

BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS (BOARS) ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) met ten times in Academic Year 2025-2026 (including two in-person meetings) 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 2021–2025; first-year UC performance outcomes for students who entered UC in fall 2025; efforts by BOARS to enhance the transfer admission path and to ensure that admitted nonresidents compare favorably to California residents; 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) 7th 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.

Nonresident Admission

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

BOARS issued its annual "Compare Favorably" report on 2025 nonresident admissions. The annual report summarizes systemwide and campus outcomes for the policy, focusing on comparisons of high school grade point average (GPA), 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 is a narrow, imperfect measure for the assessment, given campuses' use of 13 comprehensive review factors in admission.

Credit by Examination

College Board's Validation of Evidence-Based Standard Setting

In 2024-2025, BOARS began contemplating the changes made by the College Board in 2022 to how Advanced Placement (AP) exams are scored. In November 2025, College Board representatives

joined BOARS to explain the new Evidenced-Based Standard Setting (EBSS) process and respond to a set of questions, which were provided in advance, from BOARS, the University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP), and the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE). Based on the information the College Board provided about the EBSS methodology, BOARS, UCEP, and UCOPE agreed to bring the new scoring process to the attention of UC faculty so departments and programs can make reasoned decisions about how AP scores are used for credit by exam. The [joint memo](#) was submitted to Academic Council and transmitted to the divisions in January 2026.

International Baccalaureate Programs

The deliberations regarding the College Board's AP exams prompted BOARS, in collaboration with UCEP and UCOPE, to learn more about the high school International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. In December 2025, representatives from the IB Organization (IBO) provided BOARS with details about the programs. Following this presentation, the IBO requested that BOARS reconsider its 2003 decision to not grant credits for IB Standard Level (SL) exams which led to an April 2026 visit with an IBO representative who shared in-depth analyses focused on a comparison of the content and skills assessed by SL exams relative to A-Level and AP exams. In June, the majority of BOARS members agreed to allow SL exams to be submitted by the IBO and considered by UC for admissions eligibility and credit towards UC degrees. A [memo from BOARS](#) and the policy was transmitted to the divisional admission committee chairs in June 2026.

Policy on the Review of AP, IB, and A-Level Exams for Credit

In October 2023, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at the UC Office of the President (UCOP) asked BOARS to develop a systemwide policy on using credit by examination to fulfill A-G requirements, including in cases where a student may not have taken an associated course. A small subcommittee began working on a policy during the 2023-2024 academic year. However, in 2024-2025, upon learning about the changes made by the College Board to its scoring process for AP exams, members determined that there were serious questions that fell beyond the scope of the subcommittee's draft policy. The chairs of UCEP and UCOPE joined the March 2026 BOARS meeting for a discussion about what should be included in a standardized evaluation rubric to be used by faculty to assess the exams. A draft policy on reviewing AP, IB, and A-Level exams for credit was reviewed by BOARS in May 2026 and finalized and unanimously approved in June, and [the policy](#) was subsequently transmitted to the divisional admission committee chairs.

New Scoring Scale for the Test of English as a Foreign Language iBT (TOEFL iBT)

In January 2026, the Office of Undergraduate Admissions reported on the new scoring scale the Educational Testing Service was implementing for the Test of English as a Foreign Language internet-based test (TOEFL iBT) and provided an analysis on the impact of changing the scale from 0-120 to an updated 1-6 scale. BOARS debated how best to adjust UC's minimum score of 80 for demonstrating English language proficiency for undergraduate admissions in a way that aligns with the new scoring framework and maintain consistency in expectations for English language proficiency across approved examinations, noting that an individual campus can set a higher minimum score. This topic was discussed again in February and in March BOARS unanimously approved setting UC's new minimum at 4.5. A [memo](#) announcing the revised systemwide minimum score was disseminated to the divisions in April 2026.

Dual Enrollment

In January, BOARS received an overview from Riverside County Office of Education's Executive Director of College Career Readiness, Catalina Cifuentes, of how dual enrollment is currently working in California high schools. Dual enrollment enables high school students to take

community college courses, taught by college professors, at their high school campus. Executive Director Cifuentes presented data which shows that increasing numbers of students are taking advantage of dual enrollment opportunities. Despite the state's significant investment in the dual enrollment, the program is not necessarily leading to greater post-secondary enrollment. Members of BOARS were dismayed by the absence of a standard for as well as oversight of dual enrollment activities and have concerns about how this program is contributing (along with credit by exam) to students receiving significant credit for coursework completed before they arrive at UC. Therefore, this is a topic that will be the focus of future discussions.

Transfer Issues

Associate Degree for Transfer Program

Assembly Bill 1291 (2023), which went into effect on January 1st, 2024 required UCLA to implement the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) program and for UC to designate at least additional five campuses to implement the program by the 2028-2029 academic year. The program will prioritize the admission of students who have completed an ADT at a California Community Colleges' (CCCs) campus and meet the requirements of the UC transfer curricula for a participating campus. In January 2026, BOARS met with representatives of UCLA's ADT Task Force who described the campus's approach to developing its ADT pilot program which launched in the 2026-2027 academic year. Using the UCLA model as a guide, BOARS developed a systemwide guidance document that provides recommended steps for developing ADT pilot program goals and identifying selected majors at undergraduate campuses across the UC system in order to comply with Assembly Bill 1291. BOARS' [Systemwide Guidance for Developing ADT Pilot Programs](#) was distributed to the divisions in April 2026.

Transfer Subcommittee

A small subcommittee of BOARS was established this academic year to address issues related to transferring from the CCCs to UC. The subcommittee was tasked with responding to the 2024 California State Auditor's recommendation to streamline and simplify lower-division course requirements for transfer applicants in the most popular UC majors by developing and begin implementing a plan by September 2026 for reviewing and updating the UC Transfer Pathways. Over the course of several months, the subcommittee identified several strategies for addressing the Auditor's recommendation including developing ADTs with specific CCCs and aligning the UC Transfer Pathways as closely as possible with the Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) to help simplify the options and the requirements for major preparation for students while maintaining faculty expertise in their disciplines. The subcommittee's report was unanimously approved by BOARS on July 10th and subsequently transmitted to the Office of Undergraduate Admissions for formal submission to the Auditor by September 2026. Next year, UCOP expects to begin collecting data about the rationales for programs that opted not to accept the ADTs or TMCs.

Academic Preparation and Undergraduate Admissions Policies

In 2024-2025, members of BOARS frequently remarked on the decline in preparedness in writing and math within some students across the UC, and this theme continued at the start of the 2025-2026 academic year. In February 2026, the committee was joined by UCSD divisional Senate representatives to discuss the [UCSD Senate-Administration Workgroup \(SAWG\) on Admissions Report](#) which outlined faculty concerns about math preparation and high school grade inflation and suggested the need to reinstate the use of standardized tests for UC admissions. This was followed by a March presentation of data on the Smarter Balanced Assessment and a preliminary discussion regarding changes to systemwide policies to address math preparation.

Special Charge and Policies and Partnerships Roadmap on First Year Admissions

During the March 2026 meeting, BOARS considered the proposed Special Charge from Senate Leadership that called for BOARS to devise a plan for a review of current UC undergraduate admissions policies and an investigation of college preparation issues. From mid-March through the end of May, including during the BOARS videoconferences, members worked on the draft Policies and Partnerships Roadmap on First Year Admissions. The Roadmap was finalized and approved unanimously by BOARS on June 5th but the members subsequently voted to rescind approval of the Roadmap on July 10th. Members cited three major concerns as the justification for introducing a motion to rescind their June 5th vote: the Special Charge was issued to BOARS in March 2026 without formal endorsement by Academic Council; the timeline embedded within the Roadmap resulted in limited flexibility for BOARS to issue recommendations during 2026-2027 within a quicker or shorter timeframe if necessary; and concerns about legitimate feedback, input, and concerns that surfaced from internal and external stakeholders since BOARS' prior approval of the Roadmap on June 5th. After the majority of BOARS rescinded the June 5th vote to approve the Roadmap, on July 22nd Academic Council approved [two Charges to BOARS on standardized testing and the A-G framework](#).

Consultation with State Board of Education President

State Board of Education President Darling-Hammond joined BOARS in October 2025 for a discussion that touched on the A-G framework and preparing students for the workforce. In November 2025 and December 2025, President Darling-Hammond sat in on the College Board and IBO presentations as well as the February 2026 presentation by Graduate, Undergraduate, and Equity Affairs on UC's outreach and educational partnerships as well as educator programs which are directly related to the goals BOARS has for enhanced engagement with the K-12 sector.

Joint Meetings with the UC Admissions Directors and Enrollment Management Leads

The campus admissions directors and associate vice chancellors for admissions and enrollment management joined BOARS in December 2025 and May 2026 to discuss the College Board's EBSS process; UCSD's SAWG on Admissions report; the creation of ADTs; dual enrollment and credit by exam; and the Policies and Partnerships Roadmap on First Year Admissions.

Other Business and Briefings

Systemwide Review Items: In response to requests for formal comment from the Academic Council, BOARS issued comments on the proposed revisions to Senate Bylaw 192 and Senate Regulations 636 and 76.1.

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 issues related to transfer students; local holistic review processes; math preparation and placement; and enrollment trends.

Senate Leadership Briefings: The Academic Senate chair and vice chair attended a portion of each BOARS meeting to report on Academic Council and Regents meetings, and other systemwide issues of particular interest to the committee or of general interest to faculty. These briefings included updates on the state budget; labor negotiations; and the UC Adaptations to Disruptions Plus Task Force.

Graduate, Undergraduate, and Equity Affairs and Institutional Research and Academic Planning: Graduate, Undergraduate, & Equity Affairs (GUEA) provided regular briefings throughout

the admissions cycle on applications, admissions, and statement of intent to register outcomes. The GUEA consultants also provided valuable information about transfer policies, initiatives, and legislation; admissions messaging; feedback from counselor conferences; and the common course numbering (CCN) project. Institutional Research and Academic Planning presented an analysis of the relationship between AP coursework and UC admissions and completion and an analysis of Honors courses (including AP, IB, UC-transferrable college courses, and UC-certified honors courses), and AP vs. IB courses. In January 2026, the Vice President for GUEA, Yvette Gullatt, joined BOARS to provide an overview of UCOP K-12 outreach programs.

BOARS Representation

BOARS Chair Volz represented the committee at meetings of the Academic Council, the Assembly of the Academic Senate, the Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS), the ICAS California General Education Transfer Curriculum Standards Review Committee, and the CCN Council. In addition, BOARS Chair Volz participated in ICAS' Legislative Day in Sacramento on March 12, 2026 as well as testified at an Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3 on Education Finance Hearing in Sacramento on April 29, 2026.

Acknowledgements

BOARS collaborated closely with UCOP and benefited from regular consultations with Han Mi Yoon-Wu, Associate Vice Provost and Executive Director, Undergraduate Admissions, Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs, (GUEA); Chase Fischerhall, Director, Director, A-G & Transfer Articulation, GUEA; Angelica Moore, Director, Undergraduate Admissions, Policy and Communications, GUEA; and Liz Terry, Manager of Admissions Analytics, Undergraduate Admissions, GUEA. BOARS also received valuable support and advice from Institutional Research and Academic Planning Director Tongshan Chang and Senior Institutional Research and Planning Analyst Matt Reed, who provided the committee with critical analyses and data related to the *Report to the Regents on Undergraduate Admissions Requirements and Comprehensive Review* as well as the *Compare Favorably* analyses.

Respectfully submitted,

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