact freshman admissions.

Discussion: Discussions about quality versus innovation are the right discussions to be having and UC could do better when it comes to innovation. Completely online undergraduate degree programs may need to operate differently to be successful. However, the move toward greater innovation should be undertaken with wisdom and care.

III. Consent Calendar

Action: Today's agenda was approved.

Action: The November 3, 2023 BOARS minutes were approved.

IV. Consultation with the Office of the President

- *Han Mi Yoon-Wu, Associate Vice Provost & Executive Director, Undergraduate Admissions, Graduate, Undergraduate, & Equity Affairs (GUEA)*
- *Chase Fischerhall, Director, A-G & Transfer Articulation Policy, GUEA*
- *Liz Terry, Senior Policy & Research Specialist, Undergraduate Admissions, GUEA*
- *Tongshan Chang, Director, Institutional Research & Academic Planning, IRAP*
- *Matt Reed, Analyst, IRAP*

Associate Vice Provost Yoon-Wu reported that the deadline to apply to UC for Fall 2024 was yesterday, November 30th and nearly a quarter million individual applications were received. Half of the applications were submitted yesterday with almost 15k submitted in the last hour before the deadline. The last minute submissions could have stressed the application system but the system did not fail. Local admissions offices will be very busy during this time. Except for UCB and UCLA, campuses will continue accepting applications from transfer students until January 15th to ensure they meet their enrollment targets. Campuses will look at different majors that could be offered to transfer students who cannot get into the major of their choice. TurnItIn was utilized to check the applications for plagiarism and Undergraduate Admissions will provide BOARS with an update on this in the spring.

V. California High School Accreditation

Chair Knowlton explained that, in 2020, BOARS discussed the need for criteria for evaluating accreditors. BOARS still recommends the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) as the preferred accrediting agency for schools intending to establish an A-G course list with UC but would ask schools that chose another accreditor explain their decision. Associate Vice Provost (AVP) Yoon-Wu indicated that schools without WSCUC accreditation can petition if they are accredited by a different agency. Director Fischerhall shared that the CSU's willingness to accept any accreditor is complicating implementation of the new California General Education Transfer Curriculum (CalGETC). A concern is that UC might not be able to rely on regional legitimacy in the future. A few committee members are needed to develop the criteria.

Discussion: Members expressed concerns about permitting the use of different accreditors. The U.S. Department of Education withdrew an accreditor due to its involvement with a for-profit. AVP Yoon-Wu commented that removing the language about regional institutions is more urgent than figuring out how to review other accrediting agencies going forward. Chair Knowlton suggested that developing criteria may not require much work if characteristics of previous accreditors are good practices that should be carried forward.

Action: A motion to change the language on the UCOP website to agencies formerly labeled "regional accreditors" was made, seconded, and approved.

Action: Vice Chair Swenson will work with the UCSD and UCSB representatives on the criteria for evaluating future accreditors with help from BOARS' consultants. The group will attempt to complete this work by May or June 2024.

VI. Update on Area C Workgroup

- *Joshua Berke (UCSF) & Frank Vahid (UCR)*

The UCSF and UCR representatives were asked to provide an update on the Area C Workgroup's deliberations. Phase one entails reviewing what is mandated in Senate regulations for Area C and providing recommendations for implementation. Last year, BOARS voted unanimously against allowing currently approved Data Science courses to validate Algebra II. The workgroup is making sure that there are simple and clear definitions of advanced courses and what validation should mean. Although more discussion is needed, there seems to be general consensus among workgroup members about the current guidelines. It will be important to devise a straightforward recommendation for the High School Articulation team to interpret, and Director Fischerhall joined the most recent workgroup meeting to offer feedback. The representatives expect the discussions in phase II to be lively.

Discussion: Since the charge referred to advanced Mathematics in general, Chair Knowlton is wondering why the workgroup is focusing on Data Science and Statistics courses. The term "advanced Mathematics" does not appear in Senate regulations, yet it has been used in different ways including how advanced Mathematics courses can be used to validate lower level course work. However, the Senate regulation states that Advanced Math courses must be more advanced than the lower level course. Advanced Mathematics has also been used when considering what should be allowed for the recommended fourth year of Mathematics which is a different question. The workgroup wants to be specific about the two different uses of this term: what courses should be allowed to validate lower level course work and what courses should be allowed in the recommended fourth year. There will be more discussion about the fourth year of Math especially because it is recommended rather than required.

The question about whether there should be different requirements for students who intend to major in different things has come up, but the campus admissions directors have not been in favor of this. Right now, the workgroup is considering baseline requirements and what the criteria should be for the fourth year of Math including whether it must be equivalent to Algebra II. In addition to determining what is needed for students who major in Physics, Math or Data Science to succeed, another question is the level of Math that should be expected of students who will not go into STEM fields. There is a structural problem that makes it difficult to add a fourth year of required Math and perhaps changes should be made at the lower level to introduce students to numeracy and mathematical thinking. In phase two, the workgroup will take a broader view and think creatively about Math education in high school.

Regarding what can be shared with campus admissions committees about the workgroup's endeavors, it is fair to characterize the deliberations as focused on baseline requirements. The thinking about what students should take in high school shifts over time thus impacting the preparation students will have at different stages. The resources high schools have factors into the courses they are able to offer. As a result of recent legislation, the CCCs can no longer offer Algebra II which eliminates an opportunity for students who did not take this course in high school to catch up. The idea of creating tracks that are STEM focused and not STEM focused is controversial given that students change their majors. Currently, BOARS recommends a fourth year of Math and views the Calculus pathway as giving students preparation for the widest variety of majors as well as flexibility if they do not pursue a STEM major. The ability to specialize in high school allows students to focus on what interests them.

A member remarked that BOARS should think about how to innovate to support students who want to change their pathway once they reach college. The attention should be on lower level courses rather than a particular pathway. The workgroup's phase one recommendations will be discussed by BOARS in January and Chair Knowlton assumes the committee will vote to accept them or ask the workgroup to further consider certain issues. The recommendations will then be transmitted to Academic Council for information and notification, but they probably will not require systemwide review. While the recommendations will not involve changes to Senate regulations, they will necessitate changes to language on the UC website related to guidance to students.

VII. Regional/Institutional Accreditation Terminology

The University Committee on Education Policy (UCEP) has asked BOARS to provide feedback about updating the terminology and accrediting agency distinctions used by UC. The proposal is that eight formerly regional accreditors for colleges will count and that language on UCOP's website should be changed. The majority of courses taken by students at another university for which they would want UC credit would fall under the eight accrediting agencies. It is not clear if UCEP will look at criteria for new accreditors that might arise in the future. One issue could be that the CSU system accepts accreditation from a wide range of agencies. A student could take a course that fulfills CalGETC at an institution not accredited by UC standards but CSU might deem it acceptable, which may eventually be an issue.

Discussion: UC should not accept new accreditors until there is criteria which can be based on what has worked in the past. BOARS would like to stay abreast of UCEP's next steps and the committees could develop the criteria together.

Action: A motion to endorse the recommendation to continue to accept courses from institutions accredited by the formerly labeled "regional accreditors" was made, seconded, and approved.

VIII. Member Reports/Campus Updates

UCSC: The committee is working on guidance for freshman and transfer admissions for the upcoming cycle.

UCSD: There is no organized process for departments to set major requirement preparation for courses needed for transfer. The committee has decided to leave departments in charge of setting the requirements but will step in as necessary. The campus received the second highest number of applicants in the UC system however the committee has decided against cutting corners which includes continuing to review files that are not viable. A recent New York Times article about how colleges have changed in terms of diversity and access noted that UC has seen a large drop in Pell Grant recipients.

UCM: The campus continues to work on adding new majors as way to grow enrollment. The campus saw an 8% increase in applications along with recent gains in college rankings. The committee is looking at the minimum grade point average (GPA) requirement for admissions due to concerns that disadvantaged students who could be admitted by exception are being filtered out. Enrollment is below capacity so the committee is looking at the eligibility criteria and at potentially lowering the minimum GPA for admission by exception. The committee also discussed Area H.

UCB: The campus piloted a new policy in one college for admitting transfer students to make it consistent with what happens at other UC campuses. The pilot went well although it led to a shift in administrative burdens, and it will continue into next year. The committee sent a statement to UCB's divisional Council about enrollment targets, pointing out that the budget has not kept pace with the expanded student body and that students need more support to ensure academic success. Teaching assistant costs have risen and there is skepticism about online courses helping with enrollment growth. There are also discussions about the impact of overlays and direct admits especially to oversubscribed majors.

UCD: The committee is exploring the possibility of using Landscape, a College Board tool, to gain background information about a applicants' context, including neighborhood characteristics and educational opportunities. The campus switched from a seven-point to a six-point scale in an attempt to encourage more variation and less compression at the top of the scale. Now the committee is considering refinements to its tie-breaker.

UCSB: Issues discussed by this committee include resources and housing. There are concerns about Area A-History related to standard American History being taught in several states and a pending censure of Florida by the American Historical Association. The admissions office is being reviewed and it is anticipated that the director of admissions will retire in the next couple of years. The office is currently under the vice chancellor of student affairs but it would make sense to move it to academic affairs.

UCI: The committee continues to discuss impacted majors versus small majors that want to grow, but the campus admissions office is unable to model outcomes at the level of a specific school.

UCLA: The committee is getting to know the new vice chancellor of enrollment management. A major focus is on the new ADT task force which is jointly charged by the Senate's admissions committee and undergraduate council. Faculty on this campus are deeply invested in Area C and Area H deliberations.

UCR: There is an ongoing discussion about the value of reading the essays because there are questions about who is writing them and concerns about unintended consequences. AVP Yoon-Wu indicated that there is no systemwide data on the usefulness of students' responses to the personal insight questions (PIQs) since it is one of many factors used in holistic review. Chair Knowlton added that it is worth considering if the PIQ responses are not contributing to understanding who the applicant is. The committee is interested in seeing data and a member stated that the responses are not a predictor of GPA. The campus academic integrity committee is hearing from students who engaged in contract cheating and are subsequently blackmailed by the people paid to do their school work.

IX. Executive Session

Action: Chair Knowlton will draft a memo on Area H with input from all members to Council which includes information about BOARS' votes.

Meeting adjourned at: 3:07 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Barbara Knowlton