



University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE)
Meeting Minutes
June 18, 2026

Attendance: Brad Queen, Chair; John Tamku, Vice Chair; Nasser Zakariya, UCB; Timothy Lewis, UCD; Emily Penner, UCI; Aurora Pribram-Jones, UCM; Agnieszka Jaworska, UCR; Pedro Cabrales Arevalo, UCSD; Brian Dolan, UCSF; Nicol Hammond, UCSC; Maya Botros, Undergraduate Student Representative

I. Consent Calendar

The committee approved:

- The meeting agenda.
- Minutes from the April 16, 2026 meeting.

II. Consultation with Academic Senate Leadership

Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Chair

Susannah Scott, Academic Council Vice Chair

Federal and Systemwide Updates

- Federal compliance deadlines related to IT access requirements have been extended.
- Federal litigation concerning medical school admissions practices remains ongoing.
- UCLA is addressing a new Title VI complaint involving students, in addition to an existing Title VII matter involving employee hiring practices. A related breach-of-contract issue concerning federal grants is under legal review.

Academic Assembly Actions

- Approved the new UCOC Vice Chair.
- Approved revisions to Senate Bylaw 337 regarding faculty termination standards.
- Approved conversion of Regents' Standing Orders into Bylaws.
- BOARS presented its admissions review Roadmap, now available on the BOARS website.
- State budget discussions indicate approximately a 10% increase through a combination of base funding and deferred Compact funding.
- Salary-related updates include a 4% increase to the scales and an additional 2% equity allocation to be implemented at campus discretion.
- Discussion continued regarding the California Foundation for Science and Health Research bond proposal, currently reduced to \$12 billion. UC remains a co-sponsor.

- President Milliken emphasized support for the Foundation proposal, admissions review efforts, and UC's role in artificial intelligence leadership.
- Provost Newman highlighted opportunities for global partnerships and concerns regarding federal politicization of research funding.

Labor Relations

- Negotiations with AFT for Unit 18 lecturers have begun as the current contract nears expiration. Academic freedom protections and AI-related job security issues are being discussed, among other issues. Budget implications are not expected during the current budget cycle because negotiations will likely extend beyond it.
- UAW Academic Student Employee contracts were finalized during the spring. The Provost recently issued guidance related to implementation.

Academic Council Updates

- A proposed systemwide Senate climate change committee did not advance due to concerns regarding charge, scope, and divisional committee requirements.
- New Regents leadership will take effect July 1, with Regent Anguiano serving as Chair and Regent Robinson as Vice Chair.
- Discussion has begun on revisiting California's Master Plan for Higher Education, recognizing the need for modernization.
- UCAD+ is finalizing its recommendations for fall review.
- A Presidential Joint Task Force on health sciences faculty participation in UC governance has been established, with recommendations due August 31.
- A Presidential Joint Task Force on Artificial Intelligence has also been established.

III. Chair's Announcements and UCOPE Business

Brad Queen, UCOPE Chair

Bylaw and Senate Regulation Revisions

- Proposed UCOPE bylaw and Senate regulation changes were not approved and returned to UCOPE for further development. Feedback focused on confusing references to the Entry Level Writing Requirement Coordinating Council (ECC).
- Additional review will continue in the fall.

Committee Appointments

- Estee Beck (UC Merced) was nominated to serve as ECC Chair.
- Holly Bauer (UC San Diego) was discussed as a possible ECC Vice Chair candidate.
- UCOPE will work with UCOC to formalize appointments.

IV. Analysis of Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBAC) English Language Arts Scores

Han Mi Yoon-Wu, Associate Vice Provost, Undergraduate Admissions

Tongshan Chang, Director, Institutional Research and Academic Planning

Presentation and Discussion

- An updated analysis examined relationships between SBAC English Language Arts (ELA) scores and Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) outcomes.
- Significant variation exists among campuses in the use of SBAC scores and placement practices.

- Some campuses place all students into ELWR courses by default, reducing opportunities for pre-clearance.
- Members noted that factors such as registration challenges, especially for first-generation students, may influence outcomes.
- Discussion addressed:
 - Variability in ELWR standards across campuses.
 - Whether SBAC should be used for high-stakes placement decisions.
 - The impact of grade inflation in pre-clearance efforts.
 - Potential future analyses involving AP, IB, LCFF+, first-language indicators, and transcript data.
- Members emphasized that SBAC was originally designed to assess school performance rather than individual student placement.
- Questions were raised regarding campus authority to use SBAC independently of systemwide standards.

V. Draft Charge for the Proposed Math Coordinating Council

Discussion

- Members reviewed and commented on a draft charge for a proposed Math Coordinating Council.
- Topics included:
 - Variability in high school mathematics course availability.
 - Possible development of an Entry-Level Mathematics Requirement.
 - The distinction between calculus preparation and broader quantitative reasoning skills.
 - Concerns regarding grade inflation and increasing reliance on calculators in tests.
 - Resource implications for mathematics instruction.
 - Whether remediation should occur before or after admission.
- Members were encouraged to continue providing comments through the shared Google document.

VI. Consultation with the College Board

Abby Whitbeck, Vice President, Advanced Placement Strategy;

Emily Shaw, Executive Director, Research;

Leo Cota, Senior Director, Higher Education Strategic Initiatives, Higher Education, Membership, & Access

Priscilla Rodriguez, Sr VP, College Readiness Assessment SAT

Jennifer Dunn, VP Psychometrics AP

Amy Hendrickson, ED Psychometrics AP

Guests:

Dave Volz, BOARS Chair

Catherine Sugar, UCEP Chair

Digital SAT

College Board representatives discussed the transition to the Digital SAT.

- The digital format was adopted to:
 - Maintain predictive validity and rigor.
 - Improve test security.
 - Provide faster score reporting.
 - Increase flexibility for schools.
 - Improve equity and access through school-day administration.
- The exam uses adaptive testing at the section level rather than question-by-question adaptation.
- College Board staff explained psychometric methods used to ensure comparability among different versions of the exam. Questions are rated according to difficulty, even if they are not identical.
- Student surveys indicated a preference for digital testing over traditional bubble-sheet formats.
- Accommodations remain available, including religious and accessibility accommodations.
- Members requested additional information regarding:
 - Predictive validity, particularly for mathematics.
 - Relationships among AP performance, Digital SAT scores, and first-year college outcomes.
 - Use of calculators and test administration practices.

Member Debrief

- Members expressed interest in reviewing presentation materials and reconvening for a more detailed discussion of AP programs, potentially during the summer or early fall.
- Several participants noted that additional transparency is needed regarding adaptive testing methodologies.
- California-specific barriers were noted, including limited district-sponsored SAT administration and score-reporting costs.
- The role of standardized testing in identifying student excellence, particularly for transfer and international applicants, remains unclear.

VII. Member Items and New Business

Open Letters Regarding Admissions Testing

- Members discussed recently circulated open letters from STEM faculty and Humanities/Social Science faculty calling for the reinstatement of standardized test scores for admission purposes.
- Key themes included:
 - Differences in testing relevance across disciplines.
 - Concerns regarding inequitable access to test preparation resources.
 - Questions regarding whether standardized tests should serve as optional data points within holistic review processes.
 - Broader concerns about student academic preparation and readiness.
- Members agreed that concerns regarding student preparation warrant attention, though opinions differed regarding the locus and funding of solutions for action.

- Discussion highlighted the distinction between measuring student performance and evaluating educational preparation.
- One political consideration are widespread external demands for students to graduate quickly while additional preparatory work would slow academic progress.

Adjournment: 2:00 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Kenneth Feer, Principal Analyst

Attest: Brad Queen, UCOPE Chair