

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

ACADEMIC SENATE

Minutes of Meeting

October 7, 2016

I. Welcome and Announcements

- o *Henry Sanchez, BOARS Chair*

Committee Overview: Chair Sanchez welcomed BOARS members and reviewed the charge of the committee—to advise the UC President and Senate agencies on issues related to the admission of undergraduates, including the criteria for undergraduate status, transfer preparation requirements, nonresident admission, the “a-g” subject requirements, comprehensive review, diversity goals and strategies, and other systemwide and campus-based admissions policies and practices.

BOARS members are encouraged to brief their corresponding campus committee about discussions in BOARS, and in turn to share information about campus issues with the Committee, particularly those with systemwide implications.

BOARS Priorities for 2016–17: BOARS will review its “compare favorably” policy for nonresident admission and 2016 outcomes from the policy, and consider the Berkeley letters of recommendation pilot program and a systemwide policy on letters of recommendation. It will also review potential changes to UC’s area “d” (laboratory science) requirement for undergraduate admission that may align the requirement more closely with the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The Committee will also discuss the use of C-ID as a supplemental numbering system for UC courses; consider the future of the referral guarantee and enrollment management choices in the context of reduced state funding; and prepare its annual report to the Regents on comprehensive review and undergraduate admissions requirements. BOARS may also work with CSU and California Community College (CCC) faculty colleagues on issues of common concern to the three public higher education segments, through its representation on the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS).

Computer science and area “d”: In September, Chair Sanchez met with representatives from the State Board of Education and code.org, a computer-science education advocacy group, about the state’s progress implementing the NGSS through a new framework for K–12 computer science education, and UC’s expectations for high school computer science. Computer science advocates want to increase computer-science course offerings in K–12 and UC’s recognition of those courses in the “a-g” requirements. UC has noted that it accepts approved computer science courses for the area “g” (elective) requirement, and appropriately rigorous math-based CS courses for the area “c” (math) requirement. BOARS has charged a systemwide faculty group to review and revise, as needed, area “d” to align with the NGSS, and that group will begin meeting this fall.

Senate Travel: The Senate Office manager asked BOARS members to purchase airline tickets no fewer than 14 days in advance of meetings and to use SWABIZ (non-UCSB travelers) and UCLA Travel (UCSB travelers) to secure the least expensive fares. UC requires travelers to submit reimbursement requests within 45 days of travel, but does not require receipts for

expenses under \$75. Air travelers must attach an itinerary to the reimbursement form showing fare amount and proof of payment. Drivers must provide total mileage along with a map showing to-and-from addresses.

II. Consultation with UCOP

- *Stephen Handel, Associate Vice President, Undergraduate Admissions*

Office of Admissions Overview: The [Office of Undergraduate Admissions](#) manages a range of functions and is responsible for implementing the faculty's admissions policies. It appreciates the Academic Senate's delegated authority over admissions policy, and considers engagement and partnership with BOARS to be central to its work. The Office maintains the UC Application and processes all individual applications to UC for the subsequent review at individual campuses. Its Articulation unit reviews and approves all new or revised high school courses that satisfy the "a-g" requirements, as well as articulation agreements for CCC courses that transfer credit to UC, based on guidelines established by the faculty.

Fall 2016 Admissions: One of UC's goals was to meet a legislative mandate to enroll 5,000 new California resident undergraduates in exchange for new funding. UC met the goal, and its fall 2016 class is the largest ever. More than 206,000 individual students applied for fall 2016 admission to an average of four UC campuses each. UC admitted 78,000 California freshmen, and more than 39,000 of them submitted Statements of Intent to Register (SIRs), a 16 percent increase from last year. 17,000 CCC transfers also submitted an SIR, a 17 percent increase over fall 2015. The fall 2016 class is also the most diverse ever; 38% of resident freshmen are from underrepresented minority groups up from 35% last year. UC also increased the number of students from low-income and first-generation backgrounds in its admitted class and who have indicated their intent to enroll.

ELC-Only/LCFF+ Pilot: The pilot program targeted UC applicants eligible for an admission guarantee through the Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC) pathway only, as a strategy to increase the number of applicants who receive at least one admissions offer from a campus to which they applied, rather than a referral offer to UC Merced. The Legislature later encouraged UC to admit more students from high schools designated by the state as "Local Control Funding Formula Plus" (LCFF+) schools—which enroll at least 75% low-income, English language learners, and foster youth. UC identified ELC-only and LCFF+ students, and asked campuses to give them a second look in the reading process. Further, to address concerns that some of the ELC-only and LCFF+ students may not be fully prepared to succeed at UC, [AB 1602](#) (the Higher Education Trailer bill) provides \$20 million to enhance UC student services. UC will continue the pilot for a second year.

Update on UC Audit: Last year, a [State audit report](#) criticized UC's nonresident admissions practices and the "Compare Favorably" policy, claiming that UC faculty lowered admissions standards to generate more nonresident revenue. UC's response to the audit, [Straight Talk on Hot Button Issues](#), addressed misunderstandings and inaccuracies, but the audit has been very damaging, and has inspired legislators to propose mandated reductions in UC's nonresident enrollment, without an appropriate substitution of revenue. President Napolitano has asked BOARS to examine the Compare Favorably policy.

Anticipated Projects and Issues: UCOP expects the College Board and International Baccalaureate organization to submit for BOARS' review revised tests proposed to carry UC elective credit. In addition, high school counselors have asked UC to clarify how campuses will use the new SAT Essay in the admissions review. BOARS [decided](#) to continue requiring the now-optional SAT Essay, which the College Board administered for the first time in March 2016 as part of the redesigned SAT. There are no data yet about the predictive validity of the Essay, but the University wants to communicate the importance of writing and the need for students to take the Essay seriously.

Discussion: BOARS members noted that the ELC-only pilot and the larger pool of admitted URM students might have contributed to the increased diversity of the fall 2016 enrolled freshman class. They also noted that a student's decision to attend UC is influenced by multiple factors that include specific campus outreach efforts. Determining the most effective diversity strategies requires a comprehensive analysis not only of these data but also of qualitative data about the UC student experience and their views about the role and effectiveness of campus support services. It will also be important to track the academic outcomes of the ELC-only and LCFF+ cohorts to evaluate the effectiveness of support services. It was noted that allowing students to identify a second choice major on the application could help increase diversity (for campuses that admit by major), given the limited space in the most competitive majors. All campuses, except Berkeley, currently allow an alternate major choice on the application.

III. Consultation with Senate Leadership

- *Jim Chalfant, Academic Senate Chair*
- *Shane White, Academic Senate Vice Chair*

Regents September Meeting: Council Chair Chalfant's [comments](#) to the Regents focused on nonresident enrollment and the UC budget, and the extent to which state funding declines have coincided with UC's increased dependence on nonresident tuition. He made his comments in anticipation of the Regents' discussion of a policy limiting nonresident enrollment later this year. Regent Ortiz Oakley, who is also the new chancellor of the California Community College system, praised the new UC Transfer Pathways, and advocated for further improvements to the transfer path under the joint guidance of faculty from the three segments of higher education.

The Regents pulled from their agenda discussion of a proposal to end UC's moratorium on granting honorary degrees, after the Senate expressed concern about a lack of faculty consultation and specific aspects of the proposal. The administration is preparing a revised policy on Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition (PDST) for systemwide review. The policy will clarify the criteria and procedures for proposing new PDSTs or changing existing PDSTs. Senate divisions and committees are reviewing [proposed revisions to APM 015 and 016](#) that explicitly prohibit sexual harassment and violence and clarify the "three year rule" for initiating an investigation into sexual misconduct. Also out for review are the Senate's [corresponding revisions](#) to Senate Bylaw 336.

Chancellor Searches: Council Chair Chalfant is serving on the search committee for a new Berkeley Chancellor. Council Vice Chair Shane White is on Davis Chancellor search committee.

ICAS Meeting: At its September 23 meeting, ICAS discussed a response to Assembly

Concurrent Resolution 158, a non-binding legislative measure that calls on the three segments to harmonize their transfer and general education requirements.

IV. Parental Alumni Status on the Application

- *Aimée Dorr, Provost & Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs*
- *Julie Henderson, Senior Vice President – Public Affairs*

Provost Dorr and Senior Vice President Henderson discussed the status of a UCOP proposal to add a place on the UC application for students to designate their parents' UC alumni status, and progress made to address faculty concerns about the proposal.

They noted that President Napolitano is interested in strengthening relationships with parents and alumni. The Office of Public Affairs recommended to her that collecting parent contact information and college of graduation on the undergraduate application would enable more personal, targeted communication with parents, particularly those who are UC alumni. It would also help campuses avoid the solicitation of donations from alumni whose children are not admitted, and allow campuses to tailor outreach and communications to parents of children who are admitted to celebrate an acceptance offer, and/or welcome them and their child to the UC community.

BOARS and others raised concerns that asking for the information could create false perceptions or expectations that the information might have some bearing on an admission decision and could also discourage some students from applying to UC. Based on feedback from BOARS, Regents, and other constituencies, the President agreed that the application should include the new request for parents' names, address, and email, but should not include the proposed new questions about parents' college of graduation. UC will not release the information to campuses until after the admission decision. The application will be clear that providing parental contact information is voluntary.

Chair Chalfant and Chair Sanchez noted that the resolution of the issue reflected a model effort to engage faculty about a set of concerns and address them.

V. Letters of Recommendations Pilot and Policy

In May 2015, BOARS learned about Berkeley's plan to implement a new admissions policy that would have required all freshman applicants to submit two letters of recommendation. The policy also eliminated augmented review, which had previously asked a subset of applicants for letters of recommendation, and replaced Berkeley's five-category numerical scoring system with three categories: "yes," "no," and "possible." Berkeley concluded that the letters would help application reviewers make finer distinctions between the most highly qualified students. It also predicted that the policy would not decrease diversity.

BOARS was concerned that the letters policy could hurt students from disadvantaged high schools, due to the wide variation in the quality of counselor resources in schools across the state. Several Regents also met with Berkeley faculty leaders to express concern. In July 2015, the Academic Council and Berkeley agreed to a compromise pilot plan, in which Berkeley would

solicit letters from applicants receiving an initial score of “possible” based on their application materials or later in the review process.

In June 2016, BOARS reviewed outcomes from the Pilot and noted that students from underrepresented backgrounds were slightly less likely to request letters and submit letters to Berkeley, and that students who submitted letters were admitted to the campus at a slightly higher rate. Other data pointed to a decline in the proportion of URM students admitted by Berkeley in 2016, and a UCOP analysis indicated that Berkeley had admitted a smaller fraction of URMs from the shared pool of applicants reviewed by both Berkeley and UCLA. BOARS recommended that Berkeley not expand the pilot from its current form for another year until more data were gathered.

Council discussed the issue in July, and passed a motion opposing the continuation of the pilot. Berkeley responded that it would continue the pilot in its current form for a second year while it studied the effect of letters on admissions outcomes and diversity. In late summer, President Napolitano asked the Senate to develop a systemwide policy on letters of recommendation.

Chair Chalfant noted that it is difficult to determine the precise effect of the letters on Berkeley’s outcomes, since several aspects of its admissions policy changed simultaneously. The Senate hopes to learn more in year two of the pilot. Associate VP Handel said Berkeley’s letters policy changes the conditions for admission by making letters central to its evaluation; the admission requirements of an individual UC campus should not differ significantly from the rest of the system. He said UCOP has additional operational concerns about the letters policy, including how UC will communicate the policy to the public and how it will be reflected on the shared UC application. UCOP also shares BOARS’ concerns about the potential disenfranchisement of students.

Professor Worrell of Berkeley noted that the campus is highly selective, and will use the letters to help it make more fully informed admissions decisions. Berkeley is clear about the information it is seeking in the letters (e.g., additional evidence of academic promise). It found no evidence that the request for letters had an adverse effect on the admission of underrepresented groups. Berkeley’s new diversity plan to improve outreach to URMs includes letter-writing training for counselors. Berkeley is also working with UCLA to learn more about outcomes from the shared applicants.

Discussion: Several BOARS members questioned the value of letters, noting that poorly funded schools may produce lesser-quality letters, irrespective of the student’s quality, while other schools may generate generic letters expressing universally high praise, which also have limited value and credibility. Members noted that there are studies examining implicit and explicit bias in both letter writers and letter reviewers, showing how different mental models can influence perceptions about academic promise in an applicant. It was noted that a diverse reader pool helps minimize bias, but does not eliminate it.

It was noted that a well-designed study could help determine if letters of recommendation contain data critical to the admission decision that could also be gathered through the application.

Another member noted that UC campuses have different cultures and interpretations of the 14

comprehensive review criteria. These differences contribute to the strength of the UC system and individual autonomy should be preserved.

ACTION: Chair Sanchez asked BOARS members to update their campus admissions committees and directors about the Berkeley pilot project, and to gather input from them about the potential role of letters of recommendation on their campus, as well as the design components of a study that will help BOARS make an informed decision about a systemwide policy on letters.

VI. Compare Favorably Assessment and Policy

The President has asked BOARS to review its “Compare Favorably” policy for nonresident admission, clarify the policy’s compliance with the Master Plan, and assess its consistency with UC’s freshman admission goals, comprehensive review policy, and holistic review processes.

The recent state audit accused UC of displacing California residents with less qualified nonresidents, a claim the University disputed vigorously. The audit also called on UC to return to an outdated interpretation of the Master Plan requiring every nonresident to “stand in the upper half of those ordinarily eligible,” in contrast to the current focus on means and averages used under “Compare Favorably” that is consistent with the 1988 revision of the Master Plan.

BOARS’ [Compare Favorably report](#) for the 2015 admission cycle compares high school GPA, SAT score, and first-year UC GPA and persistence for residents, domestic nonresidents, and international students. The report says that UC is meeting the standard on a systemwide basis, based on those measures, although outcomes vary on individual campuses for specific indicators. The report also emphasizes the limitations of GPA and test scores in assessing compliance, given campuses’ use of 14 comprehensive review factors and the difficulty of comparing international GPAs.

It has been suggested that BOARS consider alternative measures for Compare Favorably, including holistic review score, SAT/GPA outcomes at the level of the admitting unit, and other, more fine-grained analyses that speak to how campuses comply with the policy in different contexts. It has also been noted that BOARS can change its Compare Favorably policy if it identifies a better alternative. If BOARS had to start from scratch, would its nonresident admission policy still look like Compare Favorably?

Discussion: BOARS members noted that campuses make admissions decisions based on a 14-point holistic review, not SAT or GPA alone; that campuses have little or no local context information for nonresidents; and that some campuses use a different team of reviewers for international applications. It was noted that the SAT is the only equalizing external measure UC has for comparing residents, domestic nonresidents, and international applicants. The SAT is a universal standard, while GPA carries different meanings throughout the world. It was noted that first-year success at UC, and ultimate progress to graduation, are also important measures in evaluating Compare Favorably outcomes. It was noted that regardless of any alternative measures BOARS may determine are appropriate for Compare Favorably, the public will expect UC to report SAT and GPA outcomes. BOARS may also be asked to defend holistic review. The Compare Favorably standard is imperfect, but it may be the most equitable and practical way to

ensure a favorable comparison on a campus-by-campus basis under the expanded eligibility of “entitled to review.”

ACTION: BOARS members will seek input from their local committees about the issue.

VII. Campus Reports/Issues

BOARS members briefed the committee on some of the issues being discussed on their admissions committees and campuses.

- The Berkeley committee is discussing its collaboration with BOARS on the Letters of Recommendation pilot.
- Irvine is discussing how the new influx of undergraduates is affecting space in laboratories and classrooms, and the growing imbalance between undergraduate and graduate student enrollments.
- Davis is discussing a request from specific campus majors to limit the admission of transfer students into those majors over concerns about transfer academic preparation.
- Santa Cruz is considering a policy change that would allow the campus to consider an applicant’s intended major in the admission decision, to help address a growing number of impacted majors.
- Riverside is discussing the Office of Admissions’ use of funding for outreach activities.
- Santa Barbara is discussing options for better assessing the English language skills of international applicants, and what role those assessments should play in the overall decision. UCSB is also discussing strategies to address impacted majors while still accommodating all students admitted to the campus.
- Los Angeles is discussing measures for evaluating the success of students after they are admitted.
- Merced is preparing for a visit by accreditors in 2018, and a proposal from the administration to consider some lower division transfer admits as undeclared.

Several campuses are concerned about the impact of new enrollment mandates on educational quality and faculty workload.

VIII. Executive Session

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm
Minutes Prepared by Michael LaBriola, Principal Committee Analyst
Attest: Henry Sanchez