



## UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARTORY EDUCATION

### Minutes of Meeting

October 17, 2024

**In attendance:** Po-Ning Chen Chair, Brad Queen Vice Chair, Gustavo Manso UCB, Susan Keen UCD, Kelly Kay UCLA, Susan Varnot UCM, Jianzhong Wu UCR, Pedro Cabrales Arevalo UCSD, Brian Dolan UCSF, Giuliana Perrone UCSB, Maya Botros Undergraduate Student Representative

#### I. Welcome and Introductions

#### II. Consultation with Academic Senate Leadership

*Steve Cheung, Academic Council Chair*

*Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Vice Chair*

- A. Regents: 1) UC Health now accounts for over half of the University's operating budget. The state budget is expected to be tight again this year. 2) Lots of discussions focusing on artificial intelligence and its potential impacts on higher education have occurred, but no decisions or recommendations have been made. Options for UC to leverage its size and expertise in open-source and open-access markets are being sought. A Senate AI workgroup is being formed under immediate past Council Chair Steintrager, and it will consider issues related to instruction, academic integrity, on-demand assistance, faculty burden, and the like.
- B. Senior Management Group (SMG) Recruitments: 1) President Drake has announced his intention to retire next June 30, and a national recruitment is in the early stages. Regent Carmen Chu with chair the Regents' Special Committee, and Council Chair Cheung will lead the academic advisory committee. 2) Chancellor searches at Riverside and Santa Barbara are ramping up. 3) A search for an associate vice provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Programs (FAAP) has begun. This position resulted from the bifurcation of Academic Personnel and Programs into FAAP and Systemwide Academic Personnel (SWAP), which will be led by incumbent and now Deputy Provost Amy Lee. Interim Vice Provost Doug Haynes will lead FAAP on a recall basis.
- C. Academic Planning Council (APC) Activities: 1) The Provost has proposed a single systemwide academic calendar following the semester system, which only two UC campuses currently use. Council Vice Chair Palazoglu and Richard Arum from UCI will co-chair the APC workgroup. Issues to consider include total days of instruction versus research flexibility, cost and time to transition (e.g., IT needs, syllabus and credit changes), alignment with other California higher education segments, summer opportunities, and administrative cycles. Further, if courses currently offered three-times a year are reduced to just twice a year, additional physical space and faculty would be needed. 2) A workgroup will consider revisions to APM

sections 015 (Faculty Code of Conduct) and 016 (Administration of Discipline). The former is a consequence of last year's state budget act which requires UC to review policies related to expressive activities (protests and demonstrations) or face financial penalty. The latter is a continuation of last year's review of administration-proposed changes that would automatically pause merit reviews in the event of a simultaneous disciplinary action simply being filed. The Senate resoundingly rejected the proposal noting a presumption of guilt. Interim Vice Provost Haynes and Council Chair Cheung will co-chair the workgroup.

### III. Chair's Announcements

*Po-Ning Chen, UCOPE Chair*

- A. Sunsetting UCOPE?: Senate Bylaw 192 assigns UCOPE a limited number of duties, primary among which are oversight of the Analytical Writing Place Exam (AWPE) and the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR), in addition to advising the President on other matters of academic preparation. The AWPE has been retired in favor of greater local flexibility, and immediate ELWR oversight has been granted to the ELWR Coordinating Council (ECC). As such, UCOPE retains only the duties to receive the ECC annual report and to advise on other preparatory efforts. The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) is also assigned oversight of preparation education efforts through its charge to set standards for both freshman and transfer admission through the A-G and Cal-GETC requirements (respectively). The University Committee on Education Policy (UCEP) is charged to monitor new matriculants' success, and the efficacy of placement exams, such as ELWR or others that might be used in math or other fields that occur post-registration/enrollment/matriculation (r/e/m) could be logically assigned to UCEP. Only three undergraduate campuses retain independent preparatory education committees; similar duties at other campuses are performed by undergraduate councils or education policy counterpart committees. The necessity of retaining the English for Multi-lingual Students (EMS) Advisory Group has also been questioned given that many ECC members are on both groups or come from the same faculty/administrative unit; combining their duties could yield greater engagement and financial support. However, further marginalization of dedicated attention to writing clarity and math proficiencies, before or after r/e/m, could negatively impact student academic success and thus time to degree and related considerations; external critics will be highly attentive to impacts in these areas. Revision of impacted bylaws and development of the rescission package could be led by systemwide analysts, but a faculty-led communications plan to the campuses would be useful, should the proposal advance. Members interested in volunteering to help the effort should contact Chair Chen and Analyst Feer.
- B. Math Placement: In light of last year's BOARS Area C Workgroup and its findings, there are not any immediate next steps for UCOPE in this area. While interest from external stakeholders remains high, assessing the impact of recent decisions seems prudent.
- C. English for Multi-lingual Students (EMS) Advisory Group: As noted above, this group has not been notably productive and its duties may overlap with the ECC. Its future should be considered carefully.
- D. Digital SAT Usage: While some campuses seek to use digital SAT scores for ELWR satisfaction, advice from Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP)

suggests that there is insufficient longitudinal data to draw any predictive validity conclusions. Further, there may be a small-N problem as not as many students as predicted are submitting such scores. Similar considerations have been raised regarding Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) scores, as well as noting that the SBAC is not intended to measure students' achievement in this manner. Members suggested a statement from IRAP might be persuasive to skeptics.

#### **IV. Campus Updates**

UCD: 1) There is much confusion about the administration and governance of the campus writing program. Efficiency goals aside, the process has been poorly handled; more than one campus has submitted memoranda of concern and support. 2) The local preparatory education committee considers chemistry placement practices, in addition to English and math.

UCI: 1) Questions regarding use of the digital SAT and SBAC scores remain. 2) An equivalent to the ECC for math has been suggested.

UCR: 1) This year, a report on math placement outcomes was requested, in addition to the annual ELWR outcomes report. In math, students reported high levels of dissatisfaction with the test, which is from McGraw/Hill. A lack of data makes drawing conclusions difficult, so it is unclear if the test is poor or if many students were poorly prepared.

Members noted that unproctored online tests can lead to misplacements and higher failure rates, compounding documented COVID learning loss. More students rely on AP courses and dual enrollment than previously, while reliance on the SAT has decreased. Continued attention to math placement and outcomes is needed, and best practices are welcome.

Related concerns involve LCFF time penalties, the cost of and access to summer preparation, personal circumstances – especially for transfer students, and limited funding for graduate student instructors. Access to college-level courses at many high schools is limited. More refresher courses and drop-in hours could benefit first-generation or students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

#### **V. Systemwide Review Item**

- Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479 (Cal-GETC)  
Members appreciated the proposed flexibility in allowing transfer students to defer more general education credits to post-transfer to improve major preparation, but also wondered about the availability of the deferred courses on UC campuses and if the time-to-degree goals could be inadvertently reversed. Members also noted that some majors have particularly high unit requirements and some colleges have their own requirements, so changes to the GE pattern would have limited impact in those areas but could further complicate counseling. The funding allotments for GE courses would also need to be increased, but the source and amount of those funds were not indicated. An impact analysis of the proposal is requested before a final decision is made. Analyst Feer will draft a memo for electronic approval.

#### **VI. ELWR Coordinating Committee (ECC) Deliverables**

In addition to items listed in the charge developed by last year's UCOPE, members seek additional review of the ELWR fees charged and their usage. Longitudinal outcome data will be needed, and it will need to be normalized for systemwide comparisons to be made. Some of the fees might be usefully send to IRAP to fund data requests. Disparate impacts should be measured, and the impacts of AI and translator software should be noted. EMS concerns should be highlighted, as well. Isolating COVID impacts will remain a challenge in the short term. The possible impact of third-party administrators or software should also be considered. The impact of portfolio analysis versus timed essay outcomes should also be reported.

**VII. New Business and Further Discussion**

None.

Adjournment: 1:45pm

Minutes prepared by Kenneth Feer, Principal Policy Analyst

Attest: Po-Ning Chen, UCOPE Chair