

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**                      **ACADEMIC SENATE**  
**BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS**

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**June 27, 2014**

**Part I: Joint Meeting with the Campus Admissions Directors**

**I.      Freshman Eligibility and Referral**

**Issue:** Chair Johnson reported that BOARS has been discussing possible adjustments to the “9x9” eligibility construct and is close to sending the Academic Council a specific proposal that can be circulated for systemwide Senate review in the fall.

He noted that when BOARS developed its eligibility reform policy in 2009, it projected (based on faulty CPEC data) that the students in the 9% ELC group and the 9% statewide group would combine to provide an admissions guarantee to approximately 10% of California public high school graduates. BOARS recognized the miscalculation in 2012, after UC admitted 12.1% of public high school graduates who met one or both of the 9x9 guarantees. BOARS also noticed that the referral pool was growing too large to be managed easily over the long term. Since then, BOARS has focused on ways to reduce the referral pool while maintaining the guarantee.

After analyzing projections about the admissions patterns and the UC performance of students under a variety of scenarios, BOARS voted in May to make a 7x7 construct the focus of ongoing analysis. BOARS also decided that the ELC determination should continue to be based solely on weighted/capped GPA. On June 6, BOARS reviewed a proposal for calculating the percentage of “top” public high school students who apply to UC, using ELC benchmarking information reported by high schools, to help construct a new statewide eligibility index that more accurately brings the total number of guaranteed students to 10%. The model assumes that 82% of “top” public high school students apply to UC.

**Discussion:** An admissions director noted that the implementation of the Common Core and the upcoming changes to the SAT will bring uncertainty to high schools; a significant change to UC admissions policy could introduce more uncertainty. It was noted that members of the public are already confused about what ELC means for “guaranteed” admission, and a move to 7x7 could increase an expectation that ELC status guarantees admission to a specific campus rather than to a campus with space.

A director noted that there is a contradiction between the need to enroll all applicants with a guarantee and the need to consider strong applicants in the Entitled to Review pool. Several directors noted that the ELC designation can make a difference in holistic review, although it is a deciding factor mostly at the margins and in tie-break reviews. Others noted that they do not consider ELC and have found that some ETR applicants are stronger than some ELC applicants. It was noted that ELC is contrary to the spirit of holistic review because it considers a single indicator (GPA), although it was also noted that ELC has extended UC’s reach into every CA high school and increased diversity. A director expressed concern that the scenarios would compromise diversity and encouraged BOARS to keep access and diversity at the forefront of

policy considerations. Another director recommended that BOARS model outcomes based on unweighted GPA.

Chair Johnson noted that a UCOP odds ratio analysis about the influence of ELC on admissions decisions showed that ELC students have a much higher chance of admission, although the influence was reduced in the move from 4% to 9%. BOARS also considered the role of the SAT in the ELC determination, and found evidence that a 1400 SAT score is the approximate point at which students have less than a 70-75% probability of earning a “C” or better during the first year at UC. He noted that UC’s capacity to sustain the referral guarantee is shrinking and that Merced should not be forced to continue taking all referrals. A BOARS member noted that eliminating the guarantee and admitting all students through ETR would solve many of the existing problems, although such a proposal would be opposed by many at UC, and would have an uncertain effect on diversity. Another option would be to reduce the 9x9 and enlarge ETR more dramatically. It was suggested that UC applicants be given the option of opting-out of the referral pool on the application. Senate Chair Jacob noted that UCOP may decide to take a harder line regarding the enrollment of unfunded California residents.

## **II. The Redesigned SAT**

Chair Johnson noted that three representatives from the College Board joined BOARS on June 6 to discuss the upcoming [redesign of the SAT test](#) taking effect for 2016 admissions. In general, BOARS believes that the new SAT meets its objectives and principles for admissions tests and will be an improvement over the current exam. He asked the admissions directors to discuss issues that have arisen on campuses regarding the redesign.

The directors noted several operational questions, including whether a student may take both the existing and new tests during the transition period, whether UC will accept the best score from either version, and whether UC will continue to require the newly optional Essay section.

BOARS members noted that prospective UC students should be allowed to submit scores from both the existing SAT taken before March 2016, and the redesigned SAT during the transition period. It was also noted that dropping the Essay requirement would impact campuses that currently use it to satisfy the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR), which could force campuses to spend more resources on a substitute ELWR assessment.

## **III. Transfer Action Team Report Implementation**

**Issue:** Chair Johnson asked the admissions directors to comment on the [Transfer Action Team](#) (TAT) report and recommendations.

**Discussion:** Associate Vice President Handel noted that the president is eager to see results, and there are three recommendations where campus involvement will be key—first, in creating new partnerships with low transfer California community colleges (CCC) to strengthen the transfer pipeline and build more geographical and ethnic diversity; second, in simplifying and streamlining transfer requirements to make them more coherent to potential transfers; and third, in building better “transfer success kits” to help transfers transition to and succeed at UC.

Chair Johnson noted that the TAT report asks campuses to increase the alignment of major preparation requirements across UC campuses and with the CSU Transfer Model Curricula. However, it is unlikely that UC can provide a guaranteed two-year graduation path for transfers in some majors who arrive without all required major preparation.

An admissions director noted that some potential transfers receive faulty information from CCC counselors, and others are confused by information in the ASSIST website. It will be important to ensure consistency in the transfer information provided in ASSIST and campus catalogs, and by counselors and UC departments. Another director noted that the proximity of a UC campus to home can be a greater barrier for transfers than for students who enter as freshmen, and that UC might consider establishing satellite campuses or using online education to reach transfers in far flung regions of the state. It was noted that some CCCs may focus on CSU transfer more than UC transfer, especially when there is a CSU campus in close proximity to the CCC campus. It was noted that campuses and departments may be attached to pre-major requirements that they consider to be unique characteristics of their programs. Finally, several directors noted that UC needs to show sustained interest to make a difference, but it will be difficult to build more community college partnerships without additional resources. Vice President Sakaki noted that UCOP is considering potential revenue sources that can help support campus implementation of TAT recommendations.

#### **IV. Other Issues**

Weighted/Capped GPA: Chair Johnson noted that the formula for calculating weighted-capped GPA in some cases inappropriately favors students who take fewer “a-g” courses over students who take more. The problem affects mostly students who take many honors courses, receive the honors GPA bump up in the maximum of eight courses, and earn mostly A’s. The situation is problematic to the extent that the weighted-capped GPA is used to determine eligibility and is a factor in admission and scholarship decisions. It may also incentivize the avoidance of non-honors “a-g” courses. In one real life example, a student lost a Regents Scholarship after taking too many “a-g” courses. One potential solution is to adjust the formula to account for the independence of honors and non-honors GPAs.

Campus Waitlists: Several admissions directors reported that they are using wait lists to help meet freshman enrollment targets and prevent over-enrollment. Some are also using wait lists for transfers.

Transfer Referral Pool: A new transfer referral pool is helping Riverside and Merced meet their enrollment targets. In the last admissions cycle, Merced found space for all transfers in the referral pool, and Riverside accommodated qualified transfers who were applying to majors with space.

Common Core: Campuses are thinking about how the implementation of the Common Core curriculum in California high schools will impact UC admissions in terms of applicant preparation, particularly for selective campuses. Students will arrive at campuses with different levels of preparation, particularly in math, depending on the high school they attended, and admissions officers will need to ensure that review processes are sensitive to the differences.

## **Part II – BOARS Meeting**

### **I. Consent Calendar**

- Draft BOARS Minutes of June 6, 2014.

**Action:** BOARS approved the consent calendar.

### **II. Announcements**

- *George Johnson, BOARS Chair*

**UNC Study on AP Units:** A University of North Carolina [study](#) on the first-year performance of UNC students found that students who took more than five AP courses do no better than those who took five, and students who took fewer than five have lower first-year GPA.

**Statway Review:** Several community colleges have submitted versions of a Statway course for a UC review of transferability. Chair Johnson has forwarded the materials to a six-member UC faculty content expert workgroup for an initial review.

**UCSD Tribal Membership and Admissions Proposal:** The Office of General Counsel (OGC) is reviewing a UCSD proposal for expanding the definition of membership in federally-recognized tribes in the context of comprehensive review procedures for admission. The OGC indicated that it needs to consult with a recently formed systemwide Proposition 209 Work Group to help assess the risk and benefits of the proposal.

**Higher Education Budget Innovative Grant Program:** The Governor's budget includes \$50 million to promote innovative models of higher education at the campus level that result in more bachelor's degrees, improved four-year completion rates, and more effective transfers between the community colleges and four-year universities. Individual grant proposals are due by January, and it will be important for local Senate committees to participate in strategic planning.

### **III. Consultation with UCOP**

- *Judy Sakaki, Vice President, Student Affairs*
- *Stephen Handel, Associate Vice President, Undergraduate Admissions*
- *Monica Lin, Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions*

**Ensuring Transfer Success (ETS) Institutes:** UCOP and the CCC Chancellor's office sponsor ETS Counselor Institutes each year to engage UC officials and CCC counselors in dialogue about the transfer pathway. A total of 679 counselors attended three institutes this past May.

**SIR and CCC Transfer Outcomes:** UCOP distributed near-final outcomes for CCC transfer admits and freshman SIRs for fall 2014 admission. It was noted that 20.2% of total freshman SIRs are domestic out-of-state and international nonresidents.

### **IV. Consultation with Academic Senate Leadership**

- *Bill Jacob, Academic Senate Chair*

The final State budget does not include a general fund increase for UC over the Governor's original proposal, despite the State Assembly and Senate's support for more funding. The budget maintains the Governor's one-time \$50 million Innovative Grant Program, and asks UC to submit an annual "sustainability" report that addresses projected revenues, expenses, enrollment, nonresident enrollment, and other outcomes. The President is thinking creatively about alternative revenue sources that can help sustain UC's excellence in the midst of what she calls a paradigm shift in public higher education, including a greater emphasis on entrepreneurial activities, certificate programs, and online education. The state expects UC to carve out \$10 million for a second year of support to the Innovative Learning Technology Initiative, and UCOP will release an RFP in the fall for faculty-developed online courses. Vice Chair Gilly is serving on a new Task Force empanelled by the Regents to study issues around socially responsible investing, and the Senate is sending the president two names for a new systemwide task force that will examine UC's efforts to prevent and respond to sexual assault, violence, and harassment on campuses.

## **V. The Redesigned SAT**

BOARS reviewed new UCOP data analyzing the correlation of the SAT and its individual components to first-year UC GPA. The study shows that there continues to be a close correlation between the SAT and first-year UC GPA, and that writing continues to be among the most important individual predictive components. Specifically, the Writing section, including the Essay, explained about 20% of the variance in first year UC GPA; the Reading section explained 18%; and the Math section 17%. Combined the three sections explained 23% of the variance in first year GPA.

It was noted that the new SAT appears to align more closely with high school curriculum and college-level expectations than the existing SAT, one of the principles that BOARS articulated in its January 2002 [Testing Principles](#). BOARS also agreed that the Essay component of the redesigned test should continue to be a requirement for admission to UC until evidence shows that it is not useful. By continuing to require the Essay section, UC will send a strong message that writing, and specifically the essay form, is important for college-level work.

**Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to adopt the redesigned SAT as an acceptable admissions exam for 2016 admissions, and to continue requiring the Essay section of the exam.

**Action:** The motion passed unanimously. A letter articulating the decision will be drafted and sent to Chair Jacob to forward to the President.

## **VI. Freshman Eligibility and Referral**

**Issue:** BOARS discussed next steps for a working proposal to move to a "7x7" eligibility construct (ELC would identify the top 7% of graduates from each participating school and a statewide index would identify the top 7% of all public high school graduates) to more accurately bring the total number of guaranteed students to 10% and to reduce pressure on the referral pool.

**Discussion:** A BOARS member expressed concern that moving to 7x7 would be a partial, short-term solution, and the university may be in the same position again in a few years. Another member spoke in favor of eliminating “eligibility” and the guarantee and moving to a system in which all students are selected through comprehensive review. It was acknowledged that eliminating the guarantee would be difficult to sell politically and that it may be unwise for the Senate to dramatically alter its new eligibility reform policy so soon after its implementation. It was also noted that without ELC, campuses have no obligation to accept students from some lower performing high schools, while under ELC there is an institutional obligation to recognize the best students in all California high schools. Several members expressed the opinion that the 7x7 approach is a reasonable compromise, and reduces the referral pool significantly. A BOARS member expressed concern that moving to 7x7 would reduce diversity, but Office of Institutional Research analysts noted that their December projections indicate that the change would not affect the proportion of ethnic groups represented in the guaranteed pool. It was noted that the ETR applicant pool is more diverse overall than the ELC-only applicant pool. A member spoke in support of BOARS pursuing the addition of an SAT minimum for ELC eligibility.

**Motion:** A motion was made and seconded to send forward the proposal for a 7x7 eligibility construct to the Academic Council this summer for systemwide review in the fall.

**Action:** The motion passed 6 to 4. Chair Johnson will draft a proposal and justification for Council’s review.

## **VII. BOARS Priorities for the 2014-15 Academic Year**

BOARS identified topics and issues to discuss in the next academic year. These include implementation of the Transfer Action Team recommendation to strengthen and streamline UC’s pre-major course pathways; policies covering Honors/AP units and the GPA bonus (“bump”); the role of standardized test scores in the determination of eligibility for ELC; “compare favorably” outcomes for nonresident admission; consideration of updating the “a-g” requirements with new language about the Next Generation Science Standards and Visual and Performing Arts; the implementation of the Common Core; pending legislation asking BOARS to develop guidelines for computer science courses that incorporate sufficiently rigorous math content; the potential use of sub-scores on the SAT and/or ACT Essays for diagnostics and in certain admissions decisions; the formula for calculating weighted-capped GPA; and challenges associated with the English preparation of international students.

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Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm  
Minutes Prepared by Michael LaBriola  
Attest: George Johnson