

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION

VIDEOCONFERENCE MINUTES

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2023

Attending: Eileen Camfield, Chair (UCM), Amanda Solomon Amorao, Vice Chair (UCSD), Sarah Freedman (UCB), Daniel Gross (UCI), Francois Blanchette (UCM), Po-Ning Chen (UCR), Brian Dolan (UCSF), Javier Birchenall (UCSB), John Tamkun (UCSC), Julie Lind (AWPE Coordinator, Undergraduate Admissions), Susan Cochran (Chair, Academic Senate), Jim Steintrager (Vice Chair, Academic Senate), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst)

I. Chair's Updates

Chair Camfield welcomed members to the videoconference and the new UCSB representative introduced himself. The Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates (ICAS), which is comprised of the Senate leadership from the California Community Colleges (CCC), California State University system, and UC, met this week. The segments were asked if they would entertain accepting scores from Cambridge International's curriculum but there are concerns about the cost and whether student access to the curriculum is equitable. ICAS continues to focus on the new California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC), the CCC courses that will be accepted for transfer to the CSU and UC. A special subcommittee of ICAS will work on standards for Cal-GETC courses and the UCI representative has volunteered to participate on the Written Communication workgroup. Cal-GETC will go into effect in the fall 2025 and the current Intersegmental General Education Curriculum will eventually sunset.

ICAS also received a presentation from the director of UCSD's Academic Integrity Office regarding ChatGPT as well as on the contract cheating industry. The director is exploring if there are potential systemwide solutions to academic dishonesty and described two efforts that are underway. One effort is the Certification Integrity Action Alliance which is seeking legislative changes to block the companies that sell papers to students. The Alliance's position is that these companies need to prove that they are doing no harm before they go into business, and diluting the integrity of UC degrees and undermining student learning seems harmful. The other effort is a proposal that the three segments create a consortium of testing centers on the campuses where students from any system can take exams in a proctored setting, but an agreement about the proctoring standards would be needed.

II. Consent Calendar

Action: UCOPE's January 26, 2023 videoconference minutes were approved with corrections.

III. UCOPE's Charge – Senate Bylaw 192

Chair Camfield explained that UCOPE's bylaw will need to be revised because it refers to the now-defunct systemwide Analytical Writing Placement Exam and this is an opportunity to frame things differently. During a previous meeting, it was suggested that the committee's name could be changed to the "Committee on Bridging Education."

Discussion: Members discussed the pros and cons of "bridging" and alternatives including "entry level" and "foundational." Ultimately, members agreed to not rename the committee and it was noted that the term "preparatory" is not always used as a pejorative. One recommendation is to define what "preparatory" means in the body of the bylaw and it is important to avoid suggesting that UCOPE is focused on anything beyond preparatory Math and Writing. There is no systemwide requirement for Math, and the responses to the Math workgroup's survey suggest that different campus approaches to Math placement is not problematic. The proposed revisions will eventually be sent out for systemwide

review. The analyst suggested that members ask their divisional committees for informal feedback and that UCOPE seek feedback from the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools and the Committee on Educational Policy. The chair will create a redlined version of the current bylaw with the proposed changes, and members will try to get input from their local committees in time for the June meeting.

IV. Entry Level Writing Requirement Coordinating Committee (ECC)

Based on UCOPE's discussion in January, Chair Camfield prepared a document to send to Academic Council regarding the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) Coordinating Committee which was recommended by the ELWR Task Force. With the elimination of the systemwide AWPE, each campus has control over placement so the process can be aligned with their Writing courses and student needs, but at the same time there will be systemwide principles. The chair asked members if the document accurately reflects the committee's discussions and if there are any concerns. The task force proposed calling it an "oversight" committee but because of concerns about that word, members agreed to call it a "coordinating" committee in part to underscore that it will be advisory and report to UCOPE.

This ECC is designed to provide UCOPE with the insight necessary to make informed policy decisions. The ECC's charge is two-fold: (1) to coordinate policy, including curricular and pedagogical conversations, to optimize outcomes for students taking ELWR courses guided by the principles described in the ELWR Task Force report and in support of program self-assessment; and (2) to coordinate policy to optimize outcomes for student writing placement experiences guided by principles articulated in the Task Force reports. Chair Camfield reviewed the specific responsibilities delineated in the Task Force report which include conducting periodic reviews of campus curricula to ensure they are aligned with ELWR principles and best practices and report the findings to UCOPE, providing UCOPE with the insight necessary to make informed policy decisions, and advocating to ensure that programs have the resources they need.

Chair Camfield has incorporated feedback from the committee, indicating that the ECC will refine its charge through an iterative process informed by the questions posed in the Task Force reports and the charge will subsequently be endorsed by UCOPE. This will allow the ECC to be responsive to emergent needs and evolve, thereby optimizing its relevance and efficacy. The charge also acknowledges that ideological differences may bubble up on the ECC but these can be viewed as opportunities to use the principals identified by the Task Force to collaboratively resolve them in ways that best serve students.

The ECC will be comprised of Senate faculty Writing experts from all UC campuses with experience or familiarity with the ELWR. One issue UCOPE should discuss is if the chair should be a Senate faculty member. In earlier discussions the committee has debated if the members should be the Writing program leads or their designees, core Writing instructors including non-Senate faculty, administrative staff, and any other interested parties. In addition, a member of UCOPE should sit on the ECC. Chair Camfield proposes a minimum term of service of two years that is renewable because having continuity will be valuable. The ECC should meet at least twice a year, in the fall and spring, to set goals for the year and prepare reports to UCOPE.

Discussion: Members discussed the composition of the ECC and whether it could include non-Senate Writing faculty. The analyst explained that most members of UCOPE's English for Multilingual Students Advisory Group are Unit 18 Lecturers, but the group's chair is a Senate member. One question is to whom the ECC would advocate for resources and the analyst recommended that it would be more appropriate for UCOPE to handle the advocacy. The analyst reminded the members that the AWPE was intended to be a self-supporting program funded by the student fees and when that systemwide exam was eliminated the president authorized the campuses to impose an ELWR fee. The UCI representative confirmed that UCI requires all students to pay the ELWR fee. The ECC should assess how the finances

are being utilized because it is both a campus and systemwide responsibility. It is likely that all campuses are struggling to figure out the financing, so this is a major issue that UCOPE should monitor.

The proposed charge seems to shift the majority of UCOPE's work on the ELWR to the ECC, meaning that UCOPE will primarily be a decision-making body. Chair Camfield anticipates that the ECC will have more time and expertise than UCOPE to study data from the campuses, identify challenges related to placement, and figure out best practices. The Writing experts will explore how each campus is handling placement and serving students. The ECC will report their findings to UCOPE which will work to resolve any issues through policy. A member expressed concern that if the primary directors of Writing programs are not key members of the ECC, it will not be productive and effective. At some campuses, the program leads are not Senate faculty. Senate Chair Cochran encouraged UCOPE to think about having non-Senate faculty, administrative staff, and others who are not program leads on the ECC, but it was noted that there are issues with unpaid compensation for Unit 18 Lecturers. One suggestion is that divisional COPEs or Undergraduate Councils/ Committees on Educational Policy should appoint the members. Members will ask Writing program directors to review the document on the ECC and this matter will be discussed again in June. Additionally, other pertinent constituencies (e.g., VPDUEs, COPEs/Undergraduate Councils, etc.) should be consulted.

V. Consultation with the Academic Senate Office

- *Susan Cochran, Chair, Academic Senate*
- *Jim Steintrager, Vice Chair, Academic Senate*

President Drake announced that the faculty salary scales will be increased by a 4.6% range adjustment effective October 1, 2023 contingent on approval of the governor's budget proposal. The president was asked by Academic Council to apply the increase to the total salary which includes off scale and above scale, but this decision will be made by the chancellors. Faculty are encouraged to advocate that their campus administrations give faculty the same annual percent increase on their total salaries that administrators and staff are receiving.

The last Regents' Health Services Committee meeting focused on the alignment of Regents' Policy 405, which asserts that agreements with covered health organizations must recite commitment to nondiscrimination and evidence-based care, and the interim presidential policy on affiliations with certain health care organizations.

The latter policy is undergoing stress tests before a final review and implementation, and at issue is that some affiliated partners have ethical and religious directives that limit women's access to reproductive health care and health care options for individuals seeking gender-affirming care. UC medical school faculty have been advising the Regents on these matters and there have been continuing efforts to improve the presidential policy. While UC Health asserts that providers in these settings will have the freedom to declare that a pregnant individual's health condition on entry to the hospital emergency room meets the standard of care for a medical abortion, there is skepticism on the part of some UC practitioners that this reflects what happens in practice.

The Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) Intersegmental Implementation Committee ("AB 928 Committee"), tasked by the legislature with strengthening the use of these associate degrees, met this week. The group includes representatives from the CCCs, CSUs, private four-year universities, and UC. There are three workgroup: the workgroup on goals has set a goal of 63% of Californians having a post-high school degree or certificate; the workgroup on re-engagement is figuring out how to get students who dropped out to return to college; and the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) workgroup is tasked with creating an ADT for STEM by adding six units at the lower division. Members of

the STEM workgroup have different opinions about how to approach this, with some individuals asserting that Engineering majors do not need general education and that too much preparation is required in Math and Science for STEM majors.

Assembly approved the appointment of Steven Cheung to serve as next year's Senate vice chair. Mid-year career awards were given to Kadee Russ, the UCD divisional Senate vice chair, and to Danny Widener at UCSD, the immediate past chair of the Committee on Affirmative Action, Diversity, and Equity. UCAP's chair and Academic Personnel and Programs' Vice Provost Haynes will co-chair a workgroup on faculty mission, priorities, and balance post-pandemic. This group will devise strategies to help faculty recover from the pandemic and strike, particularly junior faculty and others whose research was disrupted. A workgroup on the future of UC doctoral programs will be co-chaired by UCSB's divisional Senate chair and UCI's Vice Provost for Graduate Education and is a response to issues that emerged in the context of having represented student employees.

VI. AP Research and Seminar Data and Report from the ELWR-satisfying Exams Working Group

- *Daniel Gross (UCI) and Sarah Freedman (UCB)*

The committee received an analysis from IRAP of Advanced Placement (AP) Capstone Research and AP Capstone Seminar scores with the recommendation that a score of 3 should be accepted for ELWR-satisfaction because it will be beneficial to expand the list of options available to students. Although the number of students taking AP Research and AP Seminar is small, the UCI representative thinks these courses have college level Writing equivalency as they involve complex projects that go through multiple stages including research, drafting, feedback, revision, and presentation. These two courses are roughly six years old, but it would behoove UCOPE to foreground them as a best practice when it comes to AP scores counting for college level credit.

The UCB representative expressed concerns about the analysis which looks at student grades in other Writing courses, pointing out that a high percentage of students earn a grade of C or better, which satisfies the ELWR. The question is whether UCOPE is satisfied with a C or better or if the committee would rather use the grade of B as the dependent variable. The representative questions whether the cut scores used to exempt students from ELWR courses are too low, but this raises the issue of UC's capacity to enroll more students in the required courses, and it is not known whether the courses themselves make any difference. It is not clear if IRAP's analysis is the best way to study the mechanisms for ELWR satisfaction and another concern is the variability from campus to campus with respect to test scores and ELWR satisfaction. In addition, the data from UCD and UCM is sparse. The ECC should look at this report and the kind of research being done on how students are exempted from taking the entry level Writing courses and make recommendations to UCOPE for improving the analyses. There does not seem to be any criteria for why the grade of C or better is being used. The IRAP study suggests there could be more equality across the various tests used for ELWR satisfaction when it comes to performance in a subsequent course if the AP scores were raised from 3 to 4.

Discussion: Chair Camfield indicated that there is not much data on UCM students because few students at this campus take AP courses. A member asked about the rationale for how the current ELWR passing threshold was reached. The passing AP score of 3 is the College Board's recognized threshold which is likely why UCOPE adopted it, and there must be historical reasons for the thresholds set for the other tests. Many of these tests do not require that students do any writing, so they are simply correlations on proxies for writing, and some proxies may be better than others. If there is not a better dependent variable than grades, UCOPE might want to take a closer look at and potentially change the cut scores. A member (somewhat facetiously) observed that placement could be based on zip code, which might have a great correlation with positive outcomes, but for a variety of reasons the committee would not want

to do this, so the SAT score of 680 may be a slightly better proxy than zip code. The tests that have direct writing that is scored by experts have more construct validity when it comes to the activity and how it maps onto the college level experience.

Selecting a threshold based on the number of students it corresponds to and on how many students can be placed in preparatory classes are not good reasons, but the data does not suggest any obvious alternatives. UCOPE can help the ECC identify its priorities, but one could be to work with IRAP to determine if there are better ways to look at the data. Chair Camfield agreed with members who think that allowing a grade of C or better to satisfy the ELWR is a low bar however, there should be a balance because UCOPE does not want the requirement to be a barrier for students. Some faculty think students should not be allowed to pass the ELWR courses until they have acquired certain skills, but others assert teaching Writing must be a four-year effort involving all UC faculty. Members discussed the idea of analyzing AP courses that do not have formal Writing components to determine if they are predictors of performance in downstream Writing courses.

The analyst explained that IRAP analyses ELWR data based on what UCOPE requested in the past so the committee can make changes, and Chair Camfield suggested that the ECC be charged with investigating if the variables being used are the right ones. If the committee recommended eliminating many of the tests used to satisfy the ELWR before matriculation, it would probably alarm students and some students might not apply to UC. A member speculated that administrators may not want to pay for preparatory courses, and students may need to take an extra term to take some preparatory courses to be successful even if it does slow time to degree. The analyst advised that divisional COPEs should have ongoing discussions with vice provosts and deans for undergraduate education about investing in entry level courses. Campuses that have all students go through their placement process so they learn about the courses suggests that the standardized tests do not have to be used for ELWR satisfaction. However, this has a budgetary impact. Reportedly, 2k (50%) of UCSC students are taking the courses to satisfy the ELWR which has budgetary implications and creates scheduling challenges for students entering credit-intensive majors.

Action: A motion to accept scores of 3 on AP Capstone Seminar and Research was made and seconded. The committee voted unanimously to approve the recommendation and transmit it to Council.

VII. 2017 Recommendations for the Revised SAT and ACT and the Entry Level Writing Requirement

In 2017, UCOPE recommended starting a pilot with a threshold score of 680 on the revised SAT Evidenced-Based Reading and Writing (EBRW) for satisfying the ELWR. In January, members reviewed an updated analysis by IRAP on the use of the SAT EBRW as a method for ELWR satisfaction. Admissions has received inquiries from the campuses about the status of the pilot so it would be good to have a memo from UCOPE indicating that the pilot has ended. The committee is asked to recommend ending the pilot and setting the cut score at 680.

Discussion: Some members suggested that the cut score should be 670 and there was a brief discussion about continuing the pilot to continue gathering data. It was noted that fewer students will be submitting SAT scores since they are no longer required for admission. The analyst clarified that the committee has received the October 2022 analysis by IRAP to inform the decision about the pilot.

Action: A motion to end the pilot started in 2017-2018 and to confirm the cut score of 680 on the SAT EBRW was made and seconded. The committee voted unanimously in favor of this recommendation.

VIII. ELWR Satisfaction Post-Matriculation with a Non-UC Course

UCOPE has been asked by UCM to consider if actively enrolled UC students may take a course at a non-UC institution to satisfy the ELWR. There is a perceived inconsistency between [Senate Regulation \(SR\) 636.E](#) and [SR 544](#), and the committee should consider if the regulations are being misinterpreted. An example would be that a student actively enrolled at a UC campus takes an ELWR-satisfying course at a CCC while on summer break.

Discussion: It seems reasonable to allow a student who has not satisfied the ELWR in their first year at UC to take a course at another institution to meet the requirement. However, there is a concern about giving students the okay to take ELWR courses at local CCCs because some of the CCC courses have been found to be based on a damaging deficit model. A member questioned why the same CCC course taken by a student satisfies the ELWR before enrollment at UC cannot be used to meet the requirement after enrollment, noting that this creates a different standard for students who enroll as freshmen at UC than for those who transfer into the UC. There is a question about how frequently UC students seek permission to use a course taken at a different institution to satisfy the ELWR and Chair Camfield is aware of only one case at UCM.

UCOPE's interpretation of existing policy supports the position that students can petition for an extension to have more time to satisfy the ELWR at UC or to receive credit for an ELWR-satisfying course taken elsewhere. UCOPE may not want to open the floodgates to allow students to take ELWR-satisfying courses at a CCC because, while there are good Writing courses at some CCCs, they do not prepare students for UC Writing as well as UC courses. UCSC's policy seems to allow students to take a CCC course but students need to submit the assignments and the instructor feedback to the UCSC Writing program for evaluation. A member recommended that the committee should find out if campuses are allowing students to take CCC courses to satisfy the ELWR after they have matriculated to UC. Administrators may be in favor of letting students take ELWR-satisfying courses at other institutions as long as they are accredited in order to offset/outsource costs associated with those courses, whereas UC Writing program faculty assert that students should be taking these courses at UC. Committee members may want to ask the Writing programs if actively enrolled UC students are permitted to satisfy the ELWR with courses taken at other schools. Alternatively, UCOPE may ask the ECC to investigate this issue further.

IX. Report from the Math Working Group

- *Po-Ning Chen (UCR) and Francois Blanchette (UCM)*

Seven of the nine undergraduate campuses have responded to the survey on preparatory math courses. Some campuses have a person dedicated to Math placement and preparatory Math courses which made getting information easy, while it was difficult to get data from other campuses, in part because some do not offer preparatory Math courses. Most campuses do not have on data on the long-term impact of preparatory Math courses on graduation or retention rates. In addition, campuses do not know that UCOPE exists and is supposed to monitor Math placement. The UCM representative recommended that UCOPE ask that when Math departments conduct program reviews, the reports are shared with the committee as a way to provide regular updates.

Overall, the Math departments did not report any problems related to placement or preparatory courses and are satisfied with their activities, but they may be interested in hearing about what other campuses are doing. On some campuses there is no need for preparatory courses but on others more than half of the incoming freshmen are placed into remedial classes. Rather than thinking about a centralized placement procedure, UCOPE should have conversations with the individual departments.

Campuses have ideas about research they would like to do, but they do not have the resources to support those efforts, which is where the committee might be able to help. One research question might be how the placement test score and grades in lower division Math classes correlate to retention rates or graduation rates at four or six years.

Discussion: One member posited that there could be problems related to students who need extra support, who noted that Math is important for science majors and can be a major barrier. Preparatory Math courses are expensive to teach, and it is unclear if there is evidence that the courses are important. The predictive value of Math courses depends on the quality of the course, and preparatory courses with 40 students are likely to have better outcomes than classes with 200-300 students. It would also be interesting to know how many campuses use Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces (ALEKS). In light of the implications for students, UCOPE should consider if it is best for campuses to figure out what placement and preparatory courses in Math look like or if the committee should try to support Math departments in an effort to ensure the best possible outcomes for students.

Chair Camfield remarked that the workgroup's survey is a good first step toward the committee having a more robust focus on Math. The analyst suggested that divisional COPEs should engage the campus Math departments in discussions about placement and courses and noted that UCOPE is well-positioned to advocate for resources for the departments. UCSD has an entire center that handles placement and some of the other campuses are already using the UCSD placement exam, so this is a valuable resource for departments that want to give their preparatory Math classes serious attention. UCOPE does not want to interfere or try to micromanage placement processes or course content. The workgroup members are hopeful that UCD and UCI will submit their responses to the survey, and the information collected from the campuses to date will be available in the committee's shared Box folder. A central question about both preparatory Math and preparatory Writing courses is how they impact retention and correlate to time to degree. Chair Camfield remarked that students at UCM who do not do well in first year Writing courses tend to not do well at UC or they drop out, but there is a need for more extensive data and analysis on this to understand how widespread an issue this might be and what it means in terms of course structures.

X. Campus Reports/Member Items

There were no Campus Reports or Member Items.

XI. New Business/Executive Session

There was no New Business or Executive Session.

Videoconference adjourned at: 2:35 PM

Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams

Attest: Eileen Camfield