

## COMMITTEE ON ADMISSIONS AND FINANCIAL AID

### Annual Report 2021-22

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

The Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid (CAFA) continued its annual work evaluating the outcomes of the prior admissions cycle and adapting to changing circumstances in shaping the class entering in fall 2022 and planning ahead for new modes of application evaluation for the 2023 cohort. As always, we worked closely with Undergraduate Education (UE), Enrollment Management (EM), and Undergraduate Admissions (UA), whose energy and creativity provided us with both information and options for setting policy.

#### I. WORK OF CAFA IN 2021-22

##### A. Changes in Policy and Practice

**1. Coursework repeat policy for transfers.** Until this cycle, individual departments determined to what extent repeated courses in community college would influence transfer admissions decisions. CAFA instituted a uniform policy this year to ignore repeated coursework and determine admission decisions for transfers based only on the final grades for courses that were eventually passed. This brings us into alignment with policy at all other UC campuses admitting undergraduates.

**2. Admission and disqualification issues related to COVID-19.** Conditions for disqualification of admitted first-year students for academic shortfalls in their senior year of college were returned to their pre-COVID state for students entering in fall 2022. But the holistic review reader guidelines for this cohort were written to encourage reviewers to give extra leeway to students who specifically explained extraordinary impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic had on their prior work.

**3. Senior level transfers.** Policy on admitting senior-level transfers was formalized in this cycle. Consideration of these students for admission will be on the basis of approval of an appeal, where the evaluation will center on their meeting all requirements for junior transfers, expectation that they will be able to fulfill all graduation (including residency) requirements within a year, and “a clear plan and maturely articulated motivations” for their change of university (and possibly major).

**4. Second baccalaureate applicants.** This policy was revisited after a number of years and formalized during this cycle. The policy is similar to that for senior-level transfers. An appeal must be filed and accepted to apply, the student has to meet all transfer requirements in their new field of study, they must have a clear explanation of why the second degree is necessary for their career plans, and the new field must be substantially different from the old one.

**5. Holistic Review and selection of frosh applicants.** This year was the first time that UC Santa Cruz used a holistic review with multiple scores, a new system approved by the prior CAFA in spring 2021. Instead of a single holistic review score, readers provided 8 scores that were used during the selection phase. First, on a scale of 1 (best) to 5 (worse), an

“achievement within context” (AWC) that considers the GPA, number of A-G courses, number of honors courses, and rigor of the proposed senior year coursework in the context of the opportunities available in the student’s school, and the performance of other applicants to UC from the school. Second, a set of 7 scores on “noncognitive” factors on a scale of 1 (exceptional), 2 (good to excellent), and 3 (no evidence of strength presented). The noncognitive factors are resilience, maturity, special talents, alignment of achievements with proposed major, participation in certain academic preparation programs, involvement and leadership in community and school organizations, and likelihood to actively contribute to campus diversity and inclusion priorities. Holistic review instructions were modified and approved for the next cycle (for first-year students entering fall 2023) as well this year. The noncognitive factor related to participation in certain academic preparation programs was removed from the holistic review stage. The COVID-related language mentioned above was retained from the prior cycle (first-year students entering fall 2022).

**6. Early Consideration.** For the first time in a number of years, we did not do an early consideration/ early notification process for athletes and other students with special talents. This change was decided by last year’s CAFA due to the extra administrative burdens imposed by state audits in the wake of the Varsity Blues scandal and due to increasing efficiency in the admissions office allowing larger numbers of early admission offers to be extended to students rated highly in the holistic review, a pool that includes a number of the academically strongest special-talent students already.

**7. College Scholars.** CAFA formally invited the Faculty Director of Undergraduate Honors Programs, Amanda Smith, to meet both the committee as a whole and to attend meetings of the data subcommittee during the early stages of the selection process, so as to understand the ways in which we promote equity in admissions by viewing achievement in the context of opportunity, so as to be able to apply similar considerations in the selection of students for the College Scholars program. While selection of Scholars will always remain the purview of the College Scholars program entirely, we look forward to continuing this level of coordination, since in addition to the great value of the program for the students, their timely notification of admission into the program is an important recruiting tool for CAFA/Enrollment Management/Admissions.

## **B. Sub-Committee Efforts**

### **1. Appeals Subcommittee**

The Appeals Subcommittee continued to meet occasionally throughout the year to consider cases of cancellations of admission offers from the prior cycle.

### **2. Data Subcommittee**

As in prior years, the Data Subcommittee met regularly with staff from Enrollment Management and admissions (and, this year, Institutional Research and Policy Studies (IRAPS), a highly successful collaboration which we hope will continue) in order to design selection criteria for each stage of admission offers (early, regular, and waitlist). Several admission scenarios were presented to the full CAFA for selection and approval. While there was no separate set of admission criteria for Baskin School of Engineering (BSOE) this year, a CAFA member served also as the BSOE representative on the Data

Subcommittee, in a sort of practice run in case BSOE's plan for generating a separate set of selection criteria during this process is approved for next year.

### **C. Correspondence**

CAFA put extensive effort this cycle into reviewing two major proposals through the Senate consultation process. These are summarized here very briefly; the interested reader should consult the formal correspondence for a more nuanced and more accurate representation.

The first issue was the campus proposal for online initiatives. CAFA was skeptical overall of online degrees, pointing out that while they were being recommended by the administration as a way to expand enrollment significantly and relieve congestion on campus, the work of the subcommittees on campus analyzing the concept, and the work done previously by the systemwide committee, suggested that only very small, specialized, and expensive "boutique" programs would provide a UC-quality education. CAFA stressed that before investing in online degrees, the potential benefit of comparable investments on traditional education should be laid out for comparison. CAFA stated that if any undergraduate online degrees were instituted, they should be as upper-division programs only (for transfer students or students who were resident on campus for their first two years). This would reduce the cost and make it easier to justify the equivalence to an in-person degree. Finally, CAFA noted what we believe is a much higher-value way of staking out a unique position in the online space: having UC Santa Cruz coordinate a systemwide network of individual online courses chosen specifically to help UC students complete their degrees in popular majors, with campuses sharing the burden and each offering a few of these courses to be taken by anyone in the system.

The second major issue was the systemwide proposals for new Ethnic Studies (ES) requirements for transfer admission (as part of the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC), in the wake of a similar requirement at CSU) and for frosh admission (in the wake of new statewide ES requirements for graduation from public high schools). While CAFA supported both proposals, we found significant issues to be addressed for the latter proposal. The statewide standards for high-school graduation run to 900 pages of text, and leave the content required for approved courses very broad; while the proposed UC requirements for the new "Area H" were brief and not necessarily actionable by non-experts. In our letter, we emphasized the need for a document meant to "translate" the UC standards in terms of specific parts of the documentation that high schools already have for the state graduation standards. We emphasized the need to consult with UCOP to make sure they are ready to evaluate course proposals in the way that UC faculty intend. Finally, we also proposed several measures to make sure that students from under resourced schools who may have trouble meeting both the state and separate UC standards still have a road to UC admission, perhaps by temporary approval of any course that meets the state standards to be allowed for Area H.

CAFA also commented on two drafts of BSOE's proposal for greater autonomy in admissions and the granting of degrees. We commented only on the first aspect, as being in our purview. While reserving ultimate authority over admissions policy for all undergraduate students, CAFA approved of a plan to have a representative of BSOE always on CAFA's data subcommittee to work on customized selection plans in each cycle for incoming BSOE

students, with the particular goal of improving equity and diversity metrics for their entering class.

## **II. ISSUES FOR THE NEAR FUTURE**

### **A. Compare favorably**

In the absence of standardized test scores, CAFA hopes and expects that BOARS will specify new guidelines during the 2022-23 academic year on how to evaluate whether admitted nonresident students as a whole “compare favorably” with California admits as required by state law and Regent’s policy. One possible solution discussed in the 2021-22 CAFA is to use first-year performance of California, domestic nonresident, and international students at UC Santa Cruz from a recent cohort to “correct” high-school grade point average (GPA) scores (which are not clearly comparable between California and other states, and even more difficult to compare with schools in other countries) before comparison is done on the mean GPAs of these three residency groups for the students being evaluated for admission to the 2023-24 class.

### **B. Ethnic studies (Area H)**

There will likely be further discussion of this proposal in BOARS, Academic Council, and the divisional Senates this year, no resolution having been reached in 2021-22. CAFA should remain cognizant of the detailed work that was done in the committee this year analyzing the proposal and its implications, and continue to play an active role as the discussion progresses.

## **III. Admissions and Financial Aid for Fall 2021**

### **A. Admissions<sup>1</sup>**

A brief summary of UC Santa Cruz admissions outcome data provided by the Division of Undergraduate Education’s Office of Enrollment Management is outlined below. Admissions is dynamic, and data, such as residency or enrollment estimates, may change.

UC Santa Cruz received 75,041 fall 2021 applications, another record year. Frosh applications totaled 61,822 (CA = 49,188, out of state = 6,461, and international = 6,173) and transfer applications totaled 13,219 (CA = 11,785, out of state = 440, and international = 994). As with last year, the campus was open for winter transfer applications in selected majors. The campus will be open again for winter 2022, transfer students only. The campus received 574 applications for winter 2022; last winter was 710. The campus relies heavily on this pool to achieve the state mandate to enroll one new California transfer student for every two new California frosh, commonly referred to as 2:1. The Jack Baskin School of Engineering and in the Division of Physical and Biological Sciences continue to open many majors for winter.

UC Santa Cruz admitted 36,411 frosh for fall 2021, including 26,817 California, 5,231 out of state and 4,363 international. The frosh admission rate was 58.9%. The average high school GPA of admitted frosh was 3.99 (on a 4.4 weighted scale), compared to fall 2020 (3.91).

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<sup>1</sup> Data from UCSC Data Warehouse (InfoView- AIS-Daily), July 2021

Waitlist and referral pool strategies were utilized to manage enrollment outcomes within an ever-changing environment. The established Computer Science capacity constraints were met. UC Santa Cruz admitted 7,730 sophomore and junior transfer students, including 6,993 California, 142 out of state and 595 international. The admission rate for all transfers was 58.5%. The total number of admits decreased by 3.82% and California admits decreased by 2.88% from last year. Admitted sophomore transfer applicants met the same course requirements and (where applicable) major preparation requirements as junior transfer students, but had fewer than 90 units for transfer.

Frosh Statements of Intent to Register (SIRs) total 4,887, including 4,346 California, 330 out of state and 211 international students. California SIRs from students identifying as African American reached 5.87%, increasing from 5.27% in fall 2020 and 4.17% in fall 2019; Hispanic/ Latino reached 32.62%, increasing from 28.35% in fall 2020 and 27.11% in fall 2019.

Transfer SIRs total 2,070, including 1,976 California, 23 out of state and 71 international students. California SIRs from students identifying as African American reached 5.42%, slightly decreasing from 5.61% in fall 2020 and 5.65% in fall 2019; Hispanic/ Latino reached 31.24%, decreasing from 32.18% in fall 2020 and 31.47% in fall 2019. Continued close collaboration among Admissions, EM, UE, CAFA, CEP, programs and the disciplinary divisions helped to maximize transfer admission offers to qualified transfer applicants. UC Santa Cruz expects to fall short of 2:1 again this year as a result of increasing the California frosh target, currently estimated at 2.1:1. Had the California frosh target not been increased, it would have been 1.8:1.

## **B. Financial Aid and Scholarships**

In 2021-22, the Division of Undergraduate Education's Financial Aid and Scholarships Office provided support to 13,784 undergraduate students (77% of undergraduate population) and 1950 graduate students (98% of graduate population). The types of aid provided included grants, scholarships, fellowships, loans and/or work-study assistance.

### **1. Award Program Updates**

At a federal level, the primary impact to students remains with the Federal HEERF funding. After 3 separate rounds of funding since March 2020 (CARES, CRRSAA, and ARP), the campus has received a total of \$44,692,560 for direct distribution to students as grant aid. As of June 2022, the campus has disbursed \$44,334,957 (99%) of the funds to a total population of 18,195 undergraduate and graduate students.

At a state and institutional level, there have been many new programs introduced or implemented over the past calendar year or in the coming year.

#### **a. University Policy Changes**

*Tuition Stability Plan:* In July of 2020, the Board of Regents approved a multi-year tuition plan that includes different tuition levels by cohort. The entering cohort for Fall 2022 will be the first cohort with this tuition plan.

*Debt Free UC:* UC has rolled out a model potentially providing a debt free path for a subset of students in 2022-23 as a first step toward the Governor’s goal of every undergraduate debt free by 2030, both through UC and State financial aid programs. (See MCS 2.0 below.)

*Residence Determination Process Improvement:* UCOP is working with campuses to implement an earlier residence determination process, letting students know before they need to accept an offer of admission if they are residents for tuition purposes.

**b. *State Policy Changes***

The State of California has many expanded and new programs:

*Middle Class Scholarship (MCS) 2.0:* The Middle Class Scholarship Program is being expanded significantly.

- MCS is currently a \$37M program serving 11,700 UC students
- The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) estimates it will grow to a \$240M program serving 114,000 UC students in 2022-23.
- Each award requires file exchanges with CSAC.
- Provides awards without regard to EFC, which will significantly complicate coordination with federal student aid rules.

*Learning Aligned Employment Program (LAEP):* The Governor’s budget more than doubled this work-study program from \$200M to \$500M. LAEP goes beyond a traditional work-study program, many of which fall outside the existing expertise in financial aid offices:

- Require MOUs with off-campus employers for each relationship and UC staff “shall review each LAE position to determine whether it satisfies all conditions.”
- Prioritize opportunities for certain students (e.g., low-income) and STEM fields.
- Provide academic credit, if possible.

**c. *Other New or Expanded State Financial Aid Programs:***

- NEW: Community College Cal Grant Entitlement Program
- NEW: One-time \$15M in State emergency grants
- NEW: Dreamer Service Incentive Grant
- NEW: Augmented Cal Grants for student parents and former foster youth
- EXPANDED: Golden State Teachers Grant Program
- MADE PERMANENT: \$4M in summer financial aid

**2. Current Financial Aid Funding Model and Data**

The UC Education Finance Model (EFM), which utilizes a 33% return-to-aid (RTA) from tuition and fees to support low income students, continues to be closely reviewed by the system-wide EFM committee. This model will be changing with cohort tuition, with subsequent increases to tuition levels having a 45% RTA. The UCOP EFM committee

meets quarterly regarding issues that affect the determination of the Cost-of-Attendance and the cross-campus allocation of aid funds.

When tuition and campus fees are combined with other elements of the student budget, such as housing/dining and health care, the average cost for a UC Santa Cruz CA resident student living on campus in 2022-23 will be \$39,171. Non-residents will have an additional \$31,026 tuition charges, bringing the non-resident on-campus budget to \$70,197. Under EFM, 2022-23 UC Santa Cruz undergraduates who qualify for need-based assistance must pay approximately the first \$9,600 of their need from loan and/or work resources. After subtracting the loan/work expectation and the family contribution (from FAFSA/DREAM App data), grant aid can help pay the remainder of the total estimated total cost.

The Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan guarantees that students from families with incomes under \$80,000 will receive enough gift aid (from all sources) to pay UC tuition and fees. Virtually all students in this category already receive enough gift aid to meet this commitment. However, under the Plan some students who would not normally receive gift aid (due to high asset equity) receive gift aid.

In 2021-22 the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office administered \$295 million in financial assistance to about 77% of our undergraduates, as compared to \$238 million / 72% in 2020-21. (*See table*)

<b>2021-22 Source of Aid</b>	<b>Percent of Undergraduates</b>	<b>Amount Received</b>	<b>Average Award</b>
<b>Gift Aid (all sources)</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>\$ 233,697,283</b>	<b>\$ 19,921</b>
<b>UCSC Scholarships*</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>\$9,264,335</b>	<b>\$ 3,394</b>
<b>Federal Pell Grants*</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>\$ 30,782,202</b>	<b>\$ 5,161</b>
<b>Student/Parent Loans</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>\$51,810,667</b>	<b>\$9,704</b>
<b>Federal Work-Study</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>\$ 1,493,440</b>	<b>\$ 1,968</b>
<b>* Included in gift aid</b>			

Of the UC Santa Cruz students receiving bachelor’s degrees in 2020-21, 49% of those who originally enrolled as first-time frosh borrowed student loans while attending. Those students have an average debt of \$20,191. However, the debt can be as high as \$57,500 on an individual basis, which is the federal cumulative maximum amount an undergraduate student may borrow. Nationally, 62% of seniors graduated in 2019 had student loan debt,

with an average of \$28,950 per borrower (<https://ticas.org/our-work/student-debt/>). National Data for students graduating in 2020-21 is not yet available.

Each year, the U.S. Department of Education calculates cohort default rates for loans by campus. The national 3-Year average was 7.3% for 2018 (per Dept. of Ed.). The rate for the campus has been exceptionally low in recent years.

UCSC Year	3-Year Draft Default Rate	3-Year Official Default Rate
2017	2.9%	2.9%
2018	3.0%	2.9%
2019	1.3%	1.3%

Campus undergraduate scholarship programs are administered by various campus departments as well as by the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office. Listed below are data for major scholarship programs administered by the Financial Aid and Scholarship Office:

2021-22 Scholarship Program	Recipients	Amount Received	Average Award
Regents Scholarships	217	\$ 1,040,954	\$4,797
Campus Merit Scholarships	256	\$ 483,621	\$1,889
Pister Leadership Opportunity Awards	22	\$ 175,155	\$7,961

While issues relating to financial aid are also in CAFA's purview, most issues are governed by state and federal law and Regental policy, so there is seldom any issue that comes before the committee, and there was none in this cycle. The Office of the President maintains numerous reports regarding student financial support on the following website:

<https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/infocenter>

Respectfully submitted,

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