

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2010-11

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

The University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) met twice and the UCOPE-ESL (English as a Second Language) Advisory Group met once during the 2010-11 academic year. Both groups considered matters in accordance with its duties as set forth in [Senate Bylaw 192](#), which state that UCOPE shall advise the President and appropriate agencies of the Academic Senate on the broader issues related to preparatory education, including the language needs of students from diverse linguistic backgrounds; monitor and conduct periodic reviews and evaluations of preparatory and remedial education; to supervise the *University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement* (UC-ELWR), and to establish Universitywide standards for the *University of California Analytical Writing Placement Examination* (UC-AWPE); monitor the implementation of [Senate Regulation 761](#) (Remedial Courses) on the campuses. A summary of the committee's activities and accomplishments follows below:

UC Analytical Writing Placement Examination

- **Administration and Budget.** UCOPE members reviewed the implementation of the UC-AWPE vis-à-vis reports from AWPE Analyst Julie Lind. The UC-AWPE has had a history of structural deficits, as the costs to administer, score and manage the program exceed the revenue generated by its current fee structure. UCOPE has continued to closely monitor this issue and to work to ensure that AWPE standards are not compromised by future cost-cutting measures and that the pedagogical and curricular consequences associated with on-line scoring are carefully considered. At its January 2010 meeting, UCOPE members emphatically made it clear that: 1) the AWPE should be regularly assessed for both reliability and validity (particularly given the changes being made to the administration and scoring of the exam); and 2) the proposed changes must lead to fiscal solvency. Accordingly, the administration, vis-à-vis Sue Wilbur, then Director of Admissions agreed to these points. In January 2011, the Committee strongly objected to news that the fee for taking the AWPE would be raised this academic year from \$90 to \$110, and possibly to \$120 for the 2011-12 academic year. Given earlier understandings reached with the administration, the planned fee increases are simply appalling in UCOPE's estimation.
- **Review and Selection of the 2011 Analytical Writing Placement Examination Essays.** In January, UCOPE members selected the essay to be used in the 2011 UC-AWPE administration, in accord with Senate Regulation 636B.1. The selection is an annual event led by UCOPE Consultant George Gadda (UCLA).
- **Norming of AWPE for 2011.** In April, UCOPE members reviewed sample essays to ensure that norming procedures used in evaluation of the 2011 AWPE exam would be consistent with SR 636A and SR 636B.1. This session is an annual event led by UCOPE Consultant George Gadda (UCLA).

Senate Regulation 636. University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement

UCOPE members discussed with Evaluation Issues Coordinator Evera Spears, concerns regarding the interpretation of [SR 636](#), particularly the wording of paragraph (E) of the regulation:

E. Once enrolled at the University of California, a student must satisfy the University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement before earning transfer credit for the purpose of satisfying any subsequent University of California writing requirements by taking courses at other institutions. (Am 30 Jan 2008)

The Committee addressed the original intent of the provision that included not wanting to allow students to “double-dip” by using one course to satisfy two requirements. After a lengthy discussion of selected hypothetical scenarios culled from the campuses and presented by Director Spears, UCOPE determined that SR 636 is indeed being interpreted correctly. In the end, members decided that it was preferable for evaluators to exercise reasonable judgment rather than rely on a set of rigid policies.

UCOPE English as a Second Language (ESL) Advisory Group

The UCOPE-ESL Advisory Group met once this year. Advisory Group Chair Robin Scarcella (UCI) reported that almost every member expressed deep concerns regarding how the UC budget situation is impacting ESL programs and services on the campuses. The Advisory’s Group considered the new online scoring procedure of the AWPE and possible difficulties that might arise from its use. They also discussed plans to increase the enrollment of international students on several UC campuses. Members felt strongly that any that any proposed increase in the enrollment of international students include commensurate services with funding, in particular from the Size and Shape Working Group of the Commission on the Future. As a final point, the Advisory Group voted to put forward for UCOPE’s endorsement a proposal to change its official name to the *English for Multilingual Students Advisory Group*. The name change was later approved by UCOPE at its April meeting.

White Paper on Support of English Language Support Programs and Services

Last year, UCOPE enthusiastically endorsed the Advisory Group’s “white paper” that urged the University to fully fund academic English support course work and services as a part of the students’ academic curricula. UCOPE ultimately decided to submit the white paper to Academic Council and request that it be widely disseminated. Although several Council members praised the quality of the analysis contained in the white paper – particularly the need for Systemwide policies and funding mechanisms to sustain programs such as ESL support services that have far-reaching repercussions for the success of the University system as a whole – the Council as a whole elected not to endorse and distribute the white paper.

STATWAY Curriculum

UCOPE discussed the recent adoption by CSU of faculty recommendations on the Statway curriculum and the approval of a temporary exception to the current requirement that courses qualifying for “GE Breadth Area B4 Quantitative Reasoning” carry a prerequisite of intermediate algebra. For students placing in developmental mathematics, Statway offers a substitute approach move toward achieving success in both mathematics and statistics, evolving into better problem-solvers, and becoming more confident and competent in situations requiring statistical or mathematical reasoning. The overarching goal of Statway is to provide students with a meaningful pathway to, and through transfer-level introductory statistics. UCOPE members responded positively to the Statway curriculum but that it would need to pass a rigor test.

The Achieve Project

UCOPE members discussed UC’s continued involvement with the Achieve Project, an inter-segmental state and national project focused on improving state standards and assessment instruments for K–12 mathematics and English language preparation. The Achieve Project has generated many positive outcomes and resulted in fruitful collaborations across the higher education segments (UC/CSU/CCCs) and nurtured dialogue beneficial to all the partners in defining college readiness and how readiness is assessed. UCOPE member Jan Frodesen (UCSB) serves as one of the two UC delegates to the Achieve Project.

Other Issues and Business

In addition to official communications related to the aforementioned topics, UCOPE considered and in some cases submitted formal comments on the following policy issues under review:

- Impact of budget cuts on the future of preparatory education in the UC System;
- Funding Streams Proposal;
- Development of a written proposal and intellectual framework for adopting the concept of a Systemwide math diagnostic test; and
- Assembly Bill 1237: Remedial Instruction Funding.

UCOPE also devoted a portion of each meeting for reports and updates from its members about issues facing local divisions and committees. These discussions included reports by members on the impact of the budget situation on preparatory English and math programs on their respective campus, with attention given to any areas of concern for UCOPE or that might call for action by the committee in the future. Reports by the UCOPE Chair about Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senate (ICAS) meetings were also discussed.

Acknowledgements

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Respectfully submitted:

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