

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

During the 2021-2021 Academic Year, the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) held four videoconferences and UCOPE's English for Multilingual Students Advisory Group met once, also by videoconference. 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 to communicate these standards to all high schools and colleges in California.

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

DISCONTINUATION OF THE ANALYTICAL WRITING PLACEMENT EXAM

In August 2021, UCOPE was notified by the Vice Provost for Graduate, Undergraduate, and Equity Affairs that the systemwide Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) would be discontinued following the May 2022 administration. The Vice Provost indicated that growing campus dissatisfaction with the AWPE and the vagaries of the COVID-19 pandemic had called into question the logistical and financial sustainability of systemwide administration of the AWPE. UCOPE discussed the ramifications of the administration's decisions throughout the year, including whether the committee will have any responsibility for the AWPE when it is no longer a systemwide placement mechanism and how the Office of the President (UCOP) can equitably support the placement processes at all of the undergraduate campuses in the future. Next year, UCOPE should discuss what its interaction would be with the AWPE and Test Development committees and if campuses using alternatives processes and those using the AWPE locally will report their activities to UCOPE.

ALTERNATIVE WRITING PLACEMENT MECHANISMS

In January, the committee agreed that satisfaction of the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) by one of the alternative placement processes should be honored by other campuses and [Council endorsed this recommendation](#) in April. This year, writing program representatives from UCD, UCI, UCSD, UCSB, and UCSC provided UCOPE with updates on the alternatives to the AWPE being utilized at these campuses for placement. Members expressed an interest in receiving reports about the alternative placement processes on a regular basis.

THE ENTRY LEVEL WRITING REQUIREMENT TASK FORCE

This year, the committee received updates on the work of Council's ELWR Task Force including a briefing by the task force co-chairs in January. The task force submitted its phase one report to Council in March and the phase two report in June, and Council decided that both reports will be sent out for systemwide Senate review in September. UCOPE anticipates dedicating significant time to discussing the reports during its fall 2022 meeting.

SMARTER BALANCED ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ASSESSMENT SCORES

UCOPE considered whether campuses should be able to use the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts Assessment (SBELLA) scores in combination with other data for placement decisions after students have matriculated to a campus. The SBELLA should not be used as a single measure to make placement decisions but several members agreed it can be an additional data point to consider in combination with other measures like grade point average. The committee's consultants in Admissions will work with UC Legal on a data sharing agreement with the California Department of Education and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium. UCOP will operate a centralized mechanism to match the scores to the admitted students and systematically provide that information to the campuses. The ELA scores may be available in fall 2023.

ENGLISH FOR MULTILINGUAL STUDENTS ADVISORY GROUP

In addition to the standard reports about issues related to enrollment numbers, placement, instruction, and budget, the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic was the focus of the April meeting of the English for Multilingual Students Advisory Group.

UCOPE REPRESENTATION

UCOPE Chair Zhang represented the committee at meetings of the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS), chaired the ICAS Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum Standards Review Subcommittee, and participated on ICAS's Special Committee on California Assembly Bill 928.

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Respectfully submitted,

Jingsong Zhang, Chair (R)
Sarah Freedman (B)
Daniel Gross (I)
Yinsheng Wang (R)
Brian Dolan (SF)
Tanner WouldGo (SC)
Madeleine Sorapure (*Ex Officio*, BOARS Representative)
Maryam Amin (Undergraduate Student)

Eileen Camfield, Vice Chair (M)
Rebekka Anderson (D)
Bruce Hayes (LA)
Amanda Solomon Amorao (SD)
Katherine Saltzman-Li (SB)
Amy Vidali (SC, winter/spring)
Jennifer Reifman (Graduate Student)

Robert Horwitz (Chair, Academic Senate, *Ex Officio*, (SD))
Susan Cochran (Vice Chair, Academic Senate, *Ex Officio*, (LA))
Brenda Abrams, Principal Policy Analyst