

Committee on Preparatory Education Meeting
Minutes
February 11, 2015
Kerr Hall Room 129, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Present: Gabriel Elkaim (Chair), Kimberly Helmer, Sarah-Hope Parmeter (ELWR Coordinator), Abe Stone, Susanna Wrangell (staff).

Absent: Phil Longo (NSTF Rep). SUA and GSA reps. TBA.

Guests: Professor and Undergraduate Vice Chair from Mathematics, Debra Lewis, Senior International Officer (SIO) Joel Ferguson and Writing Program Chair Heather Shearer.

I. Announcements:

Members approved the draft minutes for January 21, 2015.

II. Mathematics Placement Exam (MPE) to ALEKS Consultation

Undergraduate Curriculum Chair Lewis reported to CPE that Mathematics is currently taking up using an online assessment tool, ALEKS instead of the online MPE test. There is urgency to have a small population of students be part of the February testing instead of the current online version. Vice Chair Lewis projected slides for committee members to review. Members reviewed the proposal from Mathematics on the ALEKS proposal. ALEKS will be used as a placement tool for those students who need extra help, Mathematics may want to make this a co-requisite instead of a prerequisite.

This program seems to have positive elements, and metrics but emotionally, no human interface, some students may struggle in this environment. ALEKS offers practicum, is flexible and only asks students to do work that they have knowledge in, in other words the program does not ask students to do unfamiliar math topics. Vice Chair Lewis is planning on setting up support documentation to get the students through this program, and if possible offer peer tutoring to encourage recruits or prospective students.

Students would be invited to workshops to see if they have mastered the skills for any math section, focusing on learning and down playing assessment. For the spring pilot about 200 students will participate.

Resources are needed for this to get off the ground, ALEKS does have a cost per student associated with use. CPE members are in support of the proposal and have made a couple of endorsements to Mathematics a couple of years ago with regard to ALEKS. CPE will request a follow up report on the pilot due fall 2015.

III. Consultation Debrief time permitting

There was not time between consultations for a debrief we can revisit this at our next committee meeting.

IV. Consultation with SIO Ferguson and Writing Program Chair Shearer

SIO Ferguson and Chair Shearer gave a brief overview for their plan on changing the college core curriculum to meet the needs of international undergraduates at UCSC who need additional instruction in academic English.

Members discussed the writing needs of international students, who are unfamiliar with the English language. Most international students catch up quickly but some have the same issues with writing as our native students. Senior International Officer Ferguson and Writing Program Chair Shearer are adopting a curricular writing plan for international students created by UC Davis. Students would be required to take an Academic English course before Core. Based on the student's placement, there will be an offering of a series of four courses, including language courses, modeling other students who are ELWR unsatisfied so they are prepared to take the course and not fail. The Academic English courses maybe linked with a corresponding 2 unit course in LAAD. Members would like students to received credit for these courses or have them carry a general education requirement or have a certificate noted on their transcripts..

There could be a potential timeline delay for ELWR satisfaction. Students expectations were not clear, the expectation was for satisfaction after 6 weeks. Students can move through the courses if they are misplaced based on the placement test score.

UC Davis has a computer generated test, and are claiming correct placement at 90% . There is one downside, students build community in the Colleges through the Core course. By offering Core at the same time to all students, both native and international, the College experience is preserved.

Based on the experience of the past two years, many of our international students will likely have to take this sequence, there may not be any additional cost or course work to the University based on international student fees. Data is being collected on the winter Core course pilot this year and international students want to belong and feel accepted by their American counterparts. They want community building, not just sequence of courses but a program for international students, to make friends, and understand UC culture for fast integration in the campus community.

CPE is strongly supportive of the effort, but would like to be kept apprised of the effort as the details are fleshed out.

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