

Minutes of Meeting – July 18, 2005

Approved October 13, 2005

I. Welcome and Chair's Announcements*Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair*National Merit Scholarships

On July 13 the University officially announced that the six campuses (Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz) that currently provide funding for National Merit Scholarships will redirect that funding to other merit-based scholarships (e.g., Regents and Chancellor's Scholarship Programs) beginning with the fall 2006 entering class. The decision was reached collectively by the chancellors in response to the Academic Council's "Resolution on The Failure of the National Merit Scholarship Program to Meet the Requirements of UC's Definition of Academic Merit," which was drafted and adopted by BOARS last month (<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/reports/AC.re.NMSP.06.29.05.pdf>).

July Regents Meeting

At the July Regents meeting, Regent Joanne Kozberg and Provost M.R.C. Greenwood will report on the work of the 2004-05 Eligibility and Admissions Study Group, which has focused primarily on the University's progress in implementing the recommendations outlined in the previous Study Group's "Final Report to the President, April 2004"

(http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/compreviue/studygroup_final0404.pdf).

Additionally, Provost Greenwood will update the Board on preliminary fall 2005 freshman enrollment outcomes and admissions trends.

II. Testing Subcommittee Report – Eligibility by Examination Alone*Mark Rashid, Testing Subcommittee Chair**Roger Studley, Assistant Director of Admissions*

ISSUE: UC freshman applicants who do not meet the requirements for Eligibility in the Statewide Context or Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC), but who achieve high scores on the required admissions examinations, may qualify for UC freshman eligibility via the Eligibility by Examination Alone pathway. In previous years, to satisfy the minimum requirements for Eligibility by Examination Alone, applicants must have attained:

- A total score on the SAT I of at least 1400 or a composite score on the ACT of at least 31, and
- a total score of 1760 or higher on three SAT II Subject Tests with a minimum score of 530 on each test.

Effective for students entering UC as freshmen in fall 2006, applicants will face new admissions core examinations, a new pattern of required exams, and an Eligibility Index in which each (SAT) component of the examination requirement is now weighted equally. Due to these

changes, the score requirements for Eligibility by Examination Alone need to be adjusted for fall 2006 admissions.

REPORT: Testing Subcommittee Chair Mark Rashid and Assistant Director Roger Studley presented results of simulations, using a 2004 cohort of high school seniors and UC applicants, of different score requirements for Eligibility by Examination Alone under the new testing pattern. These simulations show various combinations of average test score and minimum test score requirements and the resulting Eligibility by Examination Alone pool for each score combination in terms of:

- the estimated number of students eligible under the simulated policy
- the percent change from current policy in number of students
- the percent of students displaced by the simulated policy

DISCUSSION: The committee debated the advantages of increasing the current minimum test score requirement versus increasing the average test score requirement for Eligibility by Exam Alone. Members noted that students who are only eligible via the examination pathway (less than 300 applicants annually) are often students from nontraditional high school environments who do not meet UC's GPA and 'a-g' course completion requirements for Eligibility in the Statewide or Local Context. These students' examination scores are the only comparable academic information the University has available to assess their eligibility.

The Testing Subcommittee recommended that BOARS adopt a "580 minimum and 690 average" test score requirement for fall 2006 Eligibility by Examination Alone. Unlike the previous Eligibility by Exam Alone policy where the score requirements differed for the SAT I exam and the SAT Subject exams, each of the SAT exam components would be subject to the same minimum score requirement. By treating each of the exam components in a uniform manner, the Eligibility by Exam Alone policy will better reflect the fall 2006 Eligibility Index policy of weighting each of the admissions test score components equally.

MOTION: To qualify for Eligibility by Examination Alone for fall 2006, UC applicants must meet the following score requirements:

- score at least 580 on each of the three components of the SAT Reasoning Test (Math, Critical Reading, Writing) or score at least 25 on each of the four components of the ACT Assessment plus Writing (Math, Science Reasoning, Reading, Writing/English); and
- score at least 580 on two UC-approved SAT Subject Tests; and
- attain a test score total, as calculated by the UC Eligibility Index, of at least 3450 (equivalent to a 690 average for each of the five SAT exam components).

ACTION: BOARS unanimously approved the Testing Subcommittee's recommendation to adopt a "580 minimum and 690 average" test score requirement for fall 2006 Eligibility by Examination Alone. The Testing Subcommittee will monitor the impact of the test score requirement.

III. Admissions by Exception (AbyE) Guidelines

David Stern, BOARS Vice Chair

REPORT: Vice Chair David Stern presented BOARS with a revised draft of the “Guidelines for Implementation of University Policy on Admission by Exception.” This version incorporates feedback BOARS received from campus admissions committees and directors about the draft guidelines. Substantive changes from the earlier draft include clarification of the following principles:

- BOARS is not issuing a mandate to campuses, but rather is providing guidance for campus implementation of existing University policy.
- The purpose of the Admissions by Exception policy is to allow for some flexibility and experimentation in admissions at the campus level.
- Campuses develop their own procedures for evaluating applicants for AbyE.
- The UC’s admissions guarantee for eligible applicants does not apply to ineligible applicants.
- The purpose of AbyE is not to give admissions preference to less qualified applicants, but rather to give campuses the ability to admit better qualified applicants that are not readily identified using the eligibility criteria.

DISCUSSION: Questions were raised as to why “applicants from nontraditional high school settings that have adversely affected their ability to complete UC’s eligibility requirements” (Category 2) is listed as a separate category in the guidelines list of “Recommended Categories of Applicants to be Considered for Admission by Exception.” Couldn’t this “nontraditional high school students” category be included within the category of “applicants who have overcome personal challenges that have affected their ability to meet UC eligibility requirements” (Category 1)? It was noted that the nontraditional high school student population is growing rapidly and could eventually overwhelm any category in which it is included. It is also likely that an applicant selected for AbyE may have the characteristics to be identified in multiple categories, so campuses have the flexibility to choose the category in which they wish to count a student admitted by exception.

Members recommended changes to the language of Principle 4 of the draft guidelines:

“...at the campus level should ensure guard against the unlikely event that applicants the campus determines to be less qualified for UC students are not admitted instead of applicants the campus determines to be more qualified applicants...”

ACTION: BOARS unanimously approved the “Guidelines for Implementation of University Policy on Admissions by Exception” with amendments to Principle 4.

IV. Eligibility Requirements and GPA Construct Principles

Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair

Mark Rashid, BOARS Member

Dick Flacks, BOARS Member

DISCUSSION: The committee discussed the draft document, “Toward a Conceptual Definition of UC Eligibility: The Guarantee of Admissions and the Guarantee of Consideration for Admission.” A question was raised as to why UC does not use grades earned in 9th grade as part of the GPA calculation for eligibility. It was indicated that historically 9th grade has been seen as a transition period for high school students. The policy for calculating the GPA is designed to be forgiving and allow students an opportunity to transform into college-going students.

Members discussed the limitations of using high school GPA and the ways in which students may be able to manipulate their GPA for UC eligibility (e.g., take difficult courses in 9th grade). A number of different options for measuring high school academic achievement were discussed: establish a combination of both an average GPA and minimum course grade requirement, add an academic rigor measure, and use class rank. Members suggested that BOARS evaluate the available research literature for different options for measuring high school achievement and performance.

Members recommended that the conceptual definition of eligibility should be based on the criteria deemed necessary for students to be qualified and well prepared for UC. The concept of eligibility could shift towards various measures of proficiency and preparation. The assumptions on which UC establishes the Eligibility Index – the likelihood that the student will attain at least a ‘C’ average at UC – could also be reconsidered.

V. Honors Level Coursework Research Updates

Sam Agronow, Associate Director of Admissions

Roger Studley, Assistant Director of Admissions

Due to a lack of time, discussion on this item was deferred.

VI. Honors Level Grade Bump Policy

Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair

Due to a lack of time, discussion on this item was deferred.

ACTION: A BOARS teleconference will be scheduled for discussion of the Honors Level Grade Bump Policy.

VII. UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) – Admissions Research

Dick Flacks, BOARS Member

Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair

Sam Agronow, Associate Director of Admissions

REPORT: The committee was provided with a draft research paper, “UCUES and Admissions.” Member Dick Flacks briefly informed the committee of the following findings:

- UCUES provides an important source of data for validating and enriching the comprehensive review process.

- Students admitted to Berkeley via the campus's augmented review process score higher than Berkeley's regularly admitted students on academic engagement measures.
- Performance in high school is a predictor of academic engagement in college; in contrast, performance on the SAT is not positively related to "academic engagement" in college (and appears to be negatively related to "academic diligence" and positively related to "course disengagement").

DISCUSSION: Due to a lack of time, discussion on this item was deferred.

ACTION: BOARS Members are asked to provide feedback on the "UCUES and Admissions" draft report.

JOINT SESSION WITH UC VICE CHANCELLORS FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS AND ADMISSIONS DIRECTORS

VIII. Analysis of Undergraduate Admissions Trends

Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair

Chris Patti, University Counsel

REPORT: University Counsel Chris Patti provided information on state and federal laws with which UC admissions policies and practices must maintain compliance. Similar information was provided to the Eligibility and Admissions Study Group in May and will be presented to The Regents at their meeting this week (<http://www.ucop.edu/acadaff/UGEligAdm.pdf>).

State Law – Proposition 209

The California Civil Rights Initiative, Proposition 209, amended the state constitution so that state agencies are prohibited from discriminating against or granting preferential treatment to any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin. The constitutional amendment does provide for an exception for “action which must be taken to establish or maintain eligibility for any federal program, when ineligibility would result in loss of federal funds to the state.”

Federal Law – Disparate Impact

Under the federal “disparate impact” standard, an activity that seems neutral on its face can still violate *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* if it has the effect of discrimination, even if there is no evidence of an intent to discriminate. When applying a disparate impact analysis, the following three tests are addressed:

1. *Prima Facie Case.* The plaintiff must prove that the challenged practice or selection device has a substantial adverse impact on a protected group, resulting in a significantly disproportionate denial of an educational benefit or opportunity. The most commonly used method of determining disparate impact is the “80 percent rule,” which finds an adverse impact if members of a protected class are selected at a rate less than four fifths (80 percent) of that of another group. For example, if 50 percent of white applicants receive a passing score on a test, but only 30 percent of African-Americans pass, the relevant ratio would be 30/50, or 60 percent, which would violate the 80 percent rule.
2. *Educational Justification.* If the plaintiff establishes disparate impact, the educational institution must prove that the challenged practice or selection device is educationally justified.
3. *Alternative Practice.* Even if the educational institution proves educational justification, the plaintiff may still prevail by showing that an alternative practice exists that would satisfy the institution’s stated purpose and is valid and reliable for that purpose, but which would have less of a disparate impact.

The requirements of *Title VI* are enforced by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights and apply to all educational institutions that receive federal funds.

IX. Review of Fall 2005 Freshman Admissions Outcomes and Plans for Fall 2006

*Vice Chancellors for Student Affairs
Admissions Directors*

REPORT: The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Admissions Director for each campus presented information on fall 2005 freshman admissions outcomes and plans for the fall 2006 admissions cycle. Some campuses reported future plans, including: adding an augmented review process, creating an ELC admissions guarantee, piloting nontraditional student recruitment programs, implementing new marketing campaigns, and developing Admissions by Exception processes

X. Use of the SAT II in Fall 2006 for Selective Majors
Admissions Directors

REPORT: Admissions Directors reported on whether major programs on their campus recommend or state a preference for a specific SAT Subject Test for admissions purposes. Although some selective major programs on some campuses do state preferences for specific subject tests, applicants are not significantly penalized for taking a different Subject Test.

XI. Preview of BOARS 2005-06 Agenda
Michael T. Brown, BOARS Chair

REPORT: Chair Michael Brown informed the Vice Chancellors for Student Affairs and Admissions Directors of several items on BOARS' 2005-06 agenda, including:

- reconsider the Honors Level Grade Bump Policy
- assess possible expansion of Eligibility in the Local Context
- direct focus to transfer issues
- evaluate the new admissions tests
- rethink the concept of eligibility

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

Minutes drafted by
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