

UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION

VIDEOCONFERENCE MINUTES

FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2022

Attending: Jingsong Zhang, Chair (UCR), Eileen Camfield, Vice Chair (UCM), Sarah Freedman (UCB), Rebekka Andersen (UCD), Daniel Gross (UCI), Bruce Hayes (UCLA), Amanda Solomon Amorao (UCSD), Amy Vidali (UCSC), Madeleine Sorapure (BOARS representative, UCSB), Maryam Amin (Undergraduate Student Representative, UCSD), Karen Gocsik (Director, Analytical Writing Program, UCSD), Kenny Smith (Lecturer, UCSB Writing Program), Han Mi Yoon-Wu (Executive Director, Undergraduate Admissions), Julie Lind (AWPE Coordinator, Undergraduate Admissions), Laura Hardy (Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions), Robert Horwitz (Chair, Academic Senate), Brenda Abrams (Principal Policy Analyst)

I. Consultation with the Academic Senate Office

- *Robert Horwitz, Chair, Academic Senate*
- The divisional Senates voted to approve the climate Memorial, which will now be sent to President Drake to transmit to the Regents.
- UC has a compact with the governor that includes a 5% increase to the operating budget for the next five years as long as UC meets targets for increasing enrollment, student success and intersegmental cooperation.
- The Intersegmental Committee of the Academic Senates approved a revised general education transfer curriculum to meet the requirement for a singular pathway called for by Assembly Bill (AB) 928 but there are ongoing concerns about the law. The next phase of AB 928 will focus on the associate degrees for transfer (ADTs) and the ADT Implementation Committee will include students, administrators, and senate leadership from each segment and appointees of the governor and legislature.
- A joint advisory committee on UC affiliations with hospitals under ethical and religious directives will begin meeting soon. One concern is how the impending fall of *Roe v Wade* will affect the abortion services UC provides and this is raising tensions related to these agreements.
- Academic Council discussed a proposal for the high school Ethnic Studies requirement and sent it back to the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) for more work.
- Council endorsed recommendations from the systemwide Committee on Academic Freedom regarding posting political statements on department websites. This issue remains unsettled, and Senate leadership will discuss it with UC Legal today. The Regents may want to make the websites “information only” which would conflict with efforts to make research visible.
- Chair Horwitz has participated on the search committees for replacements for Vice Provost Carlson in Academic Personnel and Programs and for Provost Brown.
- Council has engaged in extensive discussions about fully online undergraduate degrees and the Committee on Educational Policy will submit a proposal to reinstate the residency requirement, which will prevent fully online degrees while still allowing fully online majors.
- Chair Horwitz thanked UCOPE members for their work this year.

II. Updates and Announcements

Chair Zhang reminded members about the new Academic Council Special Committee on Transfer Issues. It is hoped that a representative from UCOPE will agree to serve on this committee.

III. Consent Calendar

Action: The committee approved the April 29th videoconference minutes with corrections.

IV. Consultation with the Office of the President

- *Han Mi Yoon-Wu, Executive Director, Undergraduate Admissions*
- *Laura Hardy, Associate Director, Undergraduate Admissions*
- *Julie Lind, AWPE Coordinator, Undergraduate Admissions*

Executive Director Yoon-Wu reported that Admissions has been in conversation with the California Department of Education and the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium about obtaining English Language Arts scores (SBAC ELA) for use in placement and the next step is for legal counsel to create a data sharing agreement. During the January meeting, several campus representatives expressed an interest in having the SBAC ELA scores as an additional data point for their placement process. The Office of the President will operate a centralized mechanism to match the scores to the admitted students and provide that information to the campuses. The ELA scores may be available in fall 2023. The California State University system uses SBAC ELA and Math scores for placement in their early assessment program.

The May administration of the Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) went smoothly, with 7469 students taking the exam. The pass rate was 50% and the scores have been disseminated to the campuses. AWPE Chair Lang's appointment ends on June 30th and there will no longer be an AWPE Chair/Chief Reader after that point. Admissions is working on transitioning materials from the operations vendor to those campuses that will continue to use the AWPE locally, starting with the reader training videos. Reportedly, UCR will administer the AWPE in-person rather than online while UCLA and UCB will use an online exam. The Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) website will be simplified and revamped to provide general information about the requirement including the methods UCOPE has approved for ELWR satisfaction and links to information about each campus's local process. Currently, the website has links to five campuses but it will eventually include links for each campus.

Institutional Research provided the committee with data from fall 2019 to fall 2022 on the number of students who have satisfied the ELWR with SAT/ACT scores. The decline in the availability of the SAT/ACT test scores was expected once UC made the decision to eliminate the use of these standardized test scores for admissions but the data shows the true extent of the decrease. The data is from the admissions system and includes students' self-reported Advanced Placement (AP) scores from the UC application. It does not include students who passed an AP English exam in the spring of their senior year and it does not capture students who satisfy ELWR by a senior year with a California Community College (CCC) English Composition course. The data was provided by campus admissions offices and Coordinator Lind recommends that UCOPE representatives contact these offices for the campus-level data.

Discussion: The UCI representative thanked Admissions for working on the agreement to systematically provide SBAC ELA scores to the campuses. UCI has asked all of its incoming students to submit their SBAC scores this year since it will provide the campus with more data to work with in the absence of SAT/ACT scores. The representative commented that the data will be helpful for assessment and analysis of how these scores calibrate to different ways of placing students. UCSB's Writing Program would not use the SBAC ELA score on its own to place students but it would be an additional data point along with grade point average and scores on the program's internal placement survey.

A member recommended that the alternative placement methods, including the test scores, should be looked at closely especially if they do not include actual writing and observed that SBAC ELA may be an easy writing test. Another member argued that the SBAC is not an easy test and noted that it includes direct writing. It would be irresponsible to utilize the SBAC or any other standardized tests to directly place students although that is what is currently done for satisfaction of the ELWR. If a certain score on the SAT is found to calibrate to a SBAC score, it seems reasonable for UCOPE to consider using that SBAC score for ELWR satisfaction. However, the committee might want to reconsider this approach in general. A member expressed concern that students have taken the SBAC without knowing it will be used for placement and has been uncomfortable about using the SAT/ACT for placement even though UC has decided it is not appropriate to use standardized tests for admissions. Executive Director Yoon-Wu explained that students provide their consent when they take the SBAC and, as on the CSU application, UC would ask for affirmative consent to use the scores for specific processes.

V. Data Report on Alternative Placement Process from UCSD

- *Karen Gocsik, Director, Analytical Writing Program, UCSD*
- UCSD continues to use the AWPE for domestic students and the Analytical Writing Program (AWP) is piloting a new process with international students, which is a smaller population.
- The four-part collaborative Writing Placement Process (WPP) was just used for the first time.
- Students complete the first two parts anytime prior to the final two parts, which are timed.
- In parts one and two, students respond to a questionnaire about their high school education experience and attitudes toward writing and an algorithm provides an initial, tentative placement based on the responses. Students are given educational materials about the ELWR fulfilling AWP and the College Writing Program (CWP) so they can get a sense of the differences and what the courses demand.
- In the timed third step, students write summaries of sample readings from the AWP and CWP, and write a response to one of the readings, and this helps students think about which program would be more appropriate for them.
- In the timed fourth step, students reflect on the entire process and write a paragraph explaining which course seems like the best fit. If students are uncertain, they have the option of deferring to the faculty reader.
- AWP faculty read the placement files and determine the placements, and if the recommendation matches the students' preferred placement the process is complete. The assessment of the process has not begun yet so there is no information about the percentage of agreement.
- If the students' preference and faculty recommendation conflict, a second faculty reader is involved. The final placement decision rests with faculty, which is how the process differs from self-placement. Students can also discuss their placement with the AWP associate director and this could lead to the placement being changed.
- Students tend to enroll in the ELWR-fulfilling courses. These are international students who are may understand they need time with English and Writing before taking a CWP course.
- If the high demand for the AWP course continues, there will be a question about the source for additional funding. Students are not charged for the WPP and the AWP is collecting data about the costs related to the program.

Discussion: Readers are paid an hourly wage, and currently the WPP relies on AWP faculty but interested faculty from the CWP may eventually be asked to participate. AWP faculty have experience reading the AWPE, so recalibration will be needed because the WPP utilizes different criteria that avoids the deficit language used in AWPE scoring. After some debate about concerns regarding academic integrity, the decision was made to use a timed writing exercise, so students

are given two hours to write the summaries of the sample readings. The readings are from the AWP courses and students also have a reading from the college to which they have already been assigned. Faculty readers assess the students' ability to summarize the readings accurately and the exercise gives students the experience of what it means to read and write in these courses. Students in need of accommodations in order to take the timed test contact the AWP office ahead of time for assistance. A member shared that some students use their phones for writing exercises because they do not have access to other technology.

VI. Priorities for 2022-2023

- *Eileen Camfield, Vice Chair*

Vice Chair Camfield has started identifying potential priorities for next year, some of which may carry over into a second year. For the last two years, UCOPE has been in a reactive state due to the pandemic and the vice chair would like the committee to be more proactive in 2022-2023. Some of the topics are based on concerns raised by UCM faculty related to serving students who have had educational gaps. While UCOPE has focused a lot on writing, preparatory math and preparing CCC students to transfer into UC are also aspects of the committee's charge. The list of topics includes:

- Revising UCOPE's charge to remove references to remedial education, which Senate Regulation 761 indicates is not offered by UC. The charge also needs to be updated due to the elimination of the systemwide AWPE. The committee will submit a proposed revision to its charge to Academic Council and it will undergo systemwide review.
- Responding to the systemwide review of the ELWR Task Force report and recommendations.
- Identifying best practices for delivering preparatory education in ways that optimize student success. One consideration is promoting equity so that preparatory education courses help bridge educational or economic gaps, support success, and improve retention.
- Developing language to reconcile perceived tensions between ideas about academic rigor and ideas about academic support. UCOPE and its divisional counterparts might study the impact on students of having to take preparatory courses. AT UCM, an engineering major who starts with the preparatory math course is unlikely to complete their degree in four years. UCOPE might think about systemwide approaches to supporting students without increasing time to degree.
- Examining how thresholds for courses that grant credit are defined.
- Considering how to ensure that skills developed in preparatory courses transfer to subsequent coursework, and looking at whether there is intentional and effective pedagogy in place that promotes skill transfer.
- Thinking about how UCOPE is involved with issues related to CCC students transferring to a UC.

Vice Chair Camfield invited members to add their comments, questions or additional issues to the list of topics.

Discussion: Chair Zhang remarked that deliberation over the ELWR Task Force report and implementation of any recommendations may require a significant amount of the committee's time. The chair also noted that SR 761 states that credit towards a degree is not awarded for remedial courses, but since UC does offer remedial courses, it might not be possible to remove "remedial" from UCOPE's bylaw. A member shared that the issue of remedial courses and credit is related to the debate about sending Writing courses to the CCCs in the past, which meant that they were not really UC courses, and suggested that "remedial" should be removed as soon as possible. UCOPE may need to consult with others and perhaps survey the campuses to learn about the kinds of courses being sent to the CCCs and the impact this has on students.

Vice Chair Camfield explained that the committee may want to have shorter, more frequent meetings next year in an effort to move the work along. UCOPE will meet by videoconference in October and will decide at that time which meeting will be in person. The BOARS representative thanked Vice Chair Camfield and the incoming vice chair for working the list of priorities for next year, and also thanked Chair Zhang for his leadership.

VII. New Business

There was no New Business.

VIII. Executive Session

There was no Executive Session.

Videoconference adjourned at: 12 PM
Minutes prepared by: Brenda Abrams
Attest: Jingsong Zhang