

BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS

Minutes of Meeting – March 18, 2005

Approved April 15, 2005

I. Executive Session

ACTION: BOARS will begin general examination of UC Eligibility at the April meeting.

II. Consent Calendar – Approval of Minutes

ACTION: The minutes of the February 10-11, 2005 BOARS meeting were approved with one amendment.

III. Chair's Announcements

- Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair

REPORT: BOARS Chair Michael Brown reported to the committee on the following topics:

Academic Council and Assembly

At recent meetings of the Academic Council and the Assembly of the Academic Senate, BOARS Chair Michael Brown reported on the committee's findings and recommendations regarding the National Merit Scholars Program (NMSP). Academic Council Chair George Blumenthal has sent a letter to Provost M.R.C. Greenwood regarding BOARS' concerns with the NMSP and the University Committee on Planning and Budget (UCPB) sent a letter of support of BOARS' position to Council Chair Blumenthal. One Council member questioned whether BOARS' position on the NMSP was consistent with the UC Admissions by Examination Alone eligibility pathway. Chair Brown clarified that very few applicants (approximately 1%) who do not fully meet the requirements for the preferred pathways of Eligibility in the Statewide Context and Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC) are eligible through the Examination Alone pathway. Students admitted via the Examination Alone pathway also often come from nontraditional secondary education environments.

ACTION: Analyst Kimberly Peterson will provide members with a copy of UCPB's letter in support of BOARS concerns regarding the National Merit Scholars Program.

The Academic Council has also been discussing the Regents recent action articulating academic preparation programs as an intrinsic part of the University's mission. Chair Brown will report on these discussions when they have been concluded.

Joint BOARS/CSU AAC Meeting

BOARS will be holding a joint meeting with the CSU Admissions Advisory Council on April 15 at the Waterfront Plaza Hotel in Oakland. Logistics for the meeting will be sent out at a later date. The following items have been slated for the agenda:

1. 'a-g' requirements alignment
2. CSU's new Early Assessment Program
3. CSU Lower Division Transfer Preparation initiative (the "45-15 program")
4. AP/Honors grade point bump issues

ACTION: Director Susan Wilbur will work with CSU representatives and BOARS Analyst Kimberly Peterson to assemble the necessary supporting documents for the joint BOARS/CSU Admissions Advisory Council meeting.

IV. Consultation with the Office of the President – Student Academic Services

- Susan Wilbur, Director of Undergraduate Admissions

REPORT: The UC system experienced record numbers of freshman applications this year. Seven of the nine undergraduate campuses have already sent out their admissions decision letters to applicants. The UC San Diego campus will be sending letters this weekend, and the UC Berkeley campus will send letters to applicants by the end of March. Although the admissions information is still preliminary, every campus has reported that it will be admitting more students this year and it is anticipated that the UC system may have a 10% overall increase in freshman admit offers this year. Although the size of and process for the admissions referral pool is yet to be determined, UC Merced has already indicated an interest in reviewing all referral pool students and UC Riverside has indicated an interest in reviewing all engineering referrals. The official announcement of the final freshman admissions information is expected to be released to the media during the second week of April.

Campuses are now turning their attention to transfer applications, an admission process which will continue through the end of May.

V. Articulation and Evaluation Subcommittee

- Michael T. Brown, Subcommittee Chair

REPORT: Chair Michael Brown reported on the March 15 meeting of the BOARS Articulation and Evaluation Subcommittee:

Earth and Space Science

The subcommittee and the University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) have both evaluated a request to add Earth and Space Science (ESS) to the laboratory science ('d') requirement. Those lobbying in favor of this change argue that ESS is a scientific field in its own right and not just a synthesis of biology, chemistry and physics. These proponents are also concerned that high schools will drop ESS classes from their curriculum if ESS is not an explicit part of the 'd' requirement. The subcommittee determined that ESS is a descriptive rather than analytical scientific field and therefore is not a "fundamental science" as is the intent of the laboratory science requirement. It was realized, however, that the language of the 'd' requirement and the definition of "fundamental" should be revisited. The subcommittee is considering commissioning a paper from an expert on the development of scientific reasoning to give better guidance to the course approval process and eventual direct measures of competence.

DISCUSSION: Members agreed that the science laboratory courses students take to fulfill the ‘d’ requirement should develop the scientific reasoning abilities and provide students with the basic building blocks of scientific understanding that will help them succeed in their college courses. The wording of the ‘d’ requirement should make it clear that these should be foundational scientific courses and that any courses that do not fulfill this requirement are not necessarily lacking in value, but rather have value of a different nature.

CAN

The Common Articulation Numbering (CAN) is a legislatively funded initiative for the community colleges and CSU to develop a common course numbering system to aid in course articulation. There have been a number of problems with the CAN process (e.g., years of backlog) and the CSU system has recently decided to end its participation in the program.

AP Program Status Review

The Advanced Placement (AP) program has responded to a recent letter from the subcommittee requesting that AP provide additional information pertaining to program evaluation and monitoring, including evidence that the AP curriculum is taught consistently. AP’s response indicated that others have expressed concerns about quality control and the program is taking steps to improve monitoring and evaluation of their courses. This fall AP will send a communication to each participating high schools’ principal asking them to sign a statement of compliance. If the principal refuses to sign, their school will not be allowed to designate their courses as AP. The program will also conduct random spot checks of courses.

VI. Analytic Subcommittee

- David Stern, Subcommittee Chair

REPORT: The Analytic Subcommittee recently met with the UC All Campus Consortium for Research on Diversity (UC ACCORD) as part of an effort to develop indicators of inclusiveness that UC can track longitudinally. These indicators will provide a statistical backdrop of the University’s admissions policies over time and the extent to which the population of the state is represented by the UC student body. These indicators would not be used specifically to trigger policy changes, but rather would help better inform BOARS and other policy-making bodies.

The subcommittee presented a recommendation for the development of three sets of indicators: (1) high school indicators, (2) population indicators, and (3) community college indicators.

DISCUSSION: The committee discussed the importance of gathering information on 9th and 10th graders and not just high school graduates. UC’s eligibility rate is based on high school graduates and does not include dropouts, a calculation which in some sense overestimates the University’s inclusiveness of the state’s population. This failure of students to even reach the level of college entrance is a problem that needs to be illustrated. Some members questioned whether UC might be able to develop a metric of the transient ratio of different high schools. The UCOP consultants informed BOARS that the state is developing a student ID system to track students, which might enable such calculations.

ACTION: BOARS unanimously approved the recommendations of the Analytic Subcommittee to develop three sets of inclusiveness indicators.

ACTION: Chair Michael Brown will discuss concerns about UC ACCORD's funding with the Academic Council.

VII. Testing Subcommittee Report

- Mark Rashid, Subcommittee Chair

REPORT: In February the Testing Subcommittee presented a draft framework for the development of a new Statewide Eligibility construct for Fall 2006 that would reflect the new admissions testing requirements while still reproducing essentially the same group of students that were eligible under the previous index. One of the elements presented to the committee last month was the idea that the SAT and ACT scores would be converted to a common scale. Some benefits of this common scale would be (1) to remove the appearance of bias towards the SAT exam and (2) to allow BOARS to explore the possibility of eventually moving towards a percentile ranking of admissions exams. The committee was presented with the results of a study, based on past test scores, that estimates the concordance of the SAT and ACT scores onto a common "UC Score" scale of 1-100.

One issue the subcommittee has had to deal with is that the current ACT to SAT concordance is based on overall core composite scores; however, the addition of the writing section to the ACT and SAT exams and the score weighting approach approved by the Regents (each SAT section will be weighted equally) now requires that the different sections be concorded separately. This concordance is further complicated by the fact that the ACT has four sections and the SAT has three:

ACT (scores range from 6-36)

Reading

Math

Science Reasoning

English/Writing composite

SAT (scores range from 200-800)

Reading

Math

Writing

UC Score Calculations

$[2/3(\text{ACT Reading} + \text{Math} + \text{Science Reasoning})] + \text{English/Writing} = \text{UC Core Score}$

$\text{SAT Reading} + \text{Math} + \text{Writing} = \text{UC Core Score}$

A draft worksheet that applicants could use to calculate their eligibility and understand how their eligibility index score is determined was presented to the committee. A recommendation for the Fall 2006 Eligibility Index was presented to the committee for approval.

DISCUSSION: Concerns were expressed about the ability to communicate the eligibility index score calculations, especially for the ACT scores, in an easy and effective manner. Committee members recommended providing an online calculator for applicants; however, an explanation will need to be provided in the paper application as well. The public will also need to be able to understand what students need to achieve, in terms of test scores and grades, in order to be deemed eligible for UC. Director Susan Wilbur volunteered the services of the high school counselor advisory group and others to assist in the development and testing of possible explanations of the eligibility index score calculations.

The UCOP consultants expressed concerns about the time constraints of being able to effectively manage the strategic communications effort of the “UC Score” aspect of the new eligibility index proposal. The committee discussed the pros and cons of introducing the UC Score for Fall 2006 or at a later date. Members expressed a preference for trying to introduce the UC Score concept for Fall 2006 since it would correspond with the introduction of the new testing pattern. Removing the UC Score calculation would not eliminate the need for ACT test takers to perform some type of score calculation.

It was suggested that the subcommittee develop several alternative proposals for presenting the new eligibility index (both with and without the UC Score aspect) that maintains the policy and score weighting decisions that have already been approved by BOARS and the Regents. These alternatives would be presented to BOARS for consideration along with a comparison of the eligibility index explanation and calculations in the current UC application.

The Testing Subcommittee presented the following motion to BOARS for approval:

The Eligibility Index with UC Score calculation for Fall 2006 as presented to the committee be accepted provisionally for Fall 2006 subject to revision if a better presentation option is developed. The UC Score aspect of the eligibility index will be implemented for Fall 2007 if it is determined that it should not be implemented in Fall 2006.

ACTION: The Testing Subcommittee motion regarding the new Eligibility Index was approved unanimously by the committee.

VIII. Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC) Studies

- Roger Studley, Assistant Director, Student Academic Services

REPORT: Assistant Director Roger Studley presented the preliminary results of a study of the behavioral impact of the Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC) program. This study attempted to answer the following questions:

What has been the behavioral impact of the ELC program? Specifically, how many students have become eligible in the statewide context as a result of the ELC program? Additionally, how have newly eligible students performed at UC?

California public high schools submit to UC transcripts for the students they deem to be in the

top 10% of their class at the end of their junior year. UC evaluates these transcripts and assigns the students an ELC status:

- ELC Eligible: Students who have satisfied the program's required course pattern and minimum GPA and rank in the top 4% of their class.
- ELC Qualified: Students who have satisfied the required course pattern and minimum GPA but do not rank in the top 4% of their class.
- Not ELC Qualified: Students who have not satisfied the required course pattern or minimum GPA.

UC sends letters to these three groups of students to notify them of their ELC status and the steps they need to take to become UC eligible. The letters also list the remaining requirements for statewide eligibility, advise ELC qualified students that they can become eligible by meeting these requirements, and encourage students who might not obtain eligibility to prepare themselves for transfer admission to UC.

The ELC behavioral impact study examined two outcome measures: (1) the number of students taking the three SAT II examinations required for statewide eligibility and (2) the number of students applying for freshman admission to UC. Because of limited data, the study did not examine measures of 'a-g' course requirement completion. To create a control group, a statistical model predicting the probability of a student applying to UC without the existence of the ELC program was produced using the cohort of students graduating from high school in 2000. This model was then applied to the cohort of students graduating high school in 2002.

Preliminary data on actual versus predicted applicants was presented for three populations (ELC eligible, "top 5-10%", and "below 10%") by API decile and ethnicity. This study showed that about 1000-2000 students were stimulated to become statewide eligible in 2002 because of the ELC program.

DISCUSSION: Members suggested possibilities for conducting additional studies of the behavioral impact of ELC:

- use CPEC eligibility study information to also examine the number of students that were influenced to complete the 'a-g' requirements because of the ELC program
- apply the statistical model to the 2001 cohort, even though approximately 18% of high schools did not submit transcripts for 2001, and other student cohorts to increase confidence in the findings
- use the 1999 cohort to develop a statistical model and compare it to the 2000 model

The committee also discussed what further information BOARS might need to make a decision about possibly expanding the ELC program:

- Examine the results of studies on ELC students using UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) study data (e.g., Associate Director Sam Agronow is conducting a study on engagement)
- Survey students as to whether receiving the ELC letter changed their behavior (e.g., add this question to the UCUES survey)
- Obtain information on students being discouraged or destimulated by not receiving an ELC letter

- Analyze the behavioral impact on additional cohorts of students
- Study whether ELC or non-ELC status adds to the prediction of outcomes of UC performance
- Investigate the effect of the intervention of some campuses guaranteeing admission to all ELC students

ACTION: Chair Michael Brown will email the committee members for suggestions for additional information/studies BOARS needs to make a decision about ELC expansion.

The committee was also informed that the Transcript Evaluation Service is now being piloted in 20 high schools. UC will receive the transcripts for all of these students, not just the top 10%, and each student will receive a letter indicating how well they are on track to achieving UC eligibility.

ACTION: BOARS will learn more about the Transcript Evaluation Service at a future meeting.

IX. Role of AP/Honors Courses in College Admissions

- Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair

REPORT: The AP/Honors Task Force report is currently in draft form. It is expected that the report may be finalized in time for the April BOARS meeting. Wayne Camara and Michalis Michaelides from the College Board's Research and Psychometrics division have issued a "Review of Geiser and Santelices *The role of Advanced Placement and honors courses in college admissions.*" In response to this, Saul Geiser and Veronica Santelices have drafted a "Response to College Board's Review of Geiser-Santelices Study."

DISCUSSION: Members reiterated the fact that the grade bump issue extends beyond AP courses and includes IB, honors and community college courses. Any study of the grade bump should evaluate these other types of courses as well. Such a study is not meant as a critique of AP or these other types of courses, but rather is an examination of an admissions policy issue.

The committee questioned whether other institutions give an AP/Honors grade bump in their admissions practices. Director Susan Wilbur informed BOARS that other institutions do calculate some form of weighted GPA for admissions purposes.

ACTION: Director Susan Wilbur will provide BOARS with the information on other institutions' AP/Honors Grade Point admissions practices.

The committee stressed the need for obtaining data on the availability of AP/Honors courses. One way to evaluate this would be to examine the transcripts submitted to UC to see what courses are available. Also, since the state is moving towards making the school course list schedules available online, an indicator of AP/Honors availability could be developed. Although the labels (e.g., "honors") for some courses might be unreliable, such an indicator might provide the University with a better understanding of AP/Honors course availability.

Associate Director Sam Agronow provided the committee with preliminary data on the distribution of applicants in the bottom quintile of weighted versus unweighted GPA by Ethnic Group and School API Rank. These data show that some groups of students might be disadvantaged, either in eligibility or selection, by the use of an unweighted instead of a weighted GPA. Associate Director Judy Kowarsky also provided an oral report on an analysis that will be presented to BOARS at a later date. The preliminary data from this study indicates that some groups of students might be hypersensitive to a change in the AP/Honors grade bump because they are close to the border of eligibility. Members noted that these analyses are limited because they only evaluate those students that are lost by eliminating the AP/Honors grade bump and not those students that might be gained by a change in the grade bump policy.

It was suggested that BOARS consider developing a set of principles, similar to the BOARS Principles of Admissions Testing, which would guide the evaluation of and decisions related to the AP/Honors grade bump. These principles might include predictive validity, social considerations, encouragement of academic rigor, etc.

X. Comprehensive Review Report

- Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair

DISCUSSION: The committee briefly discussed preliminary data showing the “normalized” admissions rates for various demographic groups on each campus and systemwide. The normalized admissions rate is calculated as the ratio of the demographic group admit rate to the overall admit rate (e.g., female admit rate/overall admit rate). These normalized rates show how these groups fair in admissions relative to the overall applicant pool. Members noted various trends of both relative improvements and declines in access.

ACTION: UCOP Student Academic Services will provide BOARS with disaggregated admissions data on ethnic/racial groups.

ACTION: BOARS members will be provided with an electronic copy and explanation of the preliminary normalized admissions rate data to share with their campus committee’s for information and comment.

XI. Admissions by Exception Guidelines

Due to a lack of time this item was postponed.

Meeting adjourned 4:00 p.m.
Attest: Michael T. Brown

Minutes drafted by
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