

**Committee on Preparatory Education**  
Minutes

Wednesday, January 20, 2010  
9-10:30 a.m., Kerr Hall Room 129

Present: Nandini Bhattacharya (NSTF Rep), Mary-Kay Gamel (Chair), Roxanne Monnet (Staff), David Smith, Anna Tsing.

Absent: Sarah-Hope Parmeter (ELWR Coordinator).

**I. Announcements and updates.**

The minutes from the Committee on Preparatory Education's (CPE) December were accepted pending feedback from Entry-Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) Coordinator Sarah-Hope Parmeter on her discussion items.

At a future meeting, CPE will discuss possible budget impacts on course offerings toward satisfaction of the C1 and C2 requirements.

**II. Retention Services.**

Alma Sifuentes, Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students, has asked to meet with a number of Senate committees to discuss the new Retention Services unit which created through reorganization and changes in reporting lines of a number of areas under the umbrella of Student Affairs. In preparation for today's discussion, CPE Chair Gamel asked for written information on topics that they would like to discuss with CPE.

CPE discussed the letter provided by Student Affairs on Retention services and noticed a number of connections between Retention Services and preparatory education. The Committee would like to know what the effects of this reorganization have been to Learning Support Services, the faculty mentorship program, and to Support for Transfer and Re-entry Services. The Committee will continue its discussion of Retention Services and will respond to the request for a consultation after the February 17 meeting.

**III. Consultation with Learning Support Services.**

CPE developed talking points for the consultation with Learning Support Services Director Holly Cordova scheduled for February 17.

In follow up to the report on the Analysis of ELWR Core Course Student Performance Data, CPE raised a question regarding the populations of students who scored 6 on the Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE). The report indicated that Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) students continue to have a lower mean on tests than their non-EOP peers who also scored 6 on the test. CPE wonders whether this is a sign that UCSC is not serving its EOP students sufficiently well. However, another affect that could simulate like results might be the potential

for error in the overlap between two peaks of students who scored 6. More than likely some of the students who scored 6 are not really in that group—some would be lower, and some higher. CPE designed a member to raise this question with the authors of the report.

The Committee identified the following topics for discussion with LSS Director Cordova: tutor training; what assessment has occurred to further determine whether UCSC is under-serving EOP students; has separate data been collected to track Bridge students from other EOP students and are they doing better than other EOP students; and what could be done to improve how students who pass ELWR on appeal do in their upper-division courses. What can departments do to make clear the requirements for proceeding through the major? What can they do to ensure that entering students get more in lower-division courses than the material itself?

#### **IV. Humanities Advisory Task Force on Reconstitution proposal.**

CPE discussed the Humanities Advisory Task Force Report (ATFR) on reconstitute of the Humanities Division. CPE felt called to comment on two issues: writing courses, on the one hand, and the availability of language instruction at UCSC on the other. Most of the report was outside CPE's charge for preparatory education. However, preparatory education related to writing is a significant part of CPE's charge.

Chair Gamel, a member of the Humanities Divisions, was present initially to provide information and answer questions then recused herself from the discussion. Member Anna Tsing served as chair pro tem for this agenda item. That member will draft the letter for discussion at the next meeting and will sign the final letter on behalf of the Committee.

CPE is concerned to protect opportunities for UCSC students to improve their writing. The Committee feels that the Writing Program must be strong and stable, given the crucial support that they provide to bringing students to the level needed to satisfy their ELWR requirement and C1 and C2 requirements. The Writing Program's budget should be treated differently from other course sponsoring units in light of the support needs for the ELWR and C1/ C2, as well as its campuswide support for undergraduate writing. Whatever happens to the Writing Program, its key role in campus education should be protected.

The Committee is open to the suggestion that the Writing Program be moved to full supervision by the Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education (VPDUE), since the VPDUE is involved through oversight of the colleges whose core courses also aid students in satisfying ELWR and C1/C2. This would remove a layer of perhaps unnecessary oversight by the Humanities Division. However, there are considerations involved other than ELWR and C1/C2 courses, and the Committee therefore makes no definitive recommendation in regards to recommendation 3 of the ATFR.

CPE is also concerned about ATFR recommendation 2, which proposes to further reduce foreign language instruction at UCSC. Foreign language instruction is a necessary ingredient of college education. The languages that the report suggests cutting (recommendation 2a) are major world languages. Hindi, for example, is the first language of almost 500 million people. CPE does not support the further reduction of the already depleted foreign language offerings at UCSC.

Furthermore, on principle, CPE thinks that language courses should be available to all students (recommendation 2b). The Committee is concerned with the recommendation to close language classes to those who are not required to take them for their majors. Full support and training of language instructors is also key to their effectiveness in undergraduate education. CPE can only support the plan to turn language instruction over to graduate student instructors if those students are offered opportunities for full training in instruction and on-going faculty mentorship; being a native speaker is not enough (recommendation 2d). Our Committee recommends that the University shore up support for language instruction. During this time of cuts, it is important not to throw the baby out with the bathwater.

**V. UCOPE agenda item**

Chair Gamel asked for the Committee's feedback on the impact of the budget situation on preparatory English and mathematics course offerings at UCSC. The extent of what may be the impacts of possible budget cuts for the coming year is not sufficiently known for CPE to give a thorough response, however, the Humanities ATFR demonstrated how wide ranging the budget impact could be in just one division. Additionally, the possibility of significant changes to the level of offerings of writing courses and Math 2 would directly impact preparatory education at UCSC.

So attests,

Mary-Kay Gamel, Chair  
Committee on Preparatory Education