

## **COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION**

### **Annual Report 2012-2013**

To: Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

The Committee on Preparatory Education (CPE) held seven meetings throughout the academic year to discuss specific issues related to its charge. The work and accomplishments of the Committee during the 2012-13 year are summarized below.

#### **Online Math Placement Exam (MPE) Report and Data Follow Up**

Members were impressed with the effort and energy Professor Weissman put into this large project. The online version of the math placement exam is successful and may need updating in the future to prevent cheating. From the data, it appeared there was a predictive power and correlation for Math 3 over Math 11A or 19A. In the future, the department plans on changing the questions for each section and level; creating questions that are better predictors and deleting others. CPE would like the Mathematics Department to create a probability table with statistical data based on past test scores and compare with recent online test scores, using a correlation coefficient “p value”—predictive power. The table should be produced every year and be easy to read and find information. Professor Weissman’s plans include creating a manual and handing over his scripts and data to the new undergraduate adviser in the Mathematics Department.

CPE members are curious to know the department’s long term plans for the online test and will follow up in the fall.

#### **UCSC Becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution and Council of Retention**

Members were apprised by VPDUE Hughey on the status of UCSC becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution. A “team” held meetings this year and created a report with their recommendations. Having this status could be an incentive when recruiting graduate students who would like to do research on success rates with a diverse student population. The Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) Team created the following list of future task and goals. Here are a few objectives:

- Apply to become an eligible institution, which requires two years of data showing 25% Hispanic student population.
- Join the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU).
- Network with other HIS institutions and request needed funding for support and necessary programs for the needs of first generation student.

More information on the Team’s findings can be found here at the [Undergraduate Education Site](#).

CPE researched other UC campuses. With regard to retention, many of the larger campuses have student created Councils of Retention and members discussed the possibility of creating one on the UCSC campus. VPDUE Hughey apprised CPE members of a new committee he will be chairing, which will cover student retention issues, progress, and time to degree. The new team is called, “The Student Success Team” (SST). Members received the report produced by the

team in spring quarter, but there was not enough time to fully review the outcome. Here is the summary of issues that CPE may wish to review in the fall:

- Appoint a limited term “Champion” to catalyze rapid reforms.
- Expand access to information that will empower students, advisors, programs, and administration to make decisions crucial to student success.
- Increase on-campus jobs for students.
- Engage with students regarding mental health, alcohol and other drug issues.
- Develop degree paths that increase success.

### **Crown Core Course for Non-Satisfied ELWR Students**

There has been an ongoing problem with student success in satisfying ELWR. Crown College would like to try a pilot program in winter 2014, with the addition of another section of core. This course is not like other approved college core courses currently in place for students who have satisfied C1, but are not ELWR satisfied. In consultation with Provost Ferguson, the committee expressed unanimous support for the project, although a formal proposal was still being developed. An outline of the project, as understood by the committee, is that a winter section of the Crown Core course would be held for students who failed in the fall. Both the College and the Committee felt there were two major advantages: providing students who failed core, (particularly those who are ELWR unsatisfied) a chance to retake the requirement without waiting a year, giving them more time to pass Writing 2; and to encourage core instructors to maintain higher writing standards. Member Parmeter pointed out that it's not necessarily paradoxical for a student to pass core (carrying the C1 writing standard) while ELWR unsatisfied, because core also teaches many other aspects of academic discourse. However, since core carries the C1, standards for writing in core need to be raised, and core instructors need to be willing to fail students, even those working hard and showing progress, who don't meet the C1 standard. CPE recommended that core instructors known to have excellent experience and training specifically as writing instructors be engaged for the winter core sections, whether those are instructors from the writing program or instructors particularly well known to the provost as having that training.

### **ELWR Writing Data**

This year's cohort was among the lowest percentages ever satisfied for our campus and is an unexpected consequence, which required adding additional writing courses for winter and spring quarters. There were 3,400 entering students this year with the lowest test scores in writing and not a direct result of the writing program. These scores may be attributed in the Analytical Writing Placement Examination (AWPE exam or percentage of writing satisfied by other methods. These percentages have gone down this year and it is not known if this is a direct result in the admissions policies changes, or a result of admissions using percentages with regard to writing skills assessment. This new cohort of students may need help to catch up with an additional quarter of writing to pass the writing exam. Members wondered if it was the tutoring. The Writing Program hires tutors who are not a part of Learning Support Services (LSS) but the Writing program faculty meet with the tutors weekly to reinforce the work in class. With less student hours for writing tutors, faculty believe the quality of tutoring has increased to meet student's needs. There is limited individual tutoring available: 3 – 4 hours per quarter. In the past, students had unlimited access to tutors, but now there is limited funding. The Writing

Program is also working to address international student needs by offering a training this summer with writing instructors. It will be a boot camp to exchange information and share ideas. CPE will follow up on the issue of funding for tutors in the Writing Program next year.

### **Plagiarism Software**

The committee was supportive of purchasing a campus-wide license for the software as an educational tool— whether in the hands of students, instructors, or both—for demonstrating to students what plagiarism is, and how to avoid it. CPE felt instructors should be encouraged to use the system mostly to get students to rewrite plagiarized work, since misunderstanding of what constitutes plagiarism is extremely prevalent, and probably more so than calculated deception. The members thought that its utility might be greatest in disciplinary courses outside the committee's purview, since in preparatory writing courses it is often very clear when the students' writing departs from their own voice. CPE's expectation as to whether students' submitted work would be incorporated anonymously into the system's master database, can be a decision that individual instructors make. On the one hand, being a "good citizen" of the system requires helping to improve its database; if all institutions opted out of this, the system would become entirely ineffective. On the other hand, some faculty may be so uncomfortable with requiring students to submit their work to the database, even anonymously, that they will simply decline to use a system that would be otherwise valuable to them and their students. CPE supports the software purchase and that whatever system is chosen, this decision to participate can be left to individual faculty; and that, indeed, the presence or absence of this flexibility might be considered as a factor when the vendor is selected. CPE considers the "gold standard" for privacy in a system like this to be that the vendor completely removes information about the origin and authorship of submitted papers when including them in the database. If this is indeed the practice of the selected vendor, we suggested that this be publicized to faculty to increase their comfort with allowing student papers to be incorporated.

### **Targeted Review of SR 478**

CPE members reviewed the revised Senate Regulation 478 with regard to STEM majors and their ability to transfer into the UC System in a more streamlined fashion. Students in science and engineering majors without freshman physics or biology or chemistry could be delayed in graduating after transferring in to a UC and are normally expected to take up to three years to degree. The Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) for STEM majors that was proposed reduces the number of required courses in order to enable students to take science preparatory courses, increasing the likelihood of successful completion of the major within two years. The Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) is proposing this change to the regulation, freeing up three General Education (GE) courses that can be taken at the UC campus after transfer. Members agreed that these types of majors are linear, and every course the student takes is a prerequisite for progress in the major. So with the revised IGETC, there is more flexibility for the students to fulfill the requirements and progress more timely through the major. All agreed the proposal was good. From the student's perspective, it provides a broader range of courses to choose from, as well as exposure to many areas of study.

### **BOARS Mathematics Transfer Proposal**

The Committee on Preparatory Education (CPE) became aware of BOARS' deliberations regarding the required prerequisite for transferable math courses from community colleges at the end of spring quarter. UC policy requires junior transfers to complete a one-semester quantitative reasoning (mathematics or statistics) course that has Intermediate Algebra “or its equivalent” as a prerequisite. Determination of equivalency has been left in the hands of the community colleges, and one result of this has been the development of innovative paths for non-STEM majors to a transferable math course by groups such as the California Acceleration Project (CAP).

CPE's primary concern is that the changes being contemplated by BOARS—either the strict enforcement of intermediate algebra *per se*, or the alternative requirement of equivalence to Common Core—will stifle experimentation that is addressing, perhaps successfully, one of the thorniest problems facing higher education in California, which is finding those students from underrepresented groups and underperforming secondary schools who will be able to succeed at a UC and giving them a chance.

Members sent a response to our BOARS Divisional Representative, Chair Gordon, from Committee on Admissions and Financial Aid (CAFA) for the meeting at the end of June, where BOARS discussed the issue and decided that the course content was either intermediate algebra or comparable coursework.

### **Recommendations for CPE 2013-14**

Consult with the VPDUE on the progress of the goals recommended by the team on Hispanic Serving Institution.

Follow up with VPDUE on the actions resulting from the Student Success Team and how the Senate can be more formally involved with the process in the future. In particular, should there be an Undergraduate Council or a Committee on Retention and Advising? On this question, also follow up with the Senate Executive Committee and Committee on Committees.

Review new data on the MPE online results in table format. Pay close attention to the transfer of leadership for the MPE from Marty Weissman to a new math faculty member. Compare the reports from next year to the new ones provided, whether Math explicitly makes that comparison or not.

CPE reviewed UC All Campus Consortium On Research For Diversity (ACCORD) research activities for relevance to CPE's mission, and we identified several reports to read and follow up with for next academic year. Here are the research grants to follow up on:

Tina Matuchniak

UC Irvine/education

Dissertation Fellow

Dissertation: *Mind the Gap: A Cognitive Strategies Approach to College Writing Readiness*

Jessica Singer

UC Santa Barbara/education

Dissertation: *Literacy Sponsorship and First Generation Latino College Writers*

Margarita Azmitia, Ph.D., Holli A. Tonyan, Ph.D., and Olaf Reis, Ph.D.

UC Santa Cruz/psychology

Title: *The Role of Social Support in Under-represented Minority Students' Adjustment, Identity, Grades, and Retention in Their First Year of College*

Follow up on additional writing course sections, if any, with regard to new international student enrollments.

Keep in touch with new University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) Chair Frank on:

1. The recent BOARS decision regarding prerequisites to transferable math, and how this plays out for the experimental pre-statistics tracks at Community Colleges.
2. The suggestion being pursued by UCOPE for a possible systemwide math diagnostic test. (the idea originated at UCOPE with outgoing CPE Chair Smith).

Respectfully submitted;

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