

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009

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 in person and again by teleconference during the 2008-09 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 Sue Wilbur, Director of Undergraduate Admissions. In particular, the committee continued to keep watchful eye open for any noticeable improvements attributable to the vendor in the administration of the program. The UC-AWPE has had a history of structural deficits, though the projected deficit for the May 2008 exam was reduced to about \$50K. The Committee provided feedback to Director Wilbur about possible cost-cutting measures, such as raising test fees, limiting the number of test-takers and fee waivers, and employing alternate administration mediums, such as online sittings. UCOPE will continue to closely monitor this issue and to work with Director Wilbur to ensure that AWPE standards are not compromised by future cost-cutting measures.
- **Review and Selection of the 2009 Analytical Writing Placement Examination Essays.** In January, UCOPE members selected the essay to be used in the 2009 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 2009.** In April, UCOPE members reviewed sample essays to ensure that norming procedures used in evaluation of the 2009 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).

The Achieve Project

UCOPE members discussed UC's 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. Several UC faculty members are engaged in the Achieve Project; though there is some concern across UC, CSU and the CCCs that the project's assessment-focused agenda risks lowering current standards and will not adequately address the higher-level, critical thinking skills that entering students should possess. UCOPE-ESL Advisory Group member Jan Frodesen (UCSB) was appointed as one of the two UC delegates to the Achieve Project.

UCOPE English as a Second Language (ESL) Advisory Group

The UCOPE-ESL Advisory Group met once in-person and once by teleconference. Advisory Group Chair Robin Scarcella (UCI) reported that members, at their March meeting, considered various alternatives to the term "ESL" along with the range of issues associated with its use. With regard to renaming the ESL Advisory Group, the full UCOPE Committee generally supported replacing the

term “ESL” with the nomenclature “English in an Academic Setting”. Chair Scarcella described some of the emergent concerns regarding how the budget situation is impacting ESL programs and services on the campuses. UCOPE members also generally supported the Advisory Group’s pursuit of grant funds for a research study to assess the writing abilities of community college students with a report to be presented to UCOPE.

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:

- Modifications to UC’s financial aid program;
- Both the original and the revised Freshman Eligibility proposals from BOARS;
- President Yudof’s Revised Accountability Framework Report;
- Textbook affordability; and
- Revisions to Senate Regulations affected by the new BOARS eligibility standards.

UCOPE also discussed plans for a report on the possible impact of budget cuts on preparatory writing programs across the UC system. Though not enough information was available in 2008-09 about impending cuts to justify a report, the committee concluded that the situation must be monitored carefully and that a report may be advisable in the following year. Finally, UCOPE devoted a portion of each meeting to 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 and especially its annual Legislative Day held in Sacramento were also discussed.

Acknowledgements

UCOPE gratefully acknowledges the contributions of these UCOP and campus consultants over the past year: Director of Undergraduate Admissions Susan Wilbur; UC Student Academic Services; Jeanne Hargrove, Analytical Writing Placement Examination and High School Articulation Coordinator, UC Student Academic Services; UCLA Writing Program Director and Chair of the Analytical Writing Placement Examination Committee George Gadda; and the Chair of the UCOPE-ESL Advisory Group Robin Scarcella. The committee also thanks the numerous faculty members who, as alternates, kindly represented their respective campuses at UCAAD meetings this year.

Respectfully submitted:

Deborah Willis, Chair (UCR)

Jonathan Alexander, Vice Chair (Irvine)

Charles Briggs (UCB)

Richard Levin (UCD)

Sherrel Howard (UCLA)

Virginia Adan-Lifante (UCM)

Steven Axelrod (UCR)

Ross Frank (UCD)

Leslie Zimmerman (UCSF)

Judith Scott (UCSC)

Mark Pilotin (UCB student)

Brooke Moffitt (UCSB student)

Mary Croughan (ex-officio member)

Henry Powell (ex-officio member)

Eric Zárate (Committee Analyst)

**UCSB representative was not appointed in 2008-09*

**See Vice Chair above for UCI representative*