

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

ANNUAL REPORT 2001-02

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

The University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) held eight meetings during Academic Year 2001-02 to conduct its business with respect to its charge in Bylaw 170. Issues considered by the Committee this year are outlined briefly as follows:

Subject A Examination

UCEP committed a substantial portion of its meetings this year to studying and analyzing the Subject A requirement and examination as they are administered currently. Provost and Senior Vice President King followed up on Academic Planning Council discussions to request that the Academic Council review student preparation in writing. The Provost outlined fundamentals and questions for the Council to address; these were forwarded to Senate Committees and Divisions for their responses. UCEP reviewed SR 636, UCOPE's Report on Assessment of the Subject A Examination August 2001 and numerous other documents on Subject A and writing instruction, and also consulted with BOARS and UCOPE Chairs, UCOP consultants, and one campus Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. UCEP summarized its findings in "UCEP April 15, 2002 Response to Subject A Charge from Academic Council Chair Viswanathan and Provost and Senior Vice President King."

- UCEP recommended that UCOP collect reliable data on writing ability among upper division undergraduates and monitor improvements resulting from various interventions.
- UCEP supported BOARS's working with secondary schools to improve writing skills among students admitted to UC, and developing a future entrance examination that would include meaningful evaluation of writing skills that is consistent with UC expectations.
- UCEP recommended further study of the present policy that allows a single community college course to satisfy both Subject A and the first freshman composition course.
- UCEP urged that UCOPE consider ways to modify use of the Subject A test to reduce its potential for stigmatizing students.
- UCEP proposed that UCOP hold a system-wide conference on Subject A that would address campus procedures, identify administrative barriers and articulate best practices.
- UCEP proposed creation of a Task Force to develop an English composition graduation requirement that would provide for independent assessment of student writing.

UCEP was further charged by Council to prepare a summary analysis of all Divisional and Senate Committee responses. UCEP stated in its May 29, 2002 letter to the Council Chair that most of the reports presented arguments that were consistent with its own. UCEP identified a system-wide concern that incoming students can satisfy Subject A by taking a community college course, thus not taking what might be a more valuable composition course offered on their UC campus. To address this concern, we propose a study to develop evaluative data comparing the academic progress of incoming UC students who have satisfied their Subject A requirement in their freshman year composition courses on their UC campus with those meeting the requirement in a community college course before matriculating at UC. Such data could be used to guide future development of policy in this area.

BOARS Proposal to replace two-tier admissions system with comprehensive review

UCEP supported the Proposal, acknowledging it as an important step forward in returning admissions decisions to the faculty and lauding BOARS for its efforts in that regard, while observing that implementing changes on campus will be costly.

BOARS Report, “The Use of Admissions Tests by the University of California”

UCEP supported developing better assessment of college-level reading and writing skills and endorsed having BOARS continue to review, assess and improve admissions testing.

UC Systemwide Ed.D. Initiative

In its review of the Initiative developed by the Systemwide Ed.D. Initiative Work Group, UCEP objected to prescriptive language in the guidelines that appeared to take away individual campus authority for operating its own program and also to the strong recommendation that each general education campus set aside funding for this specific program during a time when other quality programs are competing for funding. UCEP supported assessment to determine whether California needs more Ed.D. degree holders, and also recommended vetting the proposal through Schools of Education.

Freshman Seminar Program Initiative

UCEP endorsed in principle the provision for increases in freshman seminars on all campuses and the educational objectives and potential educational benefits of the Program. UCEP recommended that campus CEPs and Committees on Courses monitor and protect the educational offerings to guard against erosion of the core academic enterprise and that funding incentives be defined to safeguard against allocations made at the expense of current core curriculum efforts. UCEP would prefer that the Program increase student-faculty contact rather than simply replace one set of courses for another. UCEP expressed concern about overload teaching as a potential threat to educational quality.

Approval of Change to Irvine Regulation 515. Residence Requirement and Addition to Appendix III: Assembly Approved Variances to University-wide Regulations, C. Regulation 630.

UCEP approved UCI’s request for a Variance to SR 630 that would place its Regulation 515 into system-wide compliance.

UC Berkeley Proposal to Reduce Its Number of Days of Instruction

UCEP found merit in the Berkeley proposal’s issue of equal opportunity for Berkeley students to enroll in summer sessions closer to home, but did not favor adopting a system-wide rule to govern campus calendar/s. UCEP recognized the advisability of aligning summer sessions for increased use but maintained that each campus must decide on its faculty teaching load. UCEP noted that system-wide policy change could pressure campuses into making decisions that would affect equal opportunity among students.

ICAS Draft, “Academic Literacy: A Statement of Competencies Expected of Students Entering California’s Public Colleges and Universities”

UCEP welcomed the call for increased efforts in raising academic literacy standards among college applicants and agreed that students can and should be better prepared in composition.

UC Davis Proposal to Reconstitute the Division of Education as a School of Education

As a Committee charged with overview of reconstitution process, UCEP approved the reconstitution proposed by UC Davis.

State of Instructional Technology at UC

UCEP discussed developing a comprehensive survey of system-wide resources that would provide data for comparing UC's information technology (IT) capability with its comparison institutions and also address budgetary concerns related to leveraging resources to support IT infrastructure (e.g., hardwiring buildings, IT training, trouble-shooting support). UCEP recognizes increasing demand for IT, and faculty interest for its use in distance learning. UCEP discussed planning related to infrastructural support, and how faculty use IT. Liaison with Information Resources and Communications will continue. UCEP provided suggestions for improvements to a new online webzine for University-wide Teaching, Learning and Technology Center (TLtC).

Other

The following reports, items and issues were received and discussed:

- Commission on the Growth and Support of Graduate Education's report, "Innovation and Prosperity at Risk; Investing in Graduate Education to Sustain California's Future."
- Three draft policy proposals prepared by the UC Standing Committee on Copyright.
- Staffing to teach summer session under UC's year-round plan: UCEP remains interested in whether there is a fair proportion of junior and senior faculty teaching summer sessions (the profile of faculty teaching summer session should be the same as during the regular year). UCEP sees the need for summer session faculty to switch their research and teaching responsibilities quarter by quarter/semester by semester. UCEP recognized that it is important to move away from overload teaching
- Time to degree and the 120 percent rule (accountability measures in UC's Partnership Agreement with the State): UCEP reviewed Partnership Agreement language related to the above and also campus data on the effects of unfunded enrollments on the system. It appears that UC has fulfilled its agreements with respect to the partnership.
- Power point presentation on UC Washington Center from Director Larry Berman: UCEP discussed distance learning opportunities and expressed its support for easing articulation and approval of the Center's courses among all campuses.
- May 2002 Draft – The California Master Plan for Education.
- Campus Five-year Perspectives for 2002-07.
- Do student evaluations affect the academic freedom of faculty? UCEP formulated a response that was forwarded to the Academic Council on June 3, 2002.

UCEP Representation

UCEP was represented on additional Committees, Task Forces and Work Groups this year, including: Assembly, Academic Council, Academic Planning Council, BOARS, ICAS, National Science Scoping Committee, UCDC Steering Committee, Educational Financing Model Steering Committee, and UC Merced Task Force.

Acknowledgements:

UCEP benefited from the consultation and reports of the following UCOP staff members: Julie Gordon, Coordinator of Intercampus Academic Programs, who is designated as UCOP's regular consultant to UCEP; Julius Zelmanowitz, Vice Provost for Academic

Initiatives; Carla Ferri, Director of Undergraduate Admissions; Immouna Ephrem, Coordinator, Admissions and Outreach; Sandra Smith, Assistant Vice President for Planning and Analysis; Linda Guerra, Director, Policy Analysis; Jim Dolgonas, Assistant Vice President, IS&C, IR&C; Paula Murphy, Managing Editor, TLtC.

Security changes following the events of September 11, 2001 greatly increased the difficulty of air travel to and from UCEP meetings. Nevertheless, attendance was excellent at all meetings, and the Chair commends all members for their faithful and professional service.

Respectfully submitted,

David Dooley (I), Chair

Andrew Grosovsky (R), Vice Chair

Lisa Alvarez-Cohen (B)

Terence Murphy (D)

Dennis Kibler (I)

Robert G. Frank, Jr. (LA)

Linda Walling (R)

Walter Burkhard (SD)

Patricia Benner (SF)

Michael Crandall (SB)

Carol Freeman (SC)

Chand Viswanathan (*Ex officio* member; Chair, Academic Council)

Ping Yeh (Graduate student representative)

Matthew Dean Kaczmarek (Undergraduate student representative)

Louisa Tapley-Van Pelt (Committee Analyst)