

## **COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION**

### **Annual Report 2010-2011**

To the Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division:

The Committee on Preparatory Education (CPE) held seven meetings throughout the academic year to deal with specific issues related to its charge. The work and accomplishments of the Committee during the 2010-11 year are summarized below.

#### **Letter to Preceptors on Awareness of Campus Resources**

CPE drafted a letter to preceptors covering several issues. First, CPE was concerned about the mechanisms used to contact students about support services available to them should they become academically challenged in their classes. Based on the reported success of Learning Support Services (LSS)'s Modified Supplemental Instruction (MSI) Program, CPE's letter requested that Preceptors or Academic Standing Committees of the Colleges draft contracts for students not in good standing. CPE strongly encouraged enrollment in accompanying MSI courses that they take, where these are available. Second, CPE was concerned both about the accuracy of students' ELWR(Entry Level Writing Requirement) status as listed on AIS and about the potential for students to use self-reported test scores to gain admission into 80B(C 2) sections of Core, when they may not, in fact, qualify for these sections. CPE requested that any students being placed into 80B Core on the basis of self-reported test scores be asked to immediately ensure that their official records have been received and/or file a review of transfer credit with Admissions, in the hope that we could avoid students inappropriately enrolling in this course and ensure the accuracy of AIS data by the end of the quarter. Finally, CPE addressed the issue of students taking Mathematics courses a level below what they are recommended to enroll in (as indicated by their Mathematics Placement Exam (MPE) score or AP Calculus test score). In the committee's view, students should take the class they are ready for, with few exceptions. This applies most directly to students who scored sufficiently high (31 or higher) on the placement exam to place into Math 11A (Calculus with Applications) and need to take Math 11A for their course of study, but who end up taking Math 3 (Pre-calculus) instead. Data analysis correlating MPE scores with Math 11A grades shows that these students already have a very high probability of success in Math 11A, and are therefore not well served by spending a full quarter of additional course review in Math 3. Moreover, Math 3 is a course that has seen its enrollments grow to the point where we now have a class of 475 students. CPE requested that preceptors advise students not to enroll in courses they are overqualified for and offered an online course alternative, ALEKS.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Tracking Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) Pass Rates:**

The two main concerns of the committee are for students to satisfy the ELWR requirement and pre-requisite math classes. As background for the writing requirement, ELWR students can enter UCSC satisfied and take C2 courses and complete the UC requirement. The problem at our campus is with unsatisfied ELWR students who must take a core course and then the Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE).

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<sup>1</sup>

[http://www.aleks.com/independent/students/course\\_products](http://www.aleks.com/independent/students/course_products).

ELWR Satisfied Students	ELWR Unsatisfied Students
ELWR Satisfied – C2 Writing	ELWR Not Satisfied take CORE then AWPE in November if not passing; the student can submit a portfolio or enroll in the following series of writing classes
AWPE in November - Pass	WRIT 20, 21, 23
ELWR completed	ELWR completed

In 2010, CPE discussed with the administration the tracking of students in order to see how language, culture or other factors correlated with students' success or lack of success in completing ELWR and with their overall academic success at the university. These data, and others, now show an upward trend for EOP students with AWPE scores of 4 or higher. Of these students with this score 75 – 100 % complete the requirement. The stretch core program being offered experimentally in a couple of colleges was reported to be very successful for EOP students. Director of Retention Services Pablo Reguerin is working on a Bridge Program with 60 EOP students who have low placement test scores or come from low-performing high schools. The students would enter UCSC before orientation and do intensive work in reading and writing to prepare them for University-level class work.

### **Math Preparation, Sequencing and Placement Exams:**

CPE spent the majority of the year considering math preparation and placement exams. In October, CPE learned of Math 3 over-crowding due to the Applied Math and Statistics (AMS) version of the course not being offered in the fall quarter. CPE also investigated the course offerings by AMS for social science majors and the requirements of various departments for mathematical coursework. These data suggest that another course, such as Math 4, should be offered for social sciences. The Psychology Department confirmed that they are changing their requirement for the major and minor from Math 3 (or equivalent) to AMS 2 (or equivalent). Students are now free to satisfy the math requirement by taking a higher-level math class as well as Math 3. Another committee concern was funding for Math 2, which was said to be endangered for 2011/12. At the end of spring quarter CPE was informed that there will be sufficient funding from the divisional Dean.

Mathematics removed the cut-off score of 12 on the Math Placement Exam (MPE) for Math 2, so many more students will be able to sign up. The Mathematics department is currently in discussion with the AMS department faculty about developing a new placement test to better rank students at the lower end of the preparation scale, since scores of 12 or lower on the current MPE are more or less consistent with random answers. At the rate of development, the test could be ready by Summer 2012. At the suggestion of CPE, UCOPE is investigating a systemwide mathematics diagnostic test for students to complete, much like the AWPE test for writing, but for informational purposes only, not placement, to encourage students to develop necessary skills in the summer before attending UC. Chair Smith will be expanding this proposal and recruiting systemwide representation over the next year.

### **Progression from Math 11A to 19B:**

CPE received a suggestion from AMS Professor Pascale Garaud on a way to improve the progress to degree of students in majors that require Math 19. Some students need the Math 19 series, but test scores place the students in Math 11A. Professor Garaud suggested that the difference between 11A and 19A is much less than that between 11B and 19B; thus, students who place into 11A and do well (above some threshold grade), should be considered for transfer directly to 19B, with automatic permission to use 11A in place of 19A as a prerequisite for future courses. CPE left until the 2011/12 year a recommendation to discuss this formally with the Math department and the chairs of departments that require the 19 series.

### **Research on Student Needs:**

CPE discussed the possibility of starting a research program to gather information on student needs and knowledge of campus services available to them if they run into trouble. CPE Chair Smith and member Hope-Parmeter met with Pablo Reguerin, Director of Retention Services. For the last couple of years, Student Affairs has conducted a “red carpet” survey of students who use their services. Student Affairs hires students as *Campus Life Ambassadors*, who are paid quarterly to conduct the surveys. This was left as an open item, in that CPE did not get sufficient data on this program to determine if it is sufficient to determine what student needs are not being met.

### **Senate Executive Committee (SEC) Proposal to Realign Student Affairs:**

The SEC committee wrote a proposal to re align student affairs by placing retention services under the academic oversight of the VPDUE’s office. The original SEC proposal split the units within Retention Services. The committee consulted with the Directors of LSS and Retention Services. The CPE membership was not sufficiently unanimous about a course of action to result in our writing a recommendation letter to SEC, but Chair Smith participated in meetings with SEC and made the insights and impressions of CPE clear in those meetings. One of the most valuable things that came out of the process was a recognition of the need for a Senate committee to oversee issues of retention and advising.

### **University Committee on Preparatory Education meetings:**

The chair attended two University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) meetings in which the Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) prompts were reviewed and voted on. Later in the year, AWPE fees were discussed as was the possibility of raising or eliminating waivers. The committee suggested offering reduced fees in lieu of full waivers for those who had their application fees waived. Many faculty question the cost to administer this test. With on-line grading, it was believed costs had been reduced, and the exam administration should have become self-sustaining without further fee hikes. The fee structure for the AWPE testing fees was discussed but no action was taken at the meeting. The options included raising the fees, discounting the fees instead of waiving or reducing the eligibility for the waivers. UCSC CPE wrote a note to UCOPE Chair Jonathan Alexander endorsing the principle that no student should be paying more than their own share of the overall cost of administering the exam.

UCOPE and UCSC CPE members were asked to study a new curriculum called STATWAY recently voted on for adoption at CSU. It's essentially "developmental mathematics focusing on topics needed for success in statistics or for math literacy." CPE determined that there is

insufficient detail yet developed in this program to meaningfully assess how it might differ from the pre-statistics already offered by AMS.

**Recommendations for CPE 2011-12:**

- 1) Work on the proposal for a Systemwide Mathematics Diagnostic Test.
- 2) Proposal for a Senate Committee on Retention and Advising.
- 3) Monitor the possibility of UCSC reaching the status of a Hispanic Serving Institution University and learn about the implications if it goes through.
- 4) Writing preparation for transfer students, request data from Learning Support Services to review and discuss.
- 5) Continue to work with SEC on the realignment of Student Affairs.

Respectfully submitted,

**COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION**

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