

**University of California Academic Senate
Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS)**

Minutes of Meeting – January 9, 2009

I. Chair's Announcements – Sylvia Hurtado

Report: Chair Hurtado summarized highlights of the December Academic Council and Academic Assembly meetings.

- Several other Council committees share BOARS' concern that the restructuring of the Department of Academic Affairs may negatively impact their work. President Yudof wants to use BOARS' December memo urging the preservation of UCOP analytical support and expertise to help inform the Regents about the importance of the central function.
- Council approved BOARS' request to post a [response](#) to a paper critical of the eligibility reform proposal. Council will also send the response to the Center for the Study of Higher Education with a request that it be posted on the CSHE website alongside the original paper.
- Council postponed its discussion of a request for the expansion of UC's Laboratory Science ('d') admissions requirement to include earth, environmental and space sciences.
- The state fiscal crisis continues to worsen. The Regents will meet in January to discuss a plan to curtail the entering freshman class of California resident students and increase the CCC transfer class, with specific targets set for campuses.
- Council voted not to approve the University Committee on Academic Freedom's request to join Council as a standing committee.
- The Academic Assembly meeting included updates about some of the major issues facing the University, including the Academic Senate Eligibility Reform proposal, which will be reviewed at the Regents February meeting. Chair Croughan and President Yudof have met with State legislators about the proposal, and the President has decided to move forward with the 3.0 weighted/capped minimum GPA scenario for ETR.
- The Senate received a copy of the California Legislative Analyst's Office analysis of the eligibility reform proposal, which contains some factual errors and misunderstandings.
- Possible guest consultants for future BOARS meetings include UCLA Professor of Education Patricia Gándara, who is working on an initiative to make a-g courses available online to Spanish-speaking students; Deborah Bial of the [Posse Foundation](#), which recently made a partnership agreement with UC Berkeley for the recruitment of inner city youth; Rafael Granados, Executive Director of [UCCP](#), which makes college preparation course curriculum available to CA students and teachers online.

Members noted that the most appropriate consultants would be ones who could help BOARS pursue its goal of expanding a-g and AP course access and higher educational opportunity.

Action: Check about travel reimbursement possibilities and invite consultants.

II. Consent Calendar

1. December 5, 2008 meeting minutes

Action: BOARS approved the consent calendar.

III. Consultation with the Office of the President - *Director of Admissions Susan Wilbur and Associate Director Sam Agronow*

Report: Director Wilbur summarized results of the CPEC eligibility study, preliminary 2008-09 application data, and the December 12 meeting of the Achieve Inc. Alignment Institute.

The final CPEC eligibility study for the graduating high school class of 2007 showed a 13.4% eligibility rate for UC, down from 14.4% in 2003. The decrease is likely due to eligibility requirement changes approved by the Regents in 2004, which increased the minimum GPA to 3.0 effective with the fall 2007 entering class. There were slight gains in the eligibility rates for underrepresented minority groups between 2003 and 2007. Females again have higher eligibility rates compared to males, 11.2% to 15.3% overall, with a disproportionately wide gap for URM.

Campuses are reviewing preliminary 2008-09 application data. Systemwide, UC experienced a 4.7% increase in applications for fall 2009, including gains at both the freshman and transfer level for most URM groups. UCR led campuses in the increase of freshman applications, while UCSB had the largest decline at 5%. All campuses saw slight increases in the number of first generation, low income, and low API school applicants, as well as large increases in international applications. All campuses had larger numbers of transfer applications, for an 11% increase overall, although there is concern that the economy may force the CCCs to cut courses, which could impact access to core transfer requirements. The office of admissions will be monitoring the implementation and impact of the enrollment curtailment plan.

Director Wilbur attended the December 12 Achieve meeting. There was interest in incorporating the ICAS [Statement of Competencies](#) into Achieve, particularly its views about the Habits of Mind and cognitive thinking skills expected of entering freshmen. Achieve also discussed the [Early Assessment Program](#) (EAP) exam administered by CSU to high school juniors in English and math, which integrates the California Standards Test (CST) and helps students assess their college readiness. (Associate Director Agronow is working on a study about the effectiveness of the CSTs in predicting freshman GPA compared to the SAT.) Director Wilbur noted that Achieve's goal of aligning teaching, assessment, and curriculum could be good for California, and UC should be engaged in the project as part of its public service mission.

Discussion:

- The CPEC report asserts that more low income students are becoming eligible, but data are needed to back this up.
- What can be done to address the gender gap, which appears to be a crisis in masculinity for all groups?
- Why do African-Americans have the largest proportion of ineligible applicants?
- It would be helpful to see data on the number of applicants from each region as a percentage of the total pool of students in that region, not just as a percentage of the total state pool.
- Achieve may be too focused on testing and accountability, which is not necessarily UC's approach to educational reform.

IV. Report from the Shared Review "Machine" Score Subcommittee

Report: Associate Director Agronow reported that the shared review "machine" score subcommittee of the Admissions Processing Task Force met December 9. Its goal is to refine the data elements and scores used by UCLA and UCB in their comprehensive review processes and make them available to other campuses centrally. The subcommittee reviewed application

scoring data used by UCLA and UCB and a *Shared Review Machine Score Abstract* prepared by former BOARS chair Mark Rashid, which proposes an algorithm for each of the 14 CR factors.

The subcommittee recommends that campuses be encouraged but not required to use the UCLA scores in admission decisions. It likes the UCLA scoring system because it is succinct and provides a broad context for evaluating student achievement. It also recommends adding a rating for several additional elements related to honors-level course taking opportunities and performance; senior year program quality; outstanding performance in one or more subject areas; and recent, marked improvement in academic performance.

Discussion: The new protocol will give campuses more and better quality information on which to base CR decisions. The school-to-campus comparative data are particularly useful. UCOP might make these data available to campuses next year on a trial basis and then solicit feedback. It would be better if all the score data could fit on a single page.

Action: BOARS passed a motion endorsing the subcommittee report in principle, supporting the goal of making the data widely available to campuses, and suggesting that UCOP proceed with development of a machine score template.

V. C and D Task Force Recommendations – BOARS Vice Chair Bill Jacob

Issue/Report: BOARS reviewed revisions from the C and D Task Force to the mathematics (c) and laboratory science (d) descriptions in the [Guide to “a-g” Requirements](#). The charge to the UC, CSU, and CCC faculty on the Task Force was to review and clarify the language to help schools identify the criteria that distinguish a suitable c or d course (not to make substantive changes to policy.) Area (c) now includes a description the general abilities and attitudes the task force feels should gain in math courses.

The Task Force recommendation to require all three years of math be taken in grades 9-12 is at odds with a recent decision by the CA Board of Education to require schools to test all 8th grade students on Algebra 1 in three years. Only half of 8th graders currently take the course and of them, only about half score at a proficient level on algebra on the CST. The plan to require all 8th grade students to take a course in which only about one-fourth of students currently succeed could further weaken the curriculum, and the professional development required to provide the necessary teachers will be extremely expensive. On December 18 the Sacramento Superior Court issued a preliminary injunction blocking the implementation of the Board of Education’s plan.

Discussion: A large percentage of the UC applicant pool takes 8th grade algebra, but most admitted freshmen take four math courses between grades 9 and 12. Several BOARS members spoke in favor of the Task Force recommendation to require that the three required mathematics courses be completed between grades 9 and 12. The change would codify UC’s goal of having students enter UC with three years of high school level math. It was noted that this would represent a policy change requiring Senate and Regental review and approval, and would also be contrary to the original charge of the Task Force.

BOARS decided to leave in its present condition the language requiring three units but strongly recommending four units of college preparatory mathematics. The committee may consider a policy change in the future after further study. It was suggested that BOARS address a cover letter to schools to accompany the language.

Action: BOARS approved the (d) language and will review a revised draft of (c) at the February meeting.

VI. Academic Senate Eligibility Reform Proposal

BOARS discussed the status of the ETR proposal and next steps for implementation, if passed by the Regents in February.

Immediate Communications Strategy:

- There is a new [eligibility reform website](#) on the UCOP homepage that includes FAQs about the policy.
- Once ETR passes, the Admissions office will send notice to high schools, the Department of Education, and others; add capacity to the website that will allow counselors to ask questions; add information about the policy to publications; and discuss the changes at the fall 2009 counselor conferences. Admissions is also considering ways to communicate the changes through modern communications vehicles, such as online social networking websites.
- UC must ensure that current high school students who are not impacted by the new policy do continue to take the required Subject tests.
- UCOP, the Academic Senate, and perhaps individual BOARS members should be prepared to provide coherent, consistent messages and address common misunderstandings about the new policy.

Longer-term goals:

- Develop strategies for addressing a-g deficits, AP availability, and increasing transfer numbers and access.

Revising Senate Regulations:

The corresponding amendments to Senate regulations governing eligibility and admissions must be rewritten and sent to the Academic Council and Assembly for final approval. Former BOARS Chair Rashid drafted preliminary revisions to Regulations 410 – 468 last year that address not only the sections relevant to eligibility reform – for example, elimination of SAT Subject Test requirement – but also other admissions-related regulations to increase the clarity of the language and its alignment with current policy and practice. Director Wilbur noted the importance of having the regulations be clear and precise because the Admissions Directors follow them closely.

Action: Director Wilbur will confer with the admissions directors and write up ideas for BOARS' review in February.

VII. Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan

Issue: The President is proposing a new financial aid program, “Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan,” to help cover fees for needy students. Undergraduates with parental income up to \$60,000 will have UC systemwide fees covered by scholarship or grant awards. Other needy undergraduates with incomes less than \$100,000 will continue to be provided UC grants covering half of the annual increase in systemwide fees. The program is intended to help communicate a clear message, particularly in underserved communities, that a UC education is within reach financially.

The plan would cover only the educational and registration fees, not room and board or other campus-based fees. The plan also assumes a 9.3% increase in student fees next year, a portion of which, UCOP estimates that only 1,051, or 2% of all the undergraduates eligible to have fees covered through Blue and Gold, will not already be covered by other financial aid sources like Cal, Pell, and UC grants.

Discussion:

- Although the program is essentially a marketing campaign, it is a step in the right direction that goes some way to match programs at competing universities. The public relations element of the campaign is important and appropriate. It helps send a message that UC is affordable and accessible. It could get the attention of some URM groups who hadn't considered UC and encourage them to apply and enroll. It is a pragmatic approach in a time of incredible economic constraints.
- Paying for Blue and Gold with higher student fees means the impact of the higher fees on most needy students is nil, because the state covers them through Cal Grants. The concern is that if these grants decline as a result of state funding, how will the new program commitment impact existing commitments to the neediest students who rely on funds to replace the grants?
- The program will probably have little net impact on needy students, most of whom will already be receiving Cal Grants to cover their fees. Moreover, because it does not cover the entire cost of attending UC, the Blue and Gold could be seen as a lesser substitute for a more complete financial aid approach that takes into account the total cost of a college education. It may also be seen as contradictory for UC to send a message about its affordability while simultaneously raising fees.
- Finally, this plan will continue to shift the burden of higher fees and financial aid funding away from the state and onto middle class students and families, many of whom are also in need and will be forced to work more hours and/or take on more debt to get by. The result is minimal social change and further privatization.
- Blue and Gold could replace the current UC financial aid model, which returns 1/3 of fee revenue to the UC Grant financial aid pool, and has been quite successful in helping needy students. The current program should be renamed Blue and Gold.
- There are many situations in which students are calculated to have a family income that excludes them from aid, but whose parents are unwilling to contribute to their college tuition. What about the household at \$61,000?
- BOARS should encourage UC to present financial aid policies that maintain and enhance affordability and accessibility and keep self-help (work-study and loans) at manageable levels.
- The financial aid system is confusing, and it is easy for someone inside the system to forget how arcane it can seem to someone on the outside. Financial Aid estimators for each UC campus can be found at: www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/paying.html.

Action: BOARS will draft a memo to Council for approval over email. .

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm
Minutes prepared by: Michael LaBriola; Attest: Sylvia Hurtado