

## UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION

**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Friday, January 23, 2009**  
**10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**  
**UCOP, 1111 Franklin Street, Oakland – Room 5320**  
**Telephone: 510-987-9466**  
<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/>

**I. Chair's Report/Announcements/Updates – Chair Deborah Willis**

Chair Willis welcomed members and invited members to introduce themselves.

**II. Consent Calendar**

- Approval of the Agenda

**ACTION: The agenda was approved with minor modifications.**

**III. Analytical Writing Placement Exam Review and Selection of Essay Prompts – George Gadda, Director UCLA Writing Program**

**DISCUSSION:** Due to the confidential nature of this discussion, no notes were taken.

**ACTION: Prompts for the administration of this spring's Analytical Writing Placement Exam were selected.**

**IV. Consultation with the President's Office –**

*Susan Wilbur, Director of Undergraduate Admissions*

**ISSUE:** Director Wilbur was invited to report on the outcomes of the fall 2008 Analytical Writing Placement Examination; the AWPE budget; plans for the May 2009 administration of the Analytical Writing Placement Exam; and UC's involvement with the ACHIEVE project, an inter-segmental state and national project about "closing the gap" between high school preparation and college and career expectations. As background for the discussion, members were encouraged to peruse the ACHIEVE website at [[www.achieve.org](http://www.achieve.org)] prior to the meeting.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Director Wilbur summarized a report to the state legislature on the fulfillment of the UC Entry Level Writing Requirement as of fall 2008 and fielded questions from members. She offered to share a more-detailed report with members, which she will e-mail to Analyst Zárate.
- She also discussed a projected gap between fee revenue and the expense of administering the program. She noted that the program has had a history of structural budget deficits and that the President and new Interim Provost will need to be involved in future discussions. She commented that the program's strongest case is that it serves as an important instrument in measuring student readiness. No changes are planned for the 2009 administration of the test. She provided additional background on the vendor contract and described some of the services provided in the administration of the program.

- Director Wilbur provided a brief overview of the ACHIEVE program and the network of participating states and institutions. A chief goal of participants is to improve state standards and assessment instruments for K–12 mathematics and English language preparation. UC faculty members are engaged in ACHIEVE; though there is some concern across UC, CSU and the CCCs that the project’s assessment-focused agenda is lacking and could focus more on teaching and learning. There has been some discussion among UC faculty about the types of higher-level, critical thinking skills that entering students should possess. Director Wilbur will send more information on ACHIEVE and ICAS membership to share with the committee.

**V. President Yudof’s Proposal to Modify UC Financial Aid Program – Chair Willis**

ISSUE: President Yudof has asked for Senate comment on his proposal to modify UC’s financial aid program. Members were asked to review the enclosed proposal.

DISCUSSION: Members commented on the need for future assessment mechanisms, e.g., the impact of the proposal to changes to student population.

ACTION: The committee agreed to forward the above comment.

**VI. Consultation with the Academic Senate Leadership –**

- *Mary Croughan, Academic Council Chair*
- *Henry Powell, Academic Council Vice Chair*
- *Martha Winnacker, Executive Director*

Senate leaders were invited to provide a customary overview of current issues of concern for the UC system and 2008-09 Academic Senate priorities.

DISCUSSION:

- Chair Mary Croughan discussed the ACHIEVE project and reported on the status of identifying UC faculty member experts in Math and Writing for the project. Bill Jacobs has been appointed the Math expert.
- BOARS Freshman Eligibility Reform Proposal: The proposal is going forward to The Regents. If approved, the changes which will impact the entering class of 2012, will eliminate the SAT subject test requirement and expand the percentage of ELC admits from 4% to 9%. One member commented on the seemingly conflicting goals of expanding opportunity and how not to advantage one group over another as mandated by Prop. 209.
- Chair Croughan shared with members the rationale behind the abbreviated review timeline for President Yudof’s Proposal to Modify UC Financial Aid Program. She also discussed mid-year budget cuts and how these are impacting capital projects on the campuses. Lastly, she announced that President Yudof has appointed Larry Pitts from UCSF as Interim Provost. Analyst Zárate will send members a copy of the *New York Times* Ad/Open Letter.

**VII. Discussion of Budget Concerns and the Future of Preparatory Education in the UC System – Chair Willis & Committee Members**

ISSUE: Members were asked to report on the impact of the budget situation on preparatory English and Math programs on their respective campus, with attention given to any areas of concern for UCOPE or that might call for action by the committee in the future.

**DISCUSSION:**

- Riverside: There is growing interest at UCR for mainstreaming entry-level writing courses.
- Merced: There are concerns at UCM over too few ESL sections, the Analytical Exam; and scanty budget for hiring lecturers to teach entry-level Math sections.
- Santa Cruz: UCSC is looking at how to reduce the Pre-Calculus class size (now 300 students) and looking at ways to reinstate writing tutors that were previously cut.
- San Francisco: UCSF has noticed significant numbers of applicants who score poorly in verbal reasoning; they are exploring how individualized education and competency-based training might fill some of the knowledge gaps.
- San Diego: UCSD is analyzing the pass-rate in entry-level writing courses and at possibly devising alternative assessment tools.
- Irvine: UCI is concerned that Academic English (ELL) is vulnerable to budget cuts and that the perceived value of ELL to the campus is threatened; data from an assessment of upper division writing “products” suggests a perceptible difference in the English language skills of transfer students and points to the need for alternative assessment tools.
- Berkeley: UCB is concerned with cuts to pre-college development and outreach programs and their impacts to student diversity.
- Los Angeles: UCLA Writing Programs was told to expect \$200K cut this year (equivalent to 30 FTE) though funding was ultimately restored avoiding adverse impacts to Winter/Spring programs.
- Davis: There are plans to admit fewer freshmen at UCD.
- Other comments: Vice Chair Powell suggested that UCOPE consider documenting the impact of cuts to the educational mission and quality of these programs. Chair Croughan suggested UCOPE might recommend alternative pedagogy for teaching writing skills.

**ACTION: No action was taken at this time.**

**VIII. Old Business – Chair Willis**

**ISSUE:** The committee considered how to follow-up, if necessary on: 1) the UCOPE Report on ESL and Transfer Students and 2) the BOARS Proposal to Reform UC’s Freshman Eligibility Policy.

**ACTION: After a brief discussion, Chair Willis asked Analyst Zárate to research the status of the UCOPE Report on ESL and Transfer Students. The committee concluded that its concerns with BOARS Proposal were captured in the earlier discussion under Agenda Item VI and that no further action was needed.**

**IX. New Business – Chair Willis**

**ISSUE:** UCOPE received a proposal from UC Davis Prof. Raul Aranovich requesting access to AWPE data for research purposes. Members were asked to review the enclosed proposal and provide input for UCOPE’s response.

**DISCUSSION:** Chair Willis asked members for input on how to respond to the proposal. Director Gadda provided additional background/insights on the proposal and the question(s) at issue and the possibility that the request was sent in error to UCOPE instead of UCOP. One member commented that it was customary for campuses to approve use of campus originated-data and for UCOP to approve the use of UC-wide-originated data. Several questions arose with regard to who in the

future will have access to data; the security of information; overall purview; and if the request had gone to local IRB for review?

**ACTION: Chair Willis will 1) seek legal clarification from UCOP on systemwide and campus roles with regard to the release of exam information to researchers, and 2) follow-up with UC Davis on outstanding questions and clarifications.**

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Attest: Deborah Willis, UCOPE Chair  
Prepared by: Eric Zárate, Committee Analyst