COMMTTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY
Annual Report 2007-08

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Committee on Educational Policy's (CEP) work can be divided into two categories. There is the work the Committee carries out as a matter of course, including reviews of campus programs, approval of program statements and of new and revised courses, consultations with other committees and administrative units, and consideration of student petitions. Then there are policy initiatives raised by CEP (sometimes in tandem with other bodies). CEP continued work on two major initiatives this year, in the areas of general education reform and honors. We begin with discussion of these larger initiatives.

I. Larger CEP Initiatives

General Education

UCSC's current general education framework was largely put in place in 1984. An attempt at comprehensive reform was narrowly voted down in the late 1990s. In the past two years CEP has articulated reasons why our campus needs general education reform. (See materials available at http://senate.ucsc.edu/cep/GenEdReformIndex.html.) There are external reasons, particularly expectations of WASC, UCSC's accreditation agency, but the most compelling reasons are internal. Across higher education, thinking about the meaning and functioning of general education has changed dramatically over the past decades. At the same time, our own general education objectives have lost focus.

After a good deal of consultation (including a visit by CEP members to every department on campus), CEP has drafted a "pre-proposal". CEP's recommendations are summarized below. We encourage all faculty members to read the entire proposal (available at the site given above). CEP has charged departments and divisions with providing feedback on the proposed requirements and educational objectives. Based on this feedback and a Forum on General Education to be held October 29, 2008, CEP will submit legislation for GE reform this winter quarter 2009.

Writing

There is strong faculty consensus that we must improve our students' ability to write, and that this can only happen if writing is emphasized throughout the undergraduate career. Proposals 1-3 address this need.

1. Frosh writing. Currently, college core courses (capped at 22-25 students each, funded for all frosh) do double-duty as beginning frosh writing courses and as a forum for delivering a college's thematic/academic curriculum. We propose to the colleges that they make training in college-level writing the *primary* mission of the core courses. Core courses would continue to be followed by Writing 2, as they are now, so that the current C1-C2 requirement would remain in

place. More substantively, we propose to make it significantly easier for core courses to focus on writing by means of proposal 8 below.

2. <u>Disciplinary communication</u>.   We propose that every major-sponsoring unit explicitly articulate its discipline-specific expectations in writing and other forms of communication, and ensure that these goals are met by the requirements of the major. CEP would set minimum standards concerning the amount of writing and instruction in writing; but this requirement would differ from those of the current Writing-Intensive (W) requirement in giving departments more say as to how communication objectives are met.

3. <u>Writing support</u>. We cannot do (2) without significant support for writing in the disciplines. We propose that the campus a) re-establish a peer tutoring program in writing; b) re-establish funding to support a full-time coordinator of writing in the disciplines; c) provide concomitant staff support; and d) devote resources where appropriate to make meeting disciplinary communication objectives feasible in every discipline.

Breadth, Ways of Learning, and the Matrix

A central goal of general education is to promote lifelong learning by ensuring exposure to a range of disciplines and subject areas. Other general education requirements might be grouped broadly under the heading "Ways of Learning".   The educational objectives of the latter requirements are to various extents independent of subject area. While writing might well be considered part of this group, we treated it separately above.

4. <u>Breadth categories</u>. We propose a distributional Breadth requirement employing the four subject areas named below. Students would take *one* course from the Arts subject area and *two* courses from each of the other subject areas. (Currently, students must take two Introductory (I) courses and one Topical (T) course from each of three subject areas, for a total of nine courses.) Students would *not* be formally required to take general education courses within a subject area if their major is within that area. Students would therefore normally take five-six breadth courses (outside of their major). There would no longer be a formal distinction between I and T courses (but see 7 below).

Subject Areas

        Arts   Humanities   Natural Sciences/Engineering   Social Sciences
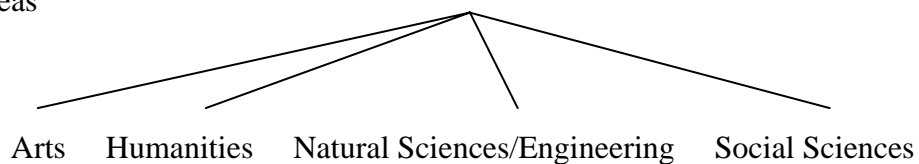
5. <u>Ways of learning categories</u>. The campus requires more discussion of Ways of Learning categories. Under the current proposal, these requirements would not entail more courses but would be met *within the breadth component itself* (see 6 below). Given the feedback we've received from faculty so far, we find broad support for two or three categories:

• Quantitative and/or formal reasoning (similar to current Q).
• Cross-cultural understanding (similar to current E).

- Race, ethnicity, and gender (similar to current E).

We suggest these others for further discussion:

- Critical thinking.
- Creative endeavor.
- Statistical reasoning/data interpretation (as a specific requirement separate from Q).
- Science, technology, and society.
- Environmental understanding.

6. <u>The Matrix</u>. To give more depth, rigor, and purpose to breadth courses, and to general education overall, we propose that every course satisfying a breadth requirement simultaneously satisfy one of the Ways of Learning requirements, according to a scheme we might call the Matrix:

	Ways of Learning					
The Matrix	Quantitative	Cross-cultural	....	....	...	# Required
Breadth Arts						1
Humanities						2
Natural Sciences/Engineering						2
Social Sciences						2

Each cell in this scheme would correspond to a possible general education course (though some combinations may be more likely than others). According to the proposal, every breadth course *would have to* occupy some cell in this sense.

Interdisciplinary topical clusters

7. <u>Interdisciplinary topical clusters</u>. In order to revive the original but now weakened intent of the Topical (T) requirement; to bring more vision and focus to a portion of general education; and to create social and intellectual communities, which are good for retention and a sense of institutional identity, we propose that a portion of the general education requirements could be met through *interdisciplinary topical clusters*. An interdisciplinary cluster would be a sequence of two (or more) courses focused on a topic of significance to society. Each course would belong to a different subject area (in the sense of 4 above), and each would satisfy a portion of the GE requirements. The focus would be not on any discipline but on a set of *problems* or *issues*. A cluster would therefore be inherently multidisciplinary, allowing students to see how one issue or problem can be analyzed according to several methodologies and perspectives. Creating good clusters would require significant collaboration across departments and divisions, a good thing in itself.

8. <u>College affiliation</u>. As a separate matter, we propose that any interdisciplinary topical cluster could target students of a *specific college*. For example, there might be a cluster on the topic of *sustainability* for students of College 8. Making clusters college-specific would strengthen the academic identity of the colleges and simultaneously deepen affiliations between regular faculty and students of a particular college. Indeed, we invite departments and college provosts to *collaborate* in creating topical clusters. For colleges, clusters would become new territory where the colleges' thematic/academic curriculum could be significantly strengthened and expanded. Finally, we may wish to *link* the first course in the cluster with the college's core course, integrating training in writing with the academic experience of the cluster course.

Educational reflection

Perhaps the most important outcome of general education reform would be not in the decisions we make about specific subject areas, ways of learning, etc., but in the culture and the mechanisms we put into place that contribute to continuous reflection about how well it works. Proposals 9-11 address this meta-issue.

9. <u>Educational objectives</u>. A strong general education program requires educational objectives that are significantly detailed, rigorous, and public. Educational objectives with these properties would be the metric by which faculty proposing or taking over general education courses would understand what doing so entails. They would similarly be the means by which those approving or reviewing courses could make consistent and defensible decisions. We further propose that departments be periodically asked to reflect on whether their general education courses are meeting these educational objectives. Reflection on this point should be integrated into the regular departmental review process.

10. <u>Committee on Course Approval</u>. We propose to follow several of our sister campuses in establishing a Senate committee on undergraduate course approval distinct from the Committee on Educational Policy. The Committee would assume CEP's duties of approving and reviewing courses, and a central aspect of this job would be overseeing general education. Given the significant workload increases implied by these tasks, we believe that only a new committee dedicated to them would be likely to succeed in realizing the goals of proposal 9.

11. <u>Administrative Authority</u>. Though a university collectively affirms value in general education, it is a fact of life that departments are often more invested in their major and minor curricula. Divisions, in turn, are naturally most responsive to the perceived needs of their departments. A consequence of these facts is that the needs of general education sometimes take a back seat to those of other programs. One means of addressing this potential problem is to place resources for general education in the hands of a central administrative authority. For example, resources for college core courses--one component of UCSC's general education program--are administered by the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education. We propose, as part of the reform process, that the campus have a conversation about the best means of providing administrative and budgetary oversight of all aspects of general education.

Honors

In collaboration with the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (VPDUE) Bill Ladusaw, CEP has been studying all aspects of honors at UCSC and has begun implementing programs. Honors programs (including designations such as honors at graduation or dean's list honors, as well as curricular and extracurricular opportunities) are a means of attracting and retaining students, of acknowledging and rewarding student achievement, and of reinforcing academic excellence. Many on campus are concerned that UCSC lags behind our sister campuses in fostering these goals.

University honors and dean's honors

We have been the only UC campus with undergraduate programs that does not have any campuswide honors program. We have also been the only campus lacking a dean's ("quarterly", "to date", "provost") honors list or Universitywide criteria for awarding honors at graduation. There is a great deal of anecdotal evidence (as those involved in any way in University admissions know) that these lacunae can be a disincentive for prospective and enrolled students. Of equal concern is the finding by CEP's Report on Undergraduate Graduation Rates (done in collaboration with the Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education and the Office of Institutional Research and Policy Studies) that UC Santa Cruz retains its academically most-prepared students at lower percentages than would be expected.[1] For reasons such as these, the recent ad hoc UCSC Honors Committee recommended that our campus establish a category of University Honors.[2]

Last fall CEP proposed an amendment to Santa Cruz Regulation 11 on UCSC honors designations. This amendment passed by Senate vote and is in effect as of this fall 2008, and can be found at http://senate.ucsc.edu/cep/legislation.html. Formerly SCR Chapter 11 established honors in the *major* (SCR 11.1) and *college* honors for "overall academic work" (SCR 11.2). The new legislation accomplished the following.

First, it established a category of *University Honors* using the Latin designations *cum laude, magna cum laude,* and *summa cum laude*. Eligibility for University Honors will be based on student rankings as follows, based on the UC grade point average.

summa cum laude	magna cum laude	cum laude	Total
top 2%	next 3%	next 10%	15%

To be eligible, students must have completed at least 70 credits at UC. (45 of those units must be at UCSC and most of them must be letter graded, by virtue of independent Regulations.)

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[1] As defined by students in the highest two quintiles based on either high school GPA or standardized test scores. Find the report at http://senate.ucsc.edu/cep/CEPretention1495.pdf.

[2] Establishing a UC Santa Cruz Campuswide Honors Program: a Report to the Academic Senate from the Honors Committee, June 2004.

Second, it established a quarterly Dean's Honors List. To be eligible for quarterly Dean's Honors students must complete at least 15 credits that quarter, at least 10 of which are letter graded, and meet a minimum GPA threshold based on the average GPAs at graduation of the past two years' UCSC graduates. This moving average would be updated yearly.

For the purposes of determining University Honors and Dean's Honors, rankings will be calculated separately for School of Engineering students and other students, based on GPAs within the respective populations. Any newly established School at UCSC would be treated separately as well.

College honors and honors in the major

Last year CEP surveyed all campus departments and colleges about their practices and criteria for selection in determining honors in the major or college, pursuant to Divisional Regulation 11.3:

> In accordance with SR 640, each agency that has an approved major that elects to award Honors shall submit the criteria for such an award to the Committee on Educational Policy for its review, approval, and permanent record. Any change in criteria will require resubmittal.

Whether at the departmental, college, or university level, we believe that the minimum criteria for determining honors designations should be made explicit and public. CEP plans to ensure that honors criteria at all levels are included in the UCSC General Catalog.

One of the survey's findings is that there is a great deal of variation, especially by department, in the percentage of students awarded honors. (Departments reported anything from 8% to 45%.) Beginning last year, CEP recommends that no more than 15% of graduating students be awarded honors in a major or college, and no more than 5% be awarded highest honors. (The 15% number should include both honors and highest honors.) While these benchmarks are a recommendation rather than a requirement, CEP intends to review percentages of students granted departmental honors annually and express concern to the departments where those percentages significantly exceed the recommended maximum.

II. Other CEP initiatives

Legislation on minimum credits for the major and double counting of degree requirements

Until now, Santa Cruz Division Regulation disallowed any amount of overlap or double-counting of courses at the upper-division level. (On the other hand, lower-division courses may simultaneously satisfy requirements of distinct majors and/or minors). Some majors and/or minors (henceforth, "programs of study") had been granted a systematic exception to this Regulation by CEP (as allowed by SCR 10.4).

Many students, including high-achieving students, wish to pursue double majors or minors in addition to their majors, seeking both the challenge and the formal recognition for doing so. In

allowing no overlap of courses at the upper-division level, UC Santa Cruz made it more difficult to do this than any other UC campus does. The problem is most acute for students in programs of study requiring many courses.

CEP proposed amendments to SCR 10.4 regarding majors and minors. These were passed by Senate vote in the spring quarter. The proposed changes accomplished the following:

- We now require that a major program include a minimum of 40 upper-division credits (typically 8 courses) of course work. Previously, Regulation set a minimum of 25 upper-division credits for minors but was silent about majors.
- We now allow upper-division courses to simultaneously satisfy requirements of distinct majors and/or minors, *subject to the condition that every major or minor program of study include, uniquely to that program of study, the minimum required credits for a major or minor (respectively).* In other words, there must be a unique 40 credits per major and a unique 25 credits per minor.

The proposed minimum of 40 upper-division credits for majors comes close to codifying current practice. The requirements of a few major programs on campus will have to be revised to come into compliance with this minimum, or those programs will have to present CEP with a well-reasoned argument for an exception.

III. Other work

Retention

In the academic year 2005-06 the Senate passed a resolution calling for (among other things) "the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor [to] work with the Division to establish a task force on retention that brings together those with interests and with authorities related to retention and graduation". In collaboration with the VPDUE, CEP proposed a task force membership and charge in the following year. In October 2007 Executive Vice Chancellor David Kliger (CPEVC) formally charged the administrative Task Force on Retention and Graduation, chaired by the VPDUE, with the following membership (Core Task Force Members will meet once each quarter with Consulting Members):

Core task force membership

Chair: Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education
Co-Chair: CEP Chair or Representative
Director of Institutional Research
Director of Admissions
Representative for Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs
SUA Representative

Consulting members

College Academic Preceptor
College Provost
Department Chair
Dean Representative
Director, Learning Support Services
Chair, CAFA (or representative)

The Task Force, which will report annually to the CPEVC, is charged to "collect, analyze, and publicize data on retention and graduation rates [and to] encourage the adoption of strategies for improving UCSC's retention and graduation rates." The Task Force is specifically charged with:

- identifying and promoting strategies for improving retention and graduation rates particularly among lower-division students who seek academic challenge (e.g., honors programs)
- examining how various aspects of the first-year experience (e.g., college core courses, campus engagement) are related to student retention
- working with programs and departments to clarify degree objectives and opportunities that foster early engagement and retention in the major
- investigating how performance in major preparation and gateway courses, including writing, mathematics, languages, physics, and chemistry, is related to retention and graduation
- setting benchmark graduation rates and reviewing progress toward these goals
- obtaining information from continuing and departing students about their commitment to graduating from UCSC and their reasons for remaining at or leaving UCSC
- identifying necessary data for tracking retention (e.g., time series analyses across divisions and majors, involvement across programs)
- fostering effective coalitions and information sharing among campus groups, students, staff, and faculty involved in undergraduate retention
- designing and assessing pilot studies of how campus, academic divisions, colleges, student affairs, departments, and other units can increase retention

The Task Force met regularly this past academic year.

Given its purview, CEP's contribution to retention issues will focus most on academic issues (as opposed to issues of student extracurricular life, for example). CEP views various of its on-going actions and proposals as relevant to improving retention and graduation. These include:

1) the establishment of University and Dean's Honors, an important step in creating an environment that is rewarding to strongly performing students;
2) requiring students to declare their major by their third year, rather than when attaining junior status; this is intended to identify undecided students making less than minimal progress toward the degree, who are arguably in most need of integrating into a major;
3) the proposal for interdisciplinary topical clusters (see under General Education above), which are intended to create academic learning communities for frosh.

Data presented by Institutional Research shows that, for underprepared students, a particularly vulnerable period is the transition into third year. For the future CEP is particularly interested in understanding how departments can work to ameliorate this tendency by taking further steps to integrate students into the major and by making efforts to identify struggling students early in the major career and to support them.

Miscellaneous responses

CEP read and gave feedback on the following:

1) A (revised) BOARS proposal to reform eligibility criteria for UC admission;
2) A proposed set of changes in policy regarding the hiring and oversight of graduate student instructors (University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) and Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA));
3) A proposal to limit class sizes for student who have not satisfied the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) at every campus (systemwide Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE));
4) A report of the ad hoc Committee on International Education (systemwide);
5) A report of the Task Force on Diversity (systemwide);
6) A "Dialectic" on the role of on-line instruction at UC (systemwide);
7) Draft principles for department instructional workload (Academic Affairs);
8) A Strategic Action Plan (follow-up to Strategic Academic Plan, Academic Affairs).

External Reviews

This was an unusually heavy year of program review activity. The Committee read and responded to seven external reviews and participated in the related closure meetings (Anthropology, Community Studies, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Environmental Toxicology, History of Art and Visual Culture, Philosophy, and the Writing Program). CEP also commented on charges for eleven external reviews (Astronomy and Astrophysics, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, History of Consciousness, Information Systems Management, Literature, Mathematics, Ocean Sciences, Politics, Sociology, Theater Arts).

Programs

CEP reviewed and approved five new campus minors (some after a good deal of revision). These were in Applied Mathematics (Applied Math and Statistics dept); Electrical Engineering; Science, Technology, and Engineering Education (STEM, Education dept); Global Information and Social Enterprise Studies (GISES, Sociology dept); Information Systems and Technology Management (ISTM, Technology and Information Management program). CEP approved the discontinuation of one minor, in South and Southeast Asian Studies (History dept).

The Committee also approved three new concentrations in Bioengineering (Bioelectronics; Biomolecular; Rehabilitation) and two in Electrical Engineering (Electronics/Optics; Communications, Signals, Systems, and Controls). Three concentrations were discontinued:

Critical Theory, Literature and Film (both in Literature) and Peace and Security Studies (Politics).

As of last year, CEP also reviews proposed University Extension proposals. CEP reviewed and approved a proposal for a certificate program in Software Engineering and Quality. It is worth noting that, according to CEP policy, at least one UCSC faculty member must be involved in proposing a new UNEX certificate program.

Other

CEP obtained statistics on timeliness of grading and was surprised to learn that about 25 percent of grades are not submitted by a quarter's grading deadline. This has negative consequences for students. Last spring CEP sent a letter to all faculty pointing out these negative consequences and asking faculty to do their best to meet the grading deadlines. A similar reminder will be sent later in fall 2008.

Taking up a request of the state legislature, CEP established a policy of giving priority course enrollment to veterans.

CEP reviewed and provided feedback on proposed start dates and religious holidays for the academic calendar in upcoming years.

Working with the CPEVC's Office of Special Projects, CEP took the lead on the development of a new Faculty Portal page in AIS. The Portal went on line July 1, 2008.

CEP reviewed and revised its policy for disqualification of majors. The revised policy can be viewed at http://senate.ucsc.edu/cep/Otherindex.html.   It encourages policies that identify struggling students early in their major career, guidelines about policy and procedure, and example policies.

CEP Subcommittees reviewed 283 new courses, 850 course revisions/substitutions/cancellations, 61 program statements, and 22 individual majors (19 new and 3 revised). The full Committee discussed many of the significant proposed degree changes, all of which were approved, though many after revision to address issues raised by the Committee.

CEP approved 308 Writing-Intensive Course substitutions. The Committee is grateful to Sarah-Hope Parmeter, the Non-Senate Faculty representative to the Committee, and who assisted a great deal in reviewing these petitions.

The Chair reviewed another 406 petitions. Major categories included:

- Other general education substitutions (88). Most often these involved the Topical or Introduction to the Discipline courses.
- Late requests to change the grade option (letter grade vs. pass/no pass) of a class (43). Most were denied. Some were approved so that a student could meet the graduation requirement that 75 percent of credits be letter graded. In such cases students are not

   allowed to choose which class(es) to change. Rather, all courses of their last quarter are
   changed to letter grade option.
- Requests for a grade change (89). Most of these involved late withdrawals from a course
  for medical reasons, leading to the grade W.
- Late add and drop requests (141). Many of these are due to students not meeting a
  deadline because of financial holds, confusion over whether the instructor will delete
  them as no-shows, and issues with the AIS "submit" button (which have been resolved).
  Students are normally told that they are responsible for reviewing their enrollments and
  will have no more approvals of like requests.
- Miscellaneous other petitions (24).

Thanks

CEP meetings are large for a Senate committee. It is a marvel that they work so well, and this is
due in large part to the Committee's guests. CEP would function poorly without the dedication,
expertise, and infinite patience of Academic Editor Margie Claxton; Academic Preceptor Elaine
Kihara; Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Bill Ladusaw; Articulation Officer
Barbara Love; and Acting Director of Admissions Michael McCawley. We thank all of you for
your commitment of time and energy.

In the absence of an Arts Division representative this year, Professor Linda Burman-Hall was
good enough to consult with the Committee on behalf of the Arts, particularly on topics of
general education reform. We are grateful to her.

CEP Analyst Roxanne Monnet gives us weekly lessons in energy, organization, and commitment
to the CEP agenda. We are grateful to her for her endless hard work for the Committee, and for
her memory, knowledge, and insights, which keep us on track.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY
Russ Flegal
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