

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

During the 2018-2019 Academic Year, the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) held two in-person meetings and two videoconferences 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 (ELWR); monitor the development and use of placement examinations in mathematics; and work with the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) 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 2019 UC-Analytical Writing Placement Exam (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.

STANDARDIZED TESTING TASK FORCE

In July 2018, President Napolitano requested that the Senate evaluate the use of standardized tests for UC admissions and determine whether any changes in admission testing policies or practices are necessary to ensure that the University continues to use standardized tests in an appropriate way. It is worth noting that more than 1,000 universities in the U.S. have stopped requiring the SAT and ACT in recent years and that nine UC campuses are among the 13 colleges that currently still require the ACT Writing or SAT Essay for freshman admission. UCOPE's Chair has served on [Academic Council's Standardized Testing Task Force](#) (STTF), which held its first meeting in February. The STTF's investigation will continue into the new Academic Year, with the expectation that recommendations will be forthcoming in early 2020.

SENATE REGULATION 636.E

Last year, the committee had several discussions about [Senate Regulation 636.E](#), which limited the ways UC students could satisfy the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) and how transfer credit is granted. In January, the committee approved a revision proposed by UCSB designed to give campuses the discretion to allow students to petition to allow the credits from another institution's course to count. In May, Council considered clarifying suggestions from Senate reviewers, and settled on a modified version of the revisions put forward by the Committee on Educational Policy and the revision was approved by the Assembly in June.

SATISFACTION OF THE ELWR AT THE CAMPUSES

As a result of discussions last year, it became clear that differing policies for how students who fail the AWPE can satisfy the ELWR once at a UC campus may have contributed to some of the criticism of the Exam and Requirement. This year, the committee reviewed the processes at each campus and discussed practices and policies that may contribute to satisfaction of the ELWR or that may be problematic. Most campuses did not have data on the number of students who fail to satisfy the ELWR and the available

data did not suggest that the requirement is leading to the dismissal of significant numbers of students. An important point that may not be well understood is that Senate Regulation 636 affords campuses significant autonomy over the curriculum utilized for ELWR satisfying courses. These discussions will continue next year and the committee may propose that UCOPE partner with BOARS and UCEP to update a 2002 study of the ELWR.

CONCERNS ABOUT THE AWPE

UCOPE had in-depth discussions about the positive and negative aspects of the systemwide Analytical Writing Placement Exam throughout the year. The committee continued its measured approach to assessing the AWPE's efficacy and to determining if any components of the AWPE, such as the specifications or the instructions to students, should be updated. The committee was also interested in assessing if the AWPE disproportionately impacts students from Under Represented Groups (URGs). In the spring, UCOPE received a memo from some Vice Provosts and Deans for Undergraduate Education (VPDUEs) describing their concerns about the Exam and the ELWR. This memo led to continued robust discussion about the ELWR in subsequent UCOPE meetings. The VPDUE memo also prompted a written response from a number of Writing Program Administrators which addressed several inaccurate or incomplete statements from the memo. The memo often conflated the Academic Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) and the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR). This VPDUE memo, lack of awareness of this memo by several (but not all) UCOPE Senate members and subsequent response from UC Writing Program Administrators, serve to highlight the lack of communication amongst interested parties on several of our campuses. Moving forward, it is essential for divisional committees to actively engage with their respective VPDUEs and for the Senate to have a broader discussion about how the ELWR is operationalized (which includes the use of the AWPE).

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 Francis represented the committee at meetings of the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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