

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

During the 2017-2018 Academic Year, the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) held two in-person meetings and two special videoconferences in Executive Session, and UCOPE's English for Multilingual Students Advisory Group met once. Both groups considered matters in accordance with their duties as set forth in Senate Bylaw 192, which states that UCOPE shall advise the President on matters relating to preparatory and remedial education (including the language needs of students from diverse linguistic backgrounds); monitor and conduct periodic reviews and evaluations of preparatory and remedial education; supervise the University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement; monitor the development and use of placement examinations in mathematics; and work with the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools to communicate these standards to all high schools and colleges in California.

A summary of the committee's activities and accomplishments follows below:

REVIEW AND SELECTION OF AWPE ESSAY PROMPTS

Under the leadership of consultant Jon Lang, UCOPE members approved selected writing prompts to be used in the 2018 UC-AWPE administration, in accord with Senate Regulation 636B.1. This annual event involved UCOPE members evaluating excerpts from a variety of publications for which the AWPE Committee has secured copyright permission. At the April meeting, under the guidance of AWPE Committee Chair Lang, samples of student exams were read and calibrated in advance of the May administration.

Julie Lind, AWPE Coordinator, Undergraduate Admissions, reported that the program continues to be financially stable but did incur extra expenses related to programming to improve accessibility of the website. The number of students selected for the exam increased this year in part because the new SAT will not be used as a method of satisfying the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR). UC tested almost 14k students on May 12th at 125 high schools throughout California.

SENATE REGULATION 636.E

UCOPE and the system-wide Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) received a memo from UCSB seeking clarification of the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) and [Senate Regulation 636.E](#). Although UCOPE is technically the committee responsible for supervising the ELWR, UCEP took up this issue because, at UCSB, the Undergraduate Council handles matters related to preparatory education. UCSB questioned why, if a student has left UC then enrolls at a different institution and later wants to return to the same UC, a course taken at that other institution will not satisfy the ELWR and they will not receive transfer credit for the course – even if the course would normally count for a transfer student enrolling in UC. There is a question about the fairness of giving credit only to the students who transfer into UC for the ELWR-satisfying courses taken elsewhere.

To better understand the intent of SR 636.E and provide expert guidance to UCSB, UCOPE and UCEP consulted with Evera Spears, Associate Director, Advocacy & Partnerships, Undergraduate Admissions in the spring. Associate Director Spears advised that the possible intent behind this Senate regulation might be related to UC faculty's concerns that students would attempt to circumvent the ELWR by substituting courses at other institutions that may not be sufficiently rigorous. After receiving this information, UCSB appealed to UCOPE and UCEP to reconsider this requirement for UC students who must leave temporarily for well-justified reasons. The chairs of UCEP and UCOPE agreed that the University

Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction (UCRJ) should be asked to review and provide an interpretation of SR 636.E and in June, the chair of UCSB's Undergraduate Council and the UCSB representative to UCOPE were asked to draft alternative language to SR 636.E, for UCRJ's consideration, which addresses UCSB's concerns. UCOPE will continue to work with UCEP and UCSB on a resolution to this matter in the year ahead.

UCSD-BASED MATH TESTING AND PLACEMENT PROGRAMS

Chair Wastal invited Susan Rinaldi, the Director of UCSD's Triton Achievement Hub of the Teaching+Learning Commons, and Kimberly Samaniego, the CSU/UC Director of Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Project and Director of Mathematics Testing and Placement (also at UCSD), to describe the math-based testing as well as their collaborative placement and support programs designed to meet the needs of incoming students and support their academic success. UCOPE learned that about 25% of incoming freshman take the placement exam, which is used to place students into a range of different preparatory math courses, and that, over time, there has been a trend of increasing numbers of students being placed into preparatory courses.

Summer matriculation programs are used to meet the academic needs of students and to support their math placement so they will be more aligned with their peers in their majors. Students participating in the summer transition program are aware of their academic needs and the support they want in order to meet their goals in the fall quarter. Triton Prep is a non-residential program primarily serving students in certain high school areas in Southeast San Diego. Triton's director reported that this population of students was also not meeting the ELWR and that, on average, 30% of students (including international students) do not meet this requirement. UCOPE would like to receive regular updates on the status of these programs as the committee dedicates more time to issues related to preparatory math. Directors Rinaldi and Samaniego also discussed their preliminary research on a correlation among reading, writing, and mathematics.

THE SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT

In January, guests from the State Board of Education, the CA Department of Education, UC Scout, and Smarter Balanced joined UCOPE to discuss a potential role for the Smarter Balanced Assessments in UC admissions. Smarter Balanced is an assessment system aligned with the Common Core State Standards for English language arts and math. Fourteen states have adopted the Smarter Balanced Assessment and Smarter Balanced Level 3 is now utilized at the California Community Colleges and the California State University systems as an equivalent for their placement tests. The SBAC is eager for California to be the second state in the Consortium to make affirmative use of the Assessment in the Admissions process. The SBAC representatives believe that the Assessment brings K-12 and higher education together in a more seamless relationship. They also asserted that the current college readiness standards require a more sophisticated test for higher-level critical thinking skills and analytical writing that is based in real world situations.

The SBAC's governing system was reportedly a factor in California's decision to use the Assessment. The superintendents of each of the states in the Consortium comprise the governing body and it is hoped that a UC representative will join the Executive Committee. This governance structure makes SBAC different from testing companies and allows the Executive Committee to have a significant influence on the actual Assessment. UC Santa Cruz provides administrative support Smarter Balanced Assessment through the UC Scout program and the program reports to the Office of the Dean at UCSC Extension, who reports directly to UCSC Chancellor Blumenthal.

UCOPE members were encouraged to discuss the use of this Assessment which could be important to those students who are unable to take the SAT. Institutional Research at UCOP is planning to conduct a

study of Smarter Balanced, and UCOPE may help identify data points that would be useful to include in the study.

ANALYSIS OF 2016 AWPE DATA

In 2001, UCOPE decided to closely review AWPE data on a five-year cycle, and last year the committee requested that Institutional Research (IR) analyze data from the most recent administration. IR completed the new analysis of the 2016 exam data, which replicated the previous study, in late October 2017.

UCOPE met in Executive Session by videoconference in December and March to discuss the analysis and dedicated significant time to the topic during [the regular April meeting](#). Key consultants from Institutional Research and Student Affairs-Undergraduate Admissions were on hand to answer questions during these discussions. Goals for these discussions included ensuring that members had a good understanding of the analysis, identifying where further analysis is needed, and determining next steps.

The AWPE is a sensitive topic and many people throughout the system are invested in or have concerns about the Exam. There is a clear sense of urgency at some campuses, in particular with respect to how the AWPE and ELWR may significantly disadvantage certain groups of students. With this in mind, UCOPE identified several short-term priorities. Members agreed that more comprehensive demographic data on the students who take the AWPE is critical and that student feedback on the Exam and about their experiences in ELWR-satisfying courses would be valuable. Since the number of international students at UC has increased significantly since the last analysis of AWPE, scores for this population would be especially informative. Additionally, the threat that students at some campuses will be dismissed if they fail to satisfy the ELWR within the specified time is worrisome; therefore, the committee would like information about each campus's processes, programs and requirements for satisfaction of the ELWR for students who did not pass the AWPE. Members also proposed that longer-term tracking of AWPE takers in post-ELWR classes that require significant writing could be informative.

UCOPE is taking a deliberate approach to major questions about the AWPE's efficacy and how extensively UC's approach to placement should be overhauled. There is general consensus that the AWPE, like any assessment, needs to be periodically reconsidered to ensure that it is aligned with the writing valued at UC today and responsive to the pedagogical and curricular goals of the composition programs, which vary based on campus culture. In the coming year, the committee will develop a concrete plan for updating components of the AWPE such as the parameters for the readings, the Exam specifications and the scoring rubric. The committee will continue to investigate alternative placement models including the impediments, benefits and consequences related to any model. UCOPE will also consider how to engage writing faculty across the campuses in conversations about assessment and placement processes, including ways to supplement the AWPE or viable alternatives to it.

The committee currently meets twice a year (winter and spring). Given this meeting schedule, turnover of members, and its upcoming agenda for the AWPE data analysis, the committee will consider adding an online meeting during the fall.

EMS Advisory Group

The campuses continue to actively manage issues related to the increased enrollment of students who are multilingual including international students as well as native students whose primary language is not English. During its meeting this year, the EMS Advisory Group discussed new and ongoing challenges related to placement, budget, and specific services/supports for this particular student population.

UCOPE Representation

UCOPE Chair Carrie Wastal represented the committee at meetings of the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates.

Acknowledgements

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