

## UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION

## MEETING MINUTES

FRIDAY, APRIL 29, 2016

**Attending:** Caroline Streeter, Chair (UCLA), Bradley Queen, Vice Chair (UCI), Carrie Wastal (UCSD), Carol Miller (UCSF), Darlene Francis (UCB), Bill Gary (UCR), George Gadda (Assistant Director, UCLA Writing Programs and AWPE Committee Chair/Chief Reader), Sholeh Quinn (UCM), Benjamin Brecher (UCSB), Robert Newcomb (UCD), Han Mi Yoon-Wu (Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions, UCOP), Julie Lind (AWPE Coordinator, Undergraduate Admissions, UCOP), Dan Hare (Chair, Academic Senate), Jim Chalfant (Vice Chair, Academic Senate), Brenda Abrams (Principal Analyst)

**I. Announcements**

Chair Streeter welcomed the members to the meeting and also announced that this is her final meeting as Chair. The committee thanked the analyst for her support.

**II. Consent Calendar**

**Action:** The January minutes were approved.

**III. AWPE Scoring/Norming**

- *George Gadda, Assistant Director, UCLA Writing Programs, AWPE Committee Chair/Chief Reader*

**Discussion:** AWPE Committee Chair Gadda led a discussion on passing the AWPE requirement. Notes were not recorded for this portion of the discussion due to its confidential subject matter.

**IV. Consultation with the Office of the President**

- *Han Mi Yoon-Wu, Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions, UCOP*
- *Julie Lind, AWPE Coordinator, Undergraduate Admissions, UCOP*

The Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) Coordinator reported that admission offers to California students are up approximately 15% and UC is on track to enroll about 5K additional students this fall. UC expects 3K to be freshmen and 2k to be transfer students. Preliminary admission rate for non-residents has dropped just a little. The upcoming AWPE will be held on the second Saturday in May (the SAT is held the first Saturday in May). The number of students selected for this year's exam reflects the growth in the California admit numbers, and 6K more students have been selected for the exam this year over last year. While only half the students show up for testing, it is anticipated that between 17-18K students will be tested this year which means there will be many more tests to score in the one week scoring period.

Consultant Gadda has been working with the operations vendor to make sure there are enough exam readers and team leaders. There are typically 140 readers who select how many essays they will read and are then asked if they are willing to read more. There are daily phone calls with the operations vendor to monitor the progress and make sure the readers are on pace. This is the first time since implementing the online scoring system that this volume of students will be tested. Usually the number of students taking the exam at the campuses is under 4K. Campuses are reimbursed a small amount from the AWPE program which is funded by the student exam fees. California students are encouraged to take the exam in

May. Students coming to UC from outside California take the fall exams. Students taking the test are those who have been admitted to UC and have accepted admission. May 1<sup>st</sup> is the deadline for returning the statement of intent to register. At the beginning of April, Admissions identifies which students who have been admitted to UC and have not satisfied the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) by ACT, SAT, or AP scores. The test notification letter is sent to 36K students, about one-half of whom show up. The other half have decided not to attend UC.

The AWPE program is still in very good financial shape. The number of students paying the full fee is 45.6%, 36% pay no fee, and 18% pay the reduced fee of \$20. This is the second year in a row where the number of students paying the full fee did not change. The five year contract with the vendor has been finalized for October 2016 to September 30, 2020. A small portion of the Coordinator's position will be charged to the program. The program is trying to maintain a small financial cushion for expenses that are not anticipated.

Associate Director Yoon-Wu reported decisions made by the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) about the redesigned SAT and these are documented in BOARS' February minutes. BOARS has stated that high school graduates in the class of 2019 will be able to submit either the old SAT or the newly redesigned SAT as a requirement for admission. Graduates of 2020 will submit the new SAT or the ACT. With the new SAT, the plan is to use the concordance tables to be provided by the College Board. Critical Reading is now Reading and, as part of the multiple choice section of the exam, Writing is now called Writing and Language. The essay is completely different and separate from the new SAT scoring. The College Board is going back to the old 1600 total scoring.

BOARS will require that students take the optional essay, but the essay scores will not be used for eligibility, minimum requirements or meeting the state index. The essay section will be used uniquely for holistic review. Little information has been made available about the new essay section. No examples of student writing and what the scores mean have been provided. The College Board will send three scores on three categories of achievement based on a scale of two to eight. BOARS has said it will use the concordance tables of the new Reading score to concord to the new Critical Reading. The Math is a section-to-section concordance. For Writing, BOARS will concord scores to the new piece of the Evidence-Based Writing and Language test score. These will be used by Admissions for policies such as Admission by Exam and fulfillment of the Subject "b" requirements. For international students there is an English proficiency minimum.

The Associate Director suggested that UCOPE will probably not want to use the scores from the multiple choice section of the exam to fulfill the minimum ELWR. Eventually, UCOPE should look at data including scores on the essay exam and the achievement levels of the students in their freshman year writing courses. In May 2016, the College Board will release scores from first administration of the test. If students took only the new revised SAT, there would be no SAT option to meet the ELWR. ELWR can still be fulfilled with ACT scores, AP scores or by taking a college level course. Due to uncertainty about the new SAT, students are currently being counseled to take the ACT. Nationally the number of students taking the ACT has increased. Students who qualify for the fee waiver for the SAT also qualify for the fee waiver for the AWPE so there is no burden for low income students.

The Smarter Balanced Assessment writing scores may eventually become eligible for fulfillment of ELWR. Monica Lin, the Associate Director of Undergraduate Admissions, can provide more information to UCOPE about the status of this assessment. Associate Director Lin joined UCOPE last April to discuss the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

**Discussion:** In the short term, more students may opt to take the ACT or to take the AWPE. The new test combines two previously separate sections. Consultant Gadda commented that the SAT's new optional

essay is a new type of test and it is more like a text analysis on an AP exam and it will be scored by different parameters. There will be separate scores for reading, analysis, and language. Chair Streeter indicated that it is not clear that UCOPE will make the decision about the Smarter Balanced Assessment since UCOPE does not set policies.

Chair Streeter asked how the consultants would feel about requiring more students to take the AWPE in terms of capacity. Coordinator Lind responded that operationally adding capacity would not be problematic but it is not clear if there would be an influx of students needing to take the AWPE. Students will still have other ways of satisfying the writing requirement. The Community Colleges and CSUs are more apt to adopt the Smarter Balanced Assessment. One key question is whether enhanced testing is connected to some worthwhile outcome.

#### **V. Consultation with the Academic Senate Leadership**

- *Dan Hare, Chair, Academic Senate*
- *Jim Chalfant, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

Chair Hare reported on the March Regent's meeting. The retirement options were passed just as the president proposed them and this was considered a victory by Senate Leadership. A concern was that the information about budget savings might not be convincing to all of the Regents and another was that the Regents might have decided to increase the savings by making the plan even less generous. The president's plan differed from that of the retirement options task force and addressed some concerns raised by the Senate. As originally designed the supplement to compensate for the PEPRA cap did not start until the salary exceeded the cap. With a 5% supplement, Assistant Professors hired at the median salary last year will have the opportunity, over their careers, to have the same income as individuals hired under the 2013 tier.

The PEPRA cap varies with salary so any supplement will also vary with salary. There is also a defined contribution (DC) plan that many people opposed even though the DC plan is optional. The Regents voted to approve a statement on the Principles against Intolerance. The Regents accepted amended language suggested by the University Committee on Academic Freedom. The policy leaves implementation up to the individual campuses. For both of these issues, the results came about after significant Senate input which the president acknowledged at the most recent Academic Council meeting. It was gratifying that the president understood and acknowledged the role of faculty in both of these major items at the Regents meeting.

The Senate has been developing systemwide transfer pathways with recommendations for potential transferees so students understand what is required for all nine campuses. This was done for the top twenty majors based on enrollment and now related majors are being asked to consider adopting the pathways. Some of the campuses have agreed to use the life science transfer pathway as proper preparation for some of the smaller majors with slight variations at the upper division. The Legislature asked UC to streamline the transfer process and should be satisfied with UC's effort.

The Senate was asked to determine if the College Level Placement Exams (CLEP) could be used at UC for GE credit. Chair Hare discussed interacting with the College Board agency and how they led to our being unable to evaluate the CLEP exams. Chair Hare described the State Auditors' report which criticizes UC for its admissions practices. One claim is that non-resident students displace California students. The auditor claims that faculty, namely BOARS, lowered the admission standards for non-resident students with the adoption of the compare favorably criterion several years ago. The audit further states that UC abandoned the furlough program too quickly. It is the UC's position that the auditor is unable to substantiate these claims. There is no question that those campuses that increased the number of non-resident students were able to apply the funds to maintain quality. Although this practice may not

increase the numbers of California students, the UC maintains that increasing the number of admissions for non-resident students does not represent a detriment to California students. Some UC faculty have written op-ed pieces that challenge the State Auditor's claim regarding the lowering of admissions standards. Chair Hare shared that the Senate was not directly involved with any aspect of the decisions related to placing the UCD chancellor on investigative leave beyond being supportive of the UCD Division Chair.

## **VI. AWPE Committee Chair/Chief Reader Search**

Chair Streeter reminded the members about the committee's January discussion about replacing the current AWPE Committee Chair/Chief Reader. Chair Streeter had a teleconference with the Chair of the Committee on Committees in February regarding the search. There is a desire to discuss the assessments more broadly and therefore Chair Streeter has decided that it makes sense to gather input from the writing program directors at all of the UC campuses. The idea is to look at how things are being done and how they could be done moving forward.

Chair Streeter would like UCOPE to create a white paper to share with the Council of Writing Program Directors. At the fall conference of the Council, there would be a session on the AWPE to give the members a way to get involved that goes beyond just suggesting nominees for the position. The transition plan proposed by UCOPE to Council in July 2015 indicated that there would be a two year transition with a third year if necessary. Consultant Gadda indicated that he would be willing to continue for more than three years.

2015-2016 is year one (of the proposed transition plan) and Chair Streeter will provide an update for Council by May 15th about today's discussion and decision as well as a timeline and justification for extending Consultant Gadda's tenure. Chair Streeter will write a white paper to be completed by August 31<sup>st</sup> addressing the pedagogical basis for consideration of the AWPE assessment and about appointing the AWPE Committee Chair/Chief Reader.

In 2016-2017, the white paper will be shared with the Council of Writing Program Directors at their October meeting. The Council could be given a deadline of December 2016 for submitting candidate's names. UCOPE could have a list of candidates for the April 2017 meeting. In the 2017-2018 academic year, UCOPE will appoint the new Committee Chair/Chief Reader and start the training. It is possible that from 2018 to 2020 there could be two more years for the individual to shadow the current AWPE Chair/Chief Reader.

**Discussion:** There is a question about how the compensation would work if someone started to learn the job in the middle of the AWPE cycle. Consultant Gadda suggested that someone who is already participating in the AWPE process as a reader or scorer might be a candidate and would not have to be pulled away from other responsibilities to learn the job duties without any financial impact. The people who currently participate as readers are lecturers from ESL programs or individuals from the California Community Colleges.

Coordinator Lind reminded the committee that a subcommittee looked at the validity of the AWPE in 2014 but there are questions about whether that report could be a starting point. The survey conducted by the subcommittee was limited in scope according to Vice Chair Queen. The conclusion of this report was that the AWPE does a good job in general. The Council would be given the opportunity to think about what else should be known about the AWPE. For example, there is a question about how many e-designations by first readers are not confirmed by subsequent readers. The identification of the candidates would come out of a shared sense of what assessment means. The job description is fairly clear although some details need to be added.

Concerns with the steps proposed by Chair Streeter are related to whether the development of a white paper or the discussion about the AWPE are dependent on or needs to be tied to the identification of potential candidates, whether the potential candidates will be contacted about their interest in the position, or whether candidates will be interviewed. Chair Streeter commented that whether candidates are contacted about their interest would be decided on a case by case basis, but a member pointed out that this would not be ethical. Another question is whether the new Committee Chair/Chief Reader should be part of the discussion about the AWPE.

Several members indicated that the white paper and the search for a new Committee Chair/Chief Reader should not be connected and they are concerned that the timeline proposed by Chair Streeter is unrealistic. The timeline would not allow for thoughtful discussion or any back and forth about the purpose of the AWPE. The October Council meeting would allow for no more than an hour long session (as opposed to an entire day) about how the AWPE is used. The members would be given background materials in advance and asked to think about the issues under consideration. Vice Chair Queen suggested a UCOPE meeting immediately following the October Council meeting.

Consultant Gadda remarked that the AWPE Committee Chair Chief reader position is unusual in that it does not have a payroll title and it is regular provision of course release to do a particular function. It is possible that the person who fills this role receives something other than course release. Consultant Gadda recommended that people who started as a reader and have advanced through the subsequent roles could form the pool of candidates. Individuals who already have a developed expertise would be ready to assume greater responsibility within the process. In addition to the job description, the expertise and experience needs to be articulated.

The Council of Writing Program Directors attempted to start the discussion about the criteria for the candidates and the benchmarks they would be expected to meet at the meeting yesterday. A member recommended that, ideally the candidates should have demonstrated sufficient experience with the AWPE process in order to have a good sense of its most important components. After this group is defined, the individuals who are the best fit for the position can be identified and then given the chance to opt out if they do not want to be considered.

Vice Chair Queen indicated that there are members of the Council of Writing Program Directors who have experience with writing assessments and should not be disqualified from consideration for the position simply because they have not read for the AWPE. Using the job description, a list of critical, basic requirements needs to be delineated. A subcommittee of UCOPE could be set up to work on the requirements or all UCOPE members could work on this using the committee listserv. The Council of Writing Program Directors wants input on the list of requirements which would be discussed and finalized at its October meeting. The memo could discuss what UCOPE would like the Council to do with respect to providing input on the criteria for the position. The criteria developed by the Council would need to be approved by UCOPE.

Chair Streeter reiterated that she will draft an update to Academic Council for May 15<sup>th</sup> outlining the process for selection of the new AWPE committee chair/chief reader as discussed today. Chair Streeter will also draft a memo, rather than a white paper, about assessment to the Council of Writing Program Directors for discussion at their October meeting.

## **VII. Divisional Reports/Member Items**

The UCSB representative shared that he's been on UCOPE for three years but this is the first year he was invited to report to the UCSB Division's Committee on Educational Policy. The members of the CEP were not aware of UCOPE or its role. He also noted that UCSB does not have a Committee on

Preparatory Education. The UCB representative is a member of the division's Committee on Diversity, Equity and Campus Climate (DECC). A student representative on DECC raised concerns about the potential burden that UC's assessment process can be already impacted student populations. The AWPE process is yet another barrier. Next year, UCOPE may want to think about what individual members should take back to their divisions. Another important point is that it is very beneficial for members of UCOPE to be from heterogeneous disciplines, not just from English departments. The analyst will send the members a list of the campuses with Preparatory Education committees.

#### **VIII. New Business**

There was no New Business

#### **IX. Executive Session**

Minutes were not taken during Executive Session

Meeting adjourned at: 3:45 p.m.

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Caroline Streeter