

Center Seeks to Help Faculty Put Digital Technology to Use In The Classroom

The overlap seems obvious: Computer technology has information processing at its core and UC faculty are in the business of imparting information to students through teaching. The question is, how can UC faculty enhance their teaching through the use of computer technology? Until recently, each UC campus has dealt with this question pretty much on its own. In July 2000, however, UC began developing a systemwide operation aimed at facilitating the use of digital technology in teaching and learning. It is the University of California's Teaching, Learning & Technology Center (TLtC). Three months ago, TLtC unveiled one of its central features, its website, which can be found at www.ucltc.org.

Faculty who go to the website, known as the TLtC Webzine & Online Forum, will get the sense of an operation that, though multi-faceted, has a couple of key concepts that underlie it. One is that digital teaching and learning tools can be shared across campuses; the second is that UC faculty have much to learn from each other about what works, and what does not, in teaching and learning technology.

In one of its dimensions, TLtC is a grants-funding operation. Last year, it distributed \$350,000 to UC faculty and staff to either get educational technology projects off the ground or to bring them to fruition. Thus, TLtC awarded a \$3,883 "planning" grant to faculty from Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and Berkeley to help them investigate ways to strengthen the teaching of architectural history across the UC system. It also awarded a \$70,249 "implementation" grant to the UC Writing Institute to develop an online resource that will simultaneously inform the public of UC's writing requirements and disseminate, to UC's writing instructors, a list of "best practices" and a set of tested writing instruction materials. Ultimately TLtC's grants funding is expected to grow to a steady-state of \$600,000 annually.

In another of its dimensions, TLtC is

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UC Requirement Aimed at Ensuring Skill in Reading and Writing Is Getting Full Review

The Academic Senate has initiated a wide-ranging review of the University of California's "Subject A" requirement, which is intended to ensure a minimum level of reading and writing ability in UC's undergraduates. Long a contentious issue at UC, the Subject A requirement has come to the fore recently because of some issues related to it, among them the number of UC undergraduates who speak English as a second language, and the prospect of summer sessions becoming a regular academic term.

Acting on a request from Office of the President Provost Judson King, Academic Senate Chair Chand Viswanathan has asked three statewide Senate committees, along with divisional chairs, to provide answers to a series of questions King posed in November about the Subject A requirement.

All undergraduates who enroll at UC must satisfy the Subject A requirement. Many do so prior to entering the University, through such means as attaining a requisite minimum score on the SAT II writing test, or by passing the University's own Subject A Examination (see story, page 5).

A high proportion of undergraduates do not pass Subject A through any of these means, however, and must therefore satisfy the requirement after enrolling at UC. In the freshman class that entered in 2000, more than 16,000 students satisfied the Subject A requirement prior to arriving on campus. That left almost 9,100 students, however, who had to satisfy the requirement during the course of their freshman year. In some cases, this meant enrolling in a single composition class. With a satisfactory grade in the class, these students were done with the Subject A process. In other instances, however, students — many of them English as a Second Language students — have to take a series of courses aimed at improving their composition skills. At the end of this process, some of these students still cannot write satisfactorily. In the most extreme cases, students may be asked to leave the University altogether. This is so because Senate Regulations stipulate that students who have not passed Subject A after three quarters may not enroll for a fourth term

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For UC Students, Study Abroad Does Not Always Mean Study within a UC Program

For years, University of California faculty and administrators have agreed that they want more UC undergraduates to study abroad, preferably through UC's Education Abroad Program (EAP). And the number of UC EAP participants has been rising at an average of 16 percent per year for each of the past three years. While this trend is encouraging, the proportion of UC students who take part in the program is still very small: About 3 percent of UC's upper-division undergraduates did so last year, up from 2.25 percent in 1995-96. This translated into 2,410 of UC's

79,000 upper-division students going abroad last year under the aegis of EAP. For this year, the number participating will be about 2,850.

UC's EAP participation rate is, if anything, slightly higher than the national average. Thus, UC faculty and administrators have plenty of company in puzzling over the reasons that more students cannot be persuaded to study abroad in programs run by their universities. Lately at UC, there has been a growing awareness of one of the factors that seems to be contributing to UC's low EAP participation rate: About half of the UC students who study abroad appear to do so *outside* EAP. In response, EAP and the UC Academic Senate committee that helps oversee it are broadening their focus. They want to en-

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Inside Notice: The Senate's Review Of Admissions Testing

Senate Panel Reviewing UC's Relationship with the DOE Labs

When the U.S. Department of Energy decided, in the fall of 2000, to extend the University of California's management of the DOE labs at Livermore and Los Alamos, the Academic Senate concluded that it needed a means by which UC faculty could remain informed in an ongoing way about UC's relationship with these labs and their sister lab at Berkeley. The Senate's Academic Council wanted to establish a mechanism through which the Senate could gather and maintain data about two subjects: UC's relationship with the labs, and faculty views about this relationship. With this information in hand, the Council reasoned, it would be in a position to respond quickly when, in the future, it is asked to provide a faculty perspective on UC's management of the labs. Last spring, the Council agreed that the Senate's University Committee on Research Policy (UCORP) should form a subcommittee whose task would be to carry out this work. In January, the UCORP subcommittee released a progress report that showed that it has been busy so far, but still has a lot to do.

Co-chaired by Henry Abarbanel of UC San Diego and Tu Jarvis of UC Davis, the UCORP subcommittee is not asking whether UC should be involved in managing the DOE labs — it has accepted that as a given — but it has taken on, as one of its central tasks, an analysis of the costs and benefits of UC's management of the labs. As a first step in examining this question, the committee has embarked on a far-ranging information-gathering effort. So far, subcommittee representatives have met with eight of the nine Academic Senate campus executive committees, along with two chancellors and a fair number of vice chancellors for research. The subcommittee also has made site visits to all three labs: Los Alamos last April, Berkeley last October, and Livermore in January. At all three sites, committee members met separately with laboratory technical staff and with lab managers.

The panel has spent a good deal of time looking into the research relationships between UC and the labs, but it has also found that it needs to review such subjects as employee welfare and personnel issues in order to be able to assess what UC does for the labs and vice versa.

Asked if any themes have emerged from the subcommittee's discussions with UC faculty and administrators, Abarbanel says that "there's a certain sense that the

University has sold its label too cheaply. We've heard that over and over again." The view, he says, is that the University has opened itself up to a great deal of governmental and public criticism for things that it has little actual control over. The Wen Ho Lee controversy, he says, is a case in point. Apart from this, there have been lots of questions from faculty about varying issues: the degree to which UC can perform public service by managing the labs; the actual scope of UC's research re-

lationship with the labs; and the size of the fee UC receives for managing the labs.

The UCORP subcommittee is now forming task groups that will analyze specific issues. Abarbanel says that he hopes his subcommittee will be able to submit a report to the Academic Council in September or October.

Set of "Accountability" Principles Developed for Comprehensive Review

The Academic Senate committee that developed the University of California's newly approved admissions policy of comprehensive review has now drafted a companion set of "accountability principles" for the policy. The principles are aimed at ensuring that comprehensive review is implemented in a fair and open way by all of UC's campuses.

Last fall, both the Senate and the UC Regents approved comprehensive review, under which, beginning immediately, all undergraduate applicants to UC campuses will be judged on the basis of a single set of criteria that include both academic measures and such "supplemental" criteria as income level, the location of a student's secondary school, and special talents or skills. Though both the Senate and the Regents approved the policy by wide margins, both groups recognized that there is possibly a greater amount of subjectivity in comprehensive review than there was in the policy that preceded it. Under the old "two-tiered" admissions policy, at least half of each entering freshman class had to be judged on the basis of academic criteria alone, with the most important of these criteria — high school GPA and standardized test scores — having no element of subjectivity in them. One of the concerns about the new policy was that it would be used as a back-door means of reinserting affirmative action into undergraduate admissions decisions. The Regents were concerned enough about what might be done under comprehensive review that they stipulated the policy "shall be used fairly, shall not use racial preferences of any kind, and shall comply with Proposition 209." Some faculty voiced concerns that went in the other direction: Since, under the new policy, campuses are free to choose from among 14 criteria —

Nominees Sought for Senate's Service Award

Once every two years, the Senate honors one of its own by bestowing, on a deserving UC faculty member, the Oliver Johnson Award for Distinguished Leadership in the Academic Senate. Because the Johnson Award will be given at the end of this academic year, the Senate's Academic Council currently is seeking nominations. Faculty on any of UC's campuses who wish to nominate a Senate member for the award should contact their divisional Committee on Committees.

The Johnson Award's first recipients were Elliot Brownlee of UC Santa Barbara and Carlton Bovell of UC Riverside who jointly received the honor in 1998. In 2000, UC San Diego's Fred Spiess became the award's third recipient. Oliver Johnson, who died in 2000, was a professor of philosophy and longtime Senate activist at UC Riverside. In 1996, he made a substantial gift to the systemwide Senate, the earnings from which are used to fund the award that bears his name.

The Johnson Award provides a cash stipend to a faculty member who has demonstrated "outstanding and creative contributions to divisional and systemwide faculty governance." Any UC Senate member may be nominated for the award, with the exception of faculty who have served during the last three years on the statewide Senate's Academic Council (which makes final decisions on award recipients).

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Education Abroad: Growing Awareness of Study Outside EAP

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sure that all UC students integrate their international study into their UC education to the extent possible.

"We really need to do something for these students," says Michael O'Connell of UC Santa Barbara, this year's chair of the Academic Senate's University Committee on the Education Abroad Program (UCEAP). "The feeling is we need to take a hold of this." Indeed, this factor and others have persuaded UCEAP that it should change its name to the Committee on International Education.

What Are the Numbers?

It is difficult to get a handle on how many UC students study abroad outside EAP because most of these students are enrolling in programs that have no connection to the University. Indeed, according to a report on this subject prepared by the Office of the President, most students studying abroad outside EAP withdraw from their UC campus while studying abroad. Nevertheless, UC administrators have been able to get some sense of how many students are going abroad outside EAP by counting students who, while still at UC, attempt to get pre-approvals for courses taken abroad. Using these figures, UC's Study Abroad Standing Committee concluded in June of 2000 that about as many UC students are studying abroad outside EAP as within it.

What are these students studying overseas? Longtime EAP Director John Marcum — who recently took on the additional title of UC's Associate Provost for International Academic Activities — thinks that many students are enrolling in specialized study programs mounted by individual faculty from small colleges, with many of these programs being summer and short-term operations. The UCOP report notes that intensive language programs are popular with students undertaking foreign study outside EAP (non-EAP students), as are programs in such areas as anthropology and environmental studies. Marcum notes that EAP has affiliation agreements with institutions in 34 countries, but this still leaves a number of countries — Greece, Nepal, Mongolia — that EAP is not affiliated with. The number of UC students going to any one of these countries is likely to be small, but student numbers are likely to add up when all such countries are factored in.

Though almost any kind of international study is likely to be valuable to UC students, UCEAP's O'Connell says his committee has a "strong preference" that UC students study abroad within the EAP framework. EAP students, he notes, are assured that the courses they take abroad will be of high quality; that these courses will, at a minimum, provide them with baccalaureate credit towards their UC degree; and that they can retain all their financial aid while on EAP study. John Marcum agrees that "to the degree that student needs can be met by EAP, it's the route to go." Nevertheless, both Marcum and O'Connell acknowledge that non-EAP foreign programs are likely to retain their appeal, and as such, the University ought to be doing what it can to assist UC students who study in them.

Helping Non-EAP Students

O'Connell thinks a good first step would be for each campus to work out a mechanism under which it can advise such students before they leave, and then stay in touch with them while they are gone. "We need to have a point on campus where students can come for information before going abroad and then contact through e-mail during their period of study," he says, adding that some campuses have already begun establishing such centers. He also believes that it makes no sense for non-EAP students to drop out of UC before they go abroad, only to reapply upon their return.

If part of UC's new approach to this

issue involves reaching out to non-EAP students, another part involves making EAP more attractive so that more students will study abroad through it, rather than through outside programs. Over the years, EAP administrators have put a great deal of thought into how to market EAP to UC's undergraduates. UC's growing awareness of the number of students going abroad outside EAP merely adds another dimension to this issue. As it happens, EAP has been moving for several years in a direction that stands to attract more such students: It is offering more programs of varying length. Ten years ago, almost all EAP study was carried out in "immersion" programs that lasted an entire academic year. Now only 50 percent of EAP's students go abroad for year-long programs. This trend stands to accelerate with UC's move to year-round state-funded instruction. The new state support has allowed EAP to create quarter-length summer programs that charge fees equivalent to regular-term academic fees.

The issue of what additional changes EAP can make touches on questions the program has been dealing with for years. Campus culture seems to have something to do with EAP participation. As the accompanying table shows, student participation rates can differ greatly from one UC campus to another. Over the past nine years, only 1.3 percent of the upper-division students at UC Riverside have participated in EAP, while for UC Santa Cruz the figure is 4.4 percent.

Student major is a huge factor in EAP participation. In a commentary Marcum wrote last year on roadblocks to international study, he noted that, from 1996 to 2001, only 2 percent of UC's EAP students were engineering majors and only 3 percent were physical science majors. Meanwhile, 44 percent were social science majors and 25 percent were arts and humanities majors. All parties seem agreed that one of the root causes of this disparity is the higher number of required courses in the physical sciences and engineering. Students in these disciplines do not believe they can cram all their required courses and international study into their undergraduate years.

More puzzling is the enormous disparity between male and female participation in EAP: female participants outnumber males by more than 2:1, a ratio that holds

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Education Abroad Student Participation Rates By Campus

Berkeley	2.8%
Davis	1.7%
Irvine	1.8%
Los Angeles	1.8%
Riverside	1.3%
San Diego	3.1%
Santa Barbara	2.7%
Santa Cruz	4.4%
Systemwide	2.4%

Figures indicate percent of upper-division UC undergraduates participating in UC's Education Abroad Program (EAP) as averaged over a nine-year period, 1992-93 through 2000-2001.

Subject A: Undergoing Extensive Academic Senate Review

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(though exceptions can be granted to this rule and often are). A fair number of students who have difficulty with Subject A are strong academic performers in other respects — in science or engineering courses, for example. Even students who satisfy Subject A by taking a single course may find their curricular planning disrupted by it, as some Subject A courses are regarded as “remedial” in nature and thus do not carry baccalaureate credit.

Given these factors, an inherent tension exists at UC regarding Subject A. On the one hand, faculty and administrators are agreed that they want undergraduates to have good reading and writing skills. On the other, Subject A can slow time-to-degree and even result in a small number of students withdrawing from the University. On an institutional level, financial issues come into play in this process in more ways than one: slow time-to-degree is costly to the University and state funding cannot be used to support remedial classes.

Requirement Dates from the 1920s

Not surprisingly, Subject A engenders disagreements within the University; indeed, such disagreements have been going on for decades. The Senate committee charged with implementing policy regarding Subject A — the University Committee on Preparatory Education — noted in a report it issued last August that UC’s Subject A requirement has essentially existed in its present form since 1922. The committee said that both the requirement and UC’s Subject A Examination “have received more or less continuous criticism from the very beginning, of a sort that would not be unfamiliar to concerned UC faculty today, without resulting in any essential change to the requirement.”

Whether fundamental change will result from the current round of review is unclear; the scope of the review is, however, the broadest in recent decades. This is so even though recent complaints about Subject A have been limited to complaints about the Subject A Examination. In July, UC’s deans and vice provosts for undergraduate education wrote to UCOP’s Provost King asking for an outside review of the Subject A Examination “to determine whether this exam is the most accurate, practical instrument for determining if our students are capable of college level writing.” King brought the matter up with a

systemwide group called the Academic Planning Council last fall, and the result was his November letter to Academic Senate Chair Viswanathan. In that letter, King asked the Senate to answer the deans’ question about an external review of the Subject A Examination, but he also went on to pose some additional questions about the entire Subject A process. What purpose should the Subject A requirement serve? he asked. Does the current process produce students who, later in their undergraduate career, possess the skills that faculty want them to have? Is a pass-fail test of writing the best way to measure the kind of writing skills that students need?

One of the Senate committees being asked to answer these questions is the Universitywide Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP), chaired this year by David Dooley of UC Irvine.

“UCEP will be considering the whole issue of the quality of undergraduate writing,” Dooley says. “We think there is room to improve writing in the junior and senior years at UC.” Looking in the other direction, UCEP will also be asking how UC might improve its assessment of student writing ability at the point of admission, he says.

Meanwhile, Wendell Potter of UC Davis, the chair of the Senate’s Preparatory Education Committee (UCOPE), says he welcomes the broad review, but hopes the initial questions being asked about Subject A will still be pursued. “I think it’s important to finish the Subject A Exam part,” he says. “I don’t want that part to get lost.”

Potter’s committee undertook a fairly thorough analysis of the Subject A Examination beginning in late 1999 and, this past August, reported that the test seems to be robust in some ways, but of uncertain quality in at least one area. No other test matches the Subject A Examination in terms of measuring the kinds of writing expected of UC students, UCOPE found. But the test’s “reliability,” or ability to measure the same thing over time, is questionable, as pass-rates on it have varied somewhat from year to year (a situation the committee is taking steps to address). UCOPE also undertook its own limited test of the examination’s validity by asking eight UC faculty to read six Subject A essays and then juxtapose the quality of these essays with the scores students received on them. UCOPE was seeking

to answer the question: Does a student who scores well on the examination possess the kind of writing skills that UC faculty are looking for in freshman students? On the whole, the results “impressively confirmed the premise of the Subject A Exam,” the committee wrote.

Deans Request Outside Review

The results of the UCOPE study were released about the time the undergraduate deans made their request for an “external assessment” of the Subject A Examination. Patricia Turner, the vice provost for undergraduate studies at UC Davis, said that UCOPE answered questions it had about the Subject A Examination, but did not ask whether an external review of the test would be worthwhile. From Turner’s perspective, the time is right for such an outside look at the examination.

“All the campuses are thinking about year-round education,” she says. “For incoming students, summer term would be a terrific opportunity to take care of Subject A coursework.” The timing of the current Subject A Examination works against this possibility, however. Students take the examination in May and do not learn whether they have passed it until mid-June — often too late to enroll in a summer course. Turner notes that a major finding of the “Boyer Report” on undergraduate education was that students have a much better chance of success in college if they have gotten preparatory work out of the way before they start their freshman year. In terms of test quality, she says, she and her fellow undergraduate deans “don’t feel we know enough to evaluate” the Subject A Exam. “We can’t say whether this is the best instrument for determining the writing abilities of incoming students.”

From the perspective of UCOPE’s Potter, the most significant single factor underlying the recent interest in the Subject A requirement is the trouble ESL students have in satisfying it. He points out that 95 percent of native English speakers pass the Subject A Examination after taking a single course, whereas for ESL students, the figure is less than 50 percent. UC has a system in place that seems to work well for most students who need help in reading and writing, he says, but that does not mean it works well for UC’s growing number of ESL students.

Diagnostic Testing, Placement, and Education: How Subject A Works

In order to implement its Subject A requirement, the University of California must mount an enormous effort every year that involves diagnostic testing, student placement, and instruction aimed at developing reading and writing proficiency. The Subject A operation is large because the Subject A requirement affects every undergraduate who enters the University. In implementing the requirement, the University must first determine which UC-bound students learned to read and write well enough while in high school to satisfy the requirement. Beyond this, UC must construct, oversee, and grade its own Subject A Examination, which was given to some 18,000 students last year. And it must make available composition courses — either at UC or at Community Colleges — for students who do not satisfy Subject A prior to enrolling at UC. What follows is a brief account of each of these Subject A operations.

Satisfying Subject A in High School

Students can satisfy the Subject A requirement in several ways while still in high school. Every student who enters UC must take the SAT II Writing Test; a score of 680 or better on this test means a student has satisfied UC's Subject A requirement. Likewise, students who score 3 or above on either the Advanced Placement English or Advanced Placement Literature examination are deemed to have met the requirement. Though there are other means of satisfying the requirement that lie outside the University's aegis, the SAT II and AP tests are, by a wide margin, the vehicles that are most commonly used.

If the University has not received, by April 1, evidence that a high school senior has met the requirement through one of the means available, it sends a letter to the student informing him or her that another means of satisfying the requirement will be offered on the second Saturday in May. That means is a test specific to the University of California, the UC Subject A Examination. Every entering student who has not satisfied the Subject A requirement by April 1 must take this examination at one of 100 or so test sites — most of them high schools — scattered throughout the state.

For many years, each UC campus developed and administered its own Subject A Examination, but in 1987 the University began using a single systemwide test. Administration of this test is so complex

that the University has hired the work out: The Educational Testing Service prints and mails test booklets, arranges meeting sites, and so forth. ETS' role is strictly administrative, however; the substance of the Subject A Examination ultimately is under the control of the Academic Senate's University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE).

The Nature of the Examination

Each year's test consists of a prose passage, some 700 to 1,000 words in length, that students are asked to read, analyze, and then write about in the space of two hours. In a model 1987 examination, for example, students read an essay on the power of culture by the Harvard anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn, and then were presented with a short series of questions — a "prompt" — about this essay. ("How does Kluckhohn explain the differences and similarities among the world's peoples? What do you think about his views?")

Because the University is greatly concerned about constructing a test that measures something meaningful with respect to writing ability — and that measures the same thing year after year — it goes through an exhaustive effort in selecting Subject A essays and in constructing the prompts that accompany them. A test development team composed of lecturers from across the system collects potential essays and the best of these are pre-tested in the fall on UC students in both Subject A and regular freshman composition courses. Following this, the team submits its findings to UC's Subject A Examination Committee, chaired by the Examination's Chief Reader, George Gadda of the UCLA Writing Programs. This committee selects three essays to be presented to the Senate's UCOPE, which meets each January to make final decisions on the essay that will be used in May. UCOPE meets again in the spring, before the test is given, and is presented with a range of UC student compositions that have been written in response to the essay and a set of recommendations as to what score each of these compositions should receive. These compositions and scores will be used as benchmarks in grading the compositions students submit in May.

The student Subject A compositions are graded over a single three-day period in June by some 200 readers who come together on UC Berkeley's Clark Kerr

campus. The vast majority of these readers are UC lecturers who teach composition courses, but a smattering of high school, Community College, and UC ladder-rank faculty also participate. Each examination essay is read by two different readers; should the scores that they assign to a given essay differ by more than 1 point (on a 6-point scale) a third reader will be asked to grade the essay. A score of 4 or higher is passing. Thus, the most critical decisions come in connection with essays that are judged, by different readers, to hover in the 3-4 range.

Some 49 percent of the students who took the Subject A Examination in 2000 got a passing grade, meaning that these students were through with the Subject A process. The systemwide pass-rate has had some troubling fluctuations over the years, however, varying from a high of 61 percent to a low of 40 percent. Given this "reliability" issue, UCOPE decided last year to have Chief Reader Gadda work with other writing experts to develop a set of guidelines that will be used in selecting the Examination's essays and prompts.

Placement in the Proper Course

Students who do not pass the Subject A Examination must be placed in an appropriate composition course — or set of courses — to improve their reading and writing skills. Until such time as they satisfy the Subject A requirement within one of these courses, they are not allowed to take regular UC reading and composition courses. Placement for these students begins with UC forwarding their failing Subject A essays to their home campus. There, writing program faculty will make decisions about their course placement.

Subject A readers flag failing essays that they believe have been composed by students who speak English as a second language. If two readers concur that a failing paper was likely written by an ESL student, that student's essay is tagged as an "E" paper as an aid to home-campus placement faculty. In 2000, 23 percent of failing Subject A essays got the "E" designation. Subject A Examination pass-rates vary greatly by ethnic group. In 2001, 56 percent of non-Hispanic whites passed the examination, compared to 32 percent of Chicanos, 42 percent of Chinese, 37 percent of African Americans, 35 percent of Vietnamese, and 61 percent of Pacific Islanders.

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serving as a kind of clearinghouse for digital innovations that have already been put into place by UC faculty, or that are being contemplated by them. The Webzine publishes monthly feature articles about how technology is being used for teaching and learning throughout the system and contains a section called “Who’s Doing What,” which is a growing database of these ideas and efforts, searchable by academic discipline, campus, and keyword. In addition, visitors to the site will find a roster of nine “academic communities” — humanities, social sciences, etc. — with the opening page for each community containing a set of modules such as community-specific excerpts from the “Who’s Doing What” database, news and events, a set of listings by disciplinary specialty, and a set of “discussion forums” aimed at enhancing faculty-to-faculty communication about digital teaching and learning. Because TLtC’s website only came on-line in December, postings to the “Who’s Doing What” database are scarce at present, but site organizers hope to see contributions grow over time.

“We have, within the UC system, lots of faculty doing lots of interesting things, but until now there hasn’t been a way for people to have, in one place, information and examples of who’s doing what across the system,” says TLtC Associate Director Julie Gordon of the Office of the President. Gordon notes that faculty projects need not be cutting-edge to warrant inclusion in the TLtC listings. Faculty may well have innovative approaches to such routine internet tasks as putting syllabi or lecture notes on the web. Likewise, faculty who have ideas for digital projects need not rule out getting a TLtC grant simply because the projects do not seem to break new ground. What is important, Gordon says, is that the ideas faculty propose be useful and applicable across several UC campuses. “We’re really experimenting with this tool — the web — to see how it might function best for faculty.”

The Sacred Sites of Asia Project

If TLtC does not mind thinking small, however, it is likewise not afraid to think big. This year it awarded a \$50,000 implementation grant to a project known as the Sacred Sites of Asia Instructional Resource. Under the leadership of three UC Santa Barbara religious studies faculty, the

project has the goal of allowing students to become virtual visitors to a set of religious sites in Asia. One of the UCSB faculty, Barbara Holdrege, notes that students cannot go to these sites themselves, and slides in a classroom can provide only a very limited idea of their multi-layered reality. As a means of dealing with this problem, Holdrege and her colleagues William Powell and Juan Campo founded the Center for the Analysis of Sacred Space (CASS) at UCSB in 2000. Over time, CASS has gotten grants from several sources that have allowed it not only to do technical web-page development, but to send graduate students to India, Nepal, and China to make video and still-picture recordings of sacred sites, and to bring together a group of faculty, mostly from UC, to strategize on website content and uses.

The results of this effort can be seen in a set of web pages (at <http://archserve.id.ucsb.edu/CASS/>) that demonstrate some of the potential of the Sacred Sites project. When the pages are in finished form, students will be able to make virtual visits to any of 20 sacred site complexes in Asia. A student will begin by locating a given site on the globe — homing in on it progressively through a set of maps — after which the student can choose from among a number of ways to approach the site. The sensory highlight of these approaches is the 3-D visualizations that CASS is creating for many of the sites. Just as a video game player can use a computer to stroll through a room, so students will be able to “walk” through a sacred site. Indeed, at some sites students will be able to choose among several *identities* in making such tours. Religious visitors to these sites are referred to as “pilgrims,” but not all pilgrims have the same access to a given site. A low-caste village woman may not have the same access to a Hindu site as a high-caste Brahmin. At some sites, student visitors will be able to choose from among such identities before entering to get a sense of how social standing affects the reality of sacred-site access.

There is more to a sacred site than its large-scale physical layout, of course. Each site exists within the context of a historical and a modern community; each has layers of narrative traditions associated with it; and each has sets of images — paintings, sculptures and so forth — as well as ritual traditions that are part of it. The CASS project will allow students to explore the

sites in each of these dimensions and more.

But what are the uses for this Sacred Sites material? In a workshop CASS held last March, seven faculty on three UC campuses — Santa Barbara, Riverside, and San Diego — agreed that the site would be useful in 14 classes they teach. UCSB’s Holdrege expects that this spring she will teach one of the first courses that utilizes the site. Ultimately, she says, the site should serve not only as a teaching resource, but as a research resource as well.

Computer Technology Synergies

The Sacred Sites of Asia project also provides a case in point for the synergies that can take place when faculty come up with new classroom uses for computer technology. CASS has established relationships with three UC-affiliated projects — the Alexandria Digital Library (ADL), the Alexandria Digital Earth Prototype (ADEPT), and the Electronic Cultural Atlas Initiative (ECAI) — each of which has been developing geographically based digital information systems. ADEPT, for example, aims to map the entire earth and link various kinds of data to these maps. To date, much of the work of ADEPT and ADL has focused on earth sciences research. But the Sacred Sites project provides a way to bring “georeferenced” materials into humanities classrooms. As such, Sacred Sites is now developing a course prototype that fits into the ADEPT framework as a means of showing what this technology can do in the humanities.

The Sacred Sites project was bootstrapped up, by its UCSB faculty, in a way that many such projects are. Holdrege and her CASS colleagues got a \$12,000 UCSB Instructional Improvement Grant, approved by a Santa Barbara Academic Senate committee, and a subsequent \$20,000 grant from Wabash Center, a program funded by the Lilly Endowment. With this money, CASS was able to send the graduate students to Asia to begin taking georeferenced digital videos and digital pictures of sacred sites — work that allowed the project to mount its own images of the sites, thus keeping it out of copyright entanglements. A \$5,000 planning grant from TLtC allowed the UCSB faculty to hold the March 2001 workshop on the site’s structure and uses. And the \$50,000 TLtC grant will now allow CASS to do the programming and other work

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Education Abroad

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fairly constant across all majors. Why should this be?

“The male/female disparity is one of the great mysteries of study abroad,” says O’Connell. Various ideas have been offered for its existence, but no one seems to know if any of them is true. One idea is that men are more focused on their careers and fear that study abroad is likely to interfere with career trajectories. Another is that women are simply more willing to take risks and are less afraid of feeling naïve in a foreign culture.

There are other perceived and real roadblocks to international study. Many UC students seem to believe that they do not have the grades to qualify for EAP. While it is true that a 3.0 GPA is required for year-long immersion programs, EAP now has a minimum GPA of 2.5 for its shorter “language and culture” programs.

From a student perspective, one important obstacle to participation is anxiety about whether courses they take abroad will satisfy major or general education requirements back at UC. EAP courses are regarded as UC courses, but departments have the final say over whether these courses will carry credit toward a major, while colleges determine whether they will carry general education credit. Both Marcum and O’Connell are enthusiastic about the growing number of departments that have appointed faculty “liaison officers” who meet with students before they depart and try to determine which foreign courses will carry credit toward a major. Marcum notes that EAP’s partner institutions are increasingly providing more information in advance about the nature of their courses, thus making it easier for UC faculty to determine what should carry credit.

O’Connell is hopeful that progress on this issue and others will eventually result in more UC students going abroad to study through EAP. “UC’s Education Abroad Program is one of the most extensive among all North American universities,” he says. “It’s an extraordinary operation.” The idea, he says, is to get more UC students to take advantage of it.

A 2001 commentary by John Marcum, “What Direction for Study Abroad?” can be found on the web at: <http://www.uocap.ucsb.edu/Staff/chronical5-14-2000.rtf>

Chair’s Notes: Admissions Testing and Senate Town Hall Meetings

The Academic Senate has entered an important phase in the process by which it will make decisions about undergraduate admissions testing at UC. Having considered a proposal from President Atkinson that UC abandon the SAT I examination in favor of expanded use of the SAT II or other tests, the Senate’s Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) last month released its own set of preliminary recommendations on testing. First, it recommended a set of principles that it believes UC should employ in making decisions about admissions tests. Second, it agreed with the President about replacing the SAT I, but recommended putting in its place not SAT II tests, but instead a new array of tests that UC would construct in cooperation with one or both of the large private-sector educational testing agencies. The BOARS report that contains these recommendations can be found on the web at: <http://www.ucop.edu/news/sat/boars.html>.

With its receipt of the BOARS recommendations, the Senate now has an important job to do. It must initiate the broadest possible discussion among the UC faculty regarding admissions testing — a discussion that includes not only Senate committee members, but rank-and-file UC faculty as well. At its January meeting, the statewide Senate’s Academic Council took several steps that should ensure this kind of wide-ranging dialogue. The Council voted to forward the BOARS recommendations to campus Senates for review, and it also decided to recommend that each campus hold a Senate Town Hall Meeting that will allow any UC faculty member to learn more about what BOARS has proposed. Each of the chairs of the campus Senates has agreed to hold a Senate Town Hall Meeting, with most of these meetings likely to take place in March or in April. The only campuses that will not hold such meetings are San Francisco (which has no undergraduates) and possibly Santa Cruz (which held a campuswide meeting on admissions testing in January, but may hold another).

The format of each meeting will differ in accordance with campus preferences, but a number of speakers have offered to make themselves available as meeting presenters, among them Dorothy Perry, the chair of BOARS; Saul Geiser, the co-author of the research paper “UC and the SAT I”; UCLA Professor Eva Baker, co-director of the Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing; and representatives from The Educational Testing Service and ACT. In addition, a few faculty members are carrying on their own analyses of the data used by Geiser and his co-author, Roger Studley, in their paper. We hope the results of their analyses will be presented at the meetings.

The main purpose of the town hall meetings is to create an opportunity for faculty to learn about what BOARS is proposing, to express their concerns, and to ask questions regarding admissions tests. It is my hope that large numbers of faculty will participate in the meetings, thus enabling divisional Senate leaders to obtain the faculty’s views on what is being proposed.

After the town hall meetings and discussions by campus committees, divisional chairs will report to the Academic Council about their campus’ reactions to the BOARS recommendations. The statewide Senate has been following a tentative time-line under which final Senate action could be taken on the BOARS proposals no earlier than the Senate’s May Assembly meeting. Should the Assembly approve the proposals presented to it, the Regents would in turn be asked to approve what the Assembly recommends. There is, however, nothing set in stone about this time-line. The Academic Council has made clear that the Senate will carry out a thoughtful and intensive review of undergraduate admissions testing. This process need not result in a simple up-or-down decision this year regarding the BOARS proposals. It is possible that the Senate may accept part of what BOARS has recommended this year, while leaving other parts of the proposal to be considered next year.

—Chand Viswanathan
Chair, Academic Council

Subject A Process

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UC campuses handle Subject A courses in a variety of ways. Davis and San Diego do not mount their own courses; instead, they have agreements with area community colleges to provide instruction to their Subject A students. All other campuses mount their own courses, but these courses vary greatly in their scope and purpose. A few have a relatively pure Subject A composition focus. These courses are regarded as “remedial” in nature and thus do not carry baccalaureate credit and are not funded by the state. Most Subject A courses, however, combine both Subject A and regular reading and composition components, such that students get baccalaureate credit for taking them. At the conclusion of some Subject A courses, students take the Subject A Examination again; in others, students are regarded as having satisfied the Subject A requirement simply by getting a grade of C or better.

Notice

is published four times during the academic year for the University of California faculty by the Academic Council of the universitywide Academic Senate.

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TLtC Operation

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necessary to make the site a reality.

From TLtC’s perspective, the Sacred Sites effort is an example of the kind of projects it seeks to facilitate: those that are campus-initiated, that bring technological innovation into the classroom, and that involve more than one UC campus.

Apart from its funding and clearinghouse functions, TLtC also serves as a news site for teaching and learning technology. The TLtC website has a managing editor, Paula Murphy, whose duties include producing news stories on how instructional technology is being used across the UC system. Meanwhile, the TLtC grants program is a peer-reviewed operation in which funding decisions are made by a Grants Review Committee composed of nine faculty (one from each operating UC campus). Overall policy for TLtC is set by a 10-member Advisory Board composed of UC campus faculty and the newly named university librarian for UC Merced.

Taking the largest view, TLtC is an operation whose goal is to both disseminate and facilitate UC faculty ideas about instructional technology. One of the messages the center hopes to get across is that any faculty member can join in this effort.

“We hope to let faculty know that there is a low entry barrier to this,” says TLtC’s Director Julius Zelmanowitz, UCOP’s vice provost for academic initiatives. “You don’t have to be a techie to have something you might do, or to learn something from your colleagues, within the TLtC framework.”

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Accountability Principles

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10 of them academic, 4 not — might a given campus begin admitting all its applicants based purely on a set of academic criteria?

Recognizing that such questions were bound to arise, the Senate’s Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS), which developed the comprehensive review policy, has now constructed a set of accountability principles that are aimed at ensuring fairness in the implementation of the policy.

BOARS agreed to 10 principles that will serve as guidelines for campuses as they implement comprehensive review. Among them are stipulations that campuses should articulate their admissions goals and define their admissions selection criteria, thereby bringing clarity and openness to the process. The principles also call for campus practices to be “routinely evaluated and monitored both by appropriate committees of the campus Academic Senate Divisions and by BOARS at regularly scheduled intervals.”

Beyond this, the principles call for campuses to maintain and regularly study “admissions outcomes” data, meaning not only data about student qualification at entrance, but demographic data about such factors as ethnic status and geographic distribution.

When the Senate’s Assembly approved comprehensive review last October, it did so with the proviso that BOARS would monitor the policy and provide the Academic Council with an evaluation of it within five years of its implementation. BOARS Chair Dorothy Perry notes that the accountability principles should ensure that the campuses will be collecting enough admissions data for BOARS to carry out this evaluation.