

**UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION
ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005**

TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

Under Senate Bylaw 192, the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) is charged with advising the President and appropriate agencies of the Academic Senate on matters related to preparatory and remedial education, including the language needs of students from diverse linguistic backgrounds, supervising the University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement (UC-ELWR), and establishing Universitywide standards for the University of California Analytical Writing Placement Exam (UC-AWPE). UCOPE met twice during the 2004-2005 academic year. Highlights of the committee's activities and accomplishments are noted in this report.

Recommendation on Class Size for Writing Classes

UCOPE submitted a report to the Academic Council in June 2005, *Bringing Writing Class Size in Line with National Standards*, which was later endorsed by the Academic Council at its July 2005 meeting. The report addresses the Academic Council's August 2004 request for data from UCOPE on the effectiveness of writing instruction vis-à-vis class size. The issue first arose when UCOPE proposed in May 2004 that the class size for all University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement (UC-ELWR) classes and classes designed to enable students to complete the UC-ELWR should be capped ideally at 15 students, but in practice at no more than 20 students. UCOPE's proposal and subsequent report were prompted by the committee's discovery that the cap on class sizes for UC-ELWR classes at all campuses excepts Berkeley and San Diego is out of line with the national standard of no more than 15 students for basic writing classes, and is also out of line with caps on writing classes at the University of California's comparison institutions.

UCOPE maintained in its report that although the University of California continues to face difficult and uncertain budget constraints, the Office of the President's projected costs for capping writing classes is not unduly burdensome. UCOPE looks forward to the Office of the President's institution of the more restrictive writing class size policy across all University of California campuses.

Review and Selection of Essay Prompts for the 2005 University of California Analytical Writing Placement Examination (UC-AWPE)

Pursuant to its charge, UCOPE received regular updates from its committee consultants concerning the 2005 UC-AWPE, including the selection of a new vendor for the UC-AWPE, Pearson Government Solutions, and improved administration processes for the examination. UCOPE also completed its annual selection of the essay prompt to be administered in the 2005 UC-AWPE after an extensive review and discussion of six possible essay prompts presented by the UC-AWPE Committee Chair, George Gadda.

Norming of the 2005 University of California Analytical Writing Placement Examination (UC-AWPE)

UCOPE reviewed and discussed UC-AWPE pretest essays provided by the Chair of the UC-AWPE Committee and unanimously agreed on all pretest essay scores which had been assigned by that committee.

Impact of New Admissions Testing Requirements on the University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement (UC-ELWR) – The New SAT and the ACT Writing Component

UCOPE discussed the impact of the new SAT examination and the new writing component of the ACT examination concerning what constitutes an acceptable score for satisfying the UC-ELWR. UCOPE members determined that the committee will set the passing scores for the UC-ELWR under both the SAT and ACT examinations at its January 2006 meeting, at which time the corresponding data analyses from the 2005 administrations of the University of California Advanced Writing Placement Exam, and the new SAT and ACT examinations will be made available.

Possible Systemwide Entry Level Mathematics or Quantitative Research Skills and Methods Entrance Requirement

The University Committee on Education Policy (UCEP) proposed in December 2004 a dual collaboration regarding the possible development of a Systemwide Entry Level Mathematics or Quantitative Research Skills and Methods Entrance Requirement, analogous to the University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement. Following the proposal, a joint UCEP-UCOPE Subcommittee was formed to study the possible Requirement, poll the campuses regarding the interest in such a Requirement, and should there be significant interest, discuss the myriad details involved in instituting a new systemwide entrance requirement. At present, the UCEP-UCOPE Subcommittee is continuing to collect data from the campuses and will report their findings and recommendations to the 2005-2006 committee membership.

Review of the Standard Level International Baccalaureate Examination in English as a Means of Satisfying the University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement (UC-ELWR)

In April 2005 UCOPE unanimously approved a score of six or seven on the Standard Level International Baccalaureate examination as satisfying the UC-ELWR, effective for students graduating high school in 2006. UCOPE members reviewed sample essays administered under the Standard Level International Baccalaureate Examination, and determined the examination to be an additional pathway for students to satisfy the UC-ELWR, similar to the Higher Level International Baccalaureate Examination that is already approved under Senate Regulation 636. UCOPE's next step in instituting this action is to receive approval of an amendment to Senate Regulation 636 by the Academic Council and the Academic Assembly, which the committee expects to complete early in fall 2005.

Requests for Review

In response to requests from the Academic Council for review and comment, UCOPE considered and submitted its views on the following proposals:

Amendment to Senate Bylaw 128 – Membership of Standing Committees of the Assembly: UCOPE expressed concerned over the proposed bylaw’s impact on the committee’s mission, and the membership and conduct of UCOPE’s two subcommittees. The final version of the bylaw however resulted in no measurable impact to UCOPE’s subcommittees, which will now be treated as “advisory groups” and thus outside the restrictions laid out in Senate Bylaw 128.

Draft Excess Units Fee Policy: UCOPE identified a number of negative academic effects that would result from the Draft Excess Units Fee Policy, including one of particular concern to UCOPE regarding those students who have difficulty completing the University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement because of limited course availability for non-native students.

Science Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (SCIGETC) Proposal: UCOPE expressed general support for the SCIGETC proposal, finding that it is an important step toward facilitating the transfer of community college students intending to major in the sciences at the University of California.

UCOPE–English as a Second Language (ESL) Subcommittee

The UCOPE-ESL Subcommittee, with Chair Jan Frodesen, met once during the 2004-2005 academic year. The Subcommittee discussed and reported to UCOPE on the following topics: campus ESL issues, including the movement, realignment or eradication of ESL courses on some campuses; the current decline in ESL enrollment on all campuses with ESL programs (Irvine, Los Angeles and Santa Barbara) with the exception of Davis; the development of specialized ESL reading and writing instruction courses at Davis and Santa Barbara; procedures used in the placement and tracking of E-designated students; the special language needs of ESL transfer students; an update on the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Assessment and English Language Instruction survey conducted across all University of California campuses; and the UCOPE-ESL Subcommittee’s participation in the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) ESL Task force survey, which is gathering information about identification, assessment, placement, instruction and support services for ESL students on all University of California, California State University, and California Community College campuses.

UCOPE Representation

UCOPE is represented on the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) through the UCOPE Chair, who is a regular ICAS member. The UCOPE Chair is also a member of the Analytical Writing Placement Exam Committee.

Acknowledgment

UCOPE wishes to acknowledge the contributions of the following committee consultants: Susan Wilbur, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, UC Student Academic Services; Jeanne Hargrove, Analytical Writing Placement Examination and High School Articulation Coordinator, UC Student Academic Services; George Gadda, UCLA Writing Program Director and Chair of the Analytical Writing Placement Examination Committee; and Jan Frodesen, Chair of the UCOPE-ESL Subcommittee.

Respectfully submitted:

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