

**Annual Report: Academic Year 2008-2009
Davis Division: Academic Senate**

Committee on Admissions & Enrollment

Total Meetings: 2	Meeting frequency: 2-3 meetings per quarter or as needed	Average hours of committee work each week: Variable

Listing of bylaw changes proposed: None

Listing of committee policies established or revised:

Issues considered by the committee:
Augmented Review of Freshman Applications
Holistic Review
Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC)
Approval of UC Eligibility Reform to be implemented in fall 2012: What changes should be made to UC Davis's Comprehensive Review?
a. Planning schedule
b. Adjusting UC Davis policies
c. Learning from other UC campus procedures
d. Automatic admission via ELC: 4% vs 9%

Recommended procedural or policy changes for the coming year:

Committee's Charge

This committee considers matters involving undergraduate admissions and enrollment at UC Davis.

Committee Narrative (2008-09)

The Admissions & Enrollment Committee (A&E) met twice in academic year 2008-09. The committee provided a positive but qualified support to the *Proposal to Reform UC's Freshman Eligibility Policy*, which was approved by the Regents on February 5, 2009. The new rules will take effect for the fall 2012 entering class.

Discussion

A & E committee members devoted discussion to current state of undergraduate admissions, projections for the 2009-2010 admissions cycle, and the coming changes in 2012 (see below). At present, most UC Davis freshman applicants come from the Bay Area and Northern California. Tidal Wave 2 has now reached its peak and the number of high school graduates is stabilizing or tapering off slightly. The mean grade point average for UC Davis applicants increased from 3.69 last year to 3.72 in 2009, but underrepresented students remain chronically underrepresented. The transfer path is less costly to families and the admit rate is 70% for transfer students. A record number of high school seniors have applied to study at UC Davis, numbering 43,374, which is a 4.3% increase over fall 2008. Systemwide, unduplicated applications went up 4.7% and transfer applications saw an increase of 11.2%. UC Davis is second to UC Riverside in terms of the largest gains in freshman applications among UC's nine undergraduate campuses. The Undergraduate Admissions staff provided the committee with an overview of the Fall '08 admissions cycle, targets and applications for Fall '09, and plans for the cycle. It was indicated that the overall freshman enrollment target was being lowered by 8% from 5,000 to 4,600. However, due to the campus's guarantee of admission to all applicants who are

Eligible in the Local Context (ELC), a decrease in the measure of diversity was not anticipated. It was commented that increased diversity was the intent of the ELC guarantee when it was approved by the Admissions & Enrollment Committee some 10 years ago.

The freshman eligibility proposal and its final passage dominated the committee's agenda for most of the year. The new policy will take effect in 2012 (meaning the class applying in November 2011 for admission the following year). The main element of the policy is the *Entitled To Review* (ETR) concept, which includes more students who might otherwise be excluded. California students who complete 11 of 15 a-g required college preparatory courses by the end of their junior year in high school, achieve a weighted GPA of at least 3.0 in their a-g courses, and take either the ACT with writing or the SAT reasoning examination, will be entitled to a full and comprehensive review of their applications at each UC campus to which they apply. Within this Entitled to Review pool, two categories of applicants will be guaranteed admission somewhere within the UC system: those who fall in the top 9% of all high school graduates statewide, based on their ACT/SAT test scores and GPA in UC-approved courses; and those who rank in the top 9% of their own high school graduating class, based on their GPA in UC-approved courses. Together, these students will make up about 10% of the state's high school graduates. If not admitted to any campus to which they applied, these students will be referred, as eligible students are currently, to a campus with remaining space and offered admission there (currently UC Riverside or UC Merced). The remaining admissions needed to make up the full 12.5% pool of top students will be drawn from the broader "entitled to review" pool. The new eligibility policy further specifies that prospective students will no longer be required to take the SAT subject examinations, thus aligning UC's test requirements more closely with those of other public universities.

These new eligibility requirements will have wide-ranging effects. An estimated 21.7% of California high school graduates will be entitled to a full review of their

applications under the new eligibility proposal, compared to 13.4% of graduates estimated to be UC eligible in 2007. The new policy is expected to expand the pool of UC applicants significantly, by as much as 30,000 students. Almost all students who would be eligible under current policy will still be entitled to review under the new policy. More students (from 4% today to 9% under the new policy) will be guaranteed admission. This improves UC's reach among high schools. Although the impact on diversity of the freshman class is difficult to project, the broader pool of students entitled to review should be more diverse with respect to race/ethnicity, geography and socioeconomic status than the current pool. A guarantee of UC admission for 10% of public high school graduates should go a long way to ensuring greater consistency with the Master Plan's initiatives.

The committee noted that the new eligibility policy will necessitate continued work in 2009-2010 in reassessing existing UCD comprehensive review guidelines and philosophies, and possibly developing new or revised procedures and policies in order to implement the changed requirements. In particular, the committee discussed the implications of the new eligibility policy for UCD's current practice of guaranteeing admission to all students who are identified as Eligible in the Local Context (ELC) (ranked in top 4% of their high school class by the end of their junior year]. The committee also considered necessary adjustments to the current Comprehensive Review practices in light of the coming elimination of the SAT Subject Test requirement.

Questions such as the following were discussed:

Why make these changes?

What impact will the new policy have on UC's academic standards?

What is the impact on UC's diversity?

How does the new policy differ from current eligibility rules?

How does this policy fit with the California Master Plan for Higher Education?

Where should UC Davis go from here? What is the cost to the institution to move from a points-based to a holistic review system? From weighted versus un-weighted GPA scoring system? What changes should be made to UC Davis's Comprehensive Review? These questions will continue to be discussed in the coming year by the 2009-2010 committee.

Terms

Augmented Review: An additional review of an applicant's file, conducted by an experienced reviewer. This additional review is useful in cases where the applicant's background, experiences, and/or qualifications are sufficiently unusual that the standard comprehensive-review process alone has a high likelihood of rendering an inappropriate selection decision. Augmented review may result in reversal of the selection decision rendered by the standard process, and/or in admission of an applicant "by exception." Admission by exception is defined as admission of an applicant who is technically ineligible for UC. University-wide policy provides that up to 6% of each freshman class may be admitted by exception.

Holistic Review: This term is used to describe the comprehensive-review processes in place at the Berkeley and Los Angeles campuses, in which highly-trained readers evaluate each applicant on the basis of a one-page quantitative abstract of the applicant's academic performance and school context, the applicant's essay responses, and other information available from the application. The readers assign a single score to the entire application. Each file is read by more than one reader, and the read outcomes are subject to rigorous monitoring for consistency and alignment with reader norming protocols. The holistic approach to application evaluation is particularly appropriate at campuses where very high levels of selectivity require that the read process make meaningful distinctions among large numbers of applicants who have similarly high GPAs and test scores. This approach may be contrasted with the more formula-driven

selection process in use at UC Davis, in which points are assigned in a number of well-defined categories.

Eligibility in the Local Context: The ELC pathway to UC eligibility holds that any California high-school student who has completed UC's required college-preparatory curriculum and pattern of standardized admissions exams is "UC eligible" if they are in the top 4% of their school's graduating class. Such students need not meet the GPA/test-score index which is required for UC-eligibility by the statewide pathway. The ELC program is about 10 years old. The original rationale for the ELC program was to give UC a presence in every high school in the state, including those that have historically sent very few students to UC. However, experience has shown that the 4% threshold sets a very high mark, so that essentially all ELC-eligible students are also eligible via the statewide index. The ELC program has proven valuable nonetheless, as it gives top students at schools with weak college-going cultures a strong incentive to complete UC's course and test requirements, thereby making themselves UC-eligible. UC Davis is one of the UC campuses which automatically admits all ELC applicants. This practice gives UCD a powerful tool with which to attract top students from all over the state: seniors who receive the letter from UC notifying them that they will be ELC-eligible if they remain on-track, know with certainty that they will be admitted to UC Davis if they apply. Prior to instituting this practice a few years ago, upward of 95% of all ELC-eligible applicants to UC Davis were admitted anyway.