



Office of the Chair  
Telephone: (510) 987-930  
Fax: (510) 763-0309  
Email: [George.Blumenthal@ucop.edu](mailto:George.Blumenthal@ucop.edu)

Assembly of the Academic Senate, Academic Council  
University of California  
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor  
Oakland, California 94607-5200

October 27, 2004

**M.R.C. GREENWOOD, PROVOST AND SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT  
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

**Re: BOARS Position Statement on Admissions Selection Criterion #14 and  
Geographical Preferences Based on Proximity to a Campus**

Dear M.R.C.:

The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) has been examining the issues surrounding the use of geographic preferences in admissions, and specifically whether local geographic preferences are permissible under the University of California's policies for undergraduate admissions. There are campuses which have used geographic preferences based on proximity to a campus in the admissions process.

BOARS focused its examination on UC's *Guidelines for Implementation of University Policy on Undergraduate Admissions*, which were approved by the Academic Assembly in October 2001 and The Regents in November 2001. These guidelines provide the framework within which campuses establish procedures for Comprehensive Review and include a list of factors campuses may use to select their admitted class. BOARS is specifically charged within these guidelines to "monitor campus policies and work with the faculty to continuously improve the processes and outcomes."

During BOARS examination of the geographical preferences issues, it became apparent that interpretations of "Selection Criterion 14" might be problematic. This criterion allows campuses to consider the following factors when selecting students for admission:

14. *Location of the applicant's secondary school and residence. These factors shall be considered in order to provide for geographic diversity in the student population and also to account for the wide variety of educational environments existing in California.*

To clarify the intent of Selection Criterion #14, BOARS has reaffirmed the goal of providing geographic diversity among admittees while explicitly excluding geographical preferences based on proximity to a campus. Towards that end, BOARS has formulated the enclosed "Position Statement on Admissions Selection Criterion #14 and Geographical Preferences," which I forward with a request that BOARS position on Selection Criterion #14 be distributed to the appropriate Office of the President and campus administrators

Best Regards,



George Blumenthal, Chair  
Academic Council

Encl.: 1  
Copy: Academic Council  
Dennis Galligani, Associate Vice President-Student Academic Services

kp

## **BOARD OF ADMISSIONS AND RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS**

### **Position Statement on Admissions Selection Criterion #14 and Geographical Preferences**

October 15, 2004

**MOTION:** The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) affirms the goals of Selection Criterion #14 of the *Guidelines for Implementation of University Policy on Undergraduate Admissions*: to “provide for geographical diversity in the student population” and to support the inclusion of students from “a wide variety of educational environments.” The reference in Criterion #14 to geographic location should not be construed to permit preferences that advantage students on the basis of geographic proximity to a campus.

#### **Statement on Geographical Preferences**

BOARS recognizes that campuses have special relationships with the regions and communities in which they are embedded. Those relationships should be nurtured and maintained and, for this reason, BOARS underscores the need to support academic preparation programs that allow campuses to reach out to schools in their local areas. In addition, BOARS recognizes that geographical location can present challenges that should be considered in the evaluation that each individual applicant receives as part of the campus comprehensive review process. For example, the fact that one student may have to travel very far across an urban area to attend a magnet school, that another lives in a neighborhood with high rates of poverty or crime that limit the opportunities available to her, or that another may have circumstances that would effectively prohibit attending a campus far away from home, are important contextual factors that campuses should consider in the selection process. However, after careful consideration, BOARS concludes that local campus policies with the intent to favor students from a specific geographic region, such as the campus’s immediate area, without regard to the principles of inclusion and diversity that are intended in this criterion, raise basic fairness questions in that they disadvantage students of similar backgrounds who are from other geographic areas. Policies having that intent are not consistent with Criterion #14 and should be discontinued as quickly as possible.