

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION

Annual Report 2013-2014

To: Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

Introduction

The Committee on Preparatory Education (CPE) met throughout the academic year to discuss specific issues related to its charge. Members' discussions focused on a pro-active agenda with regard to strategies for writing, writing resources, ELWR, native and international student progress, and the online Mathematics Placement Exam. The work and accomplishments of the Committee during the 2013-14 year are summarized below.

New International Baccalaureate (IBH) Exam English A: Literature for C1

CPE reviews writing composition issues and concerns with regard to C1 satisfaction and has purview over decisions in consultation with the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP). This year CEP approved the International Baccalaureate (IBH) English A: Literature exam to satisfy C1 and ELWR with a score of 5, 6, or 7. UCOP announced earlier that such scores would also satisfy ELWR. Due to time restraints, CEP was not able to consult with CPE before making this decision.

Online Math Placement Exam (MPE)

CPE has been closely involved with the Mathematics Department's version of an online math placement exam by participating in reviewing annual data reports and test questions. This year the committee requested the test questions for review and comment. It is our understanding that each question on the exam is drawn from a pool with 43 questions. The exam chooses randomly from the pool so the answer is the same but the questions are varied. Members agreed the exam could use editing and revision of the order of questions. Ideally, the test should be global with key placement of multiple choice questions, increasing in difficulty as the test progresses to avoid brain fatigue. Committee members sent a request for suggested changes and received a response from the Mathematics Department Undergraduate Chair Debra Lewis who shared these concerns. The Department plans to create a committee during the summer which will review the questions and recommended changes. CPE will follow up with the Mathematics Department in fall quarter.

During our discussion, members raised the question of which UC campuses offer online math placement exams. Committee members learned that only four campuses do not offer an online math placement exam: Irvine, Riverside and Santa Barbara.

International Student Growth and IO Staff Position Review

CPE was asked to review and write a response to the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) on VPDUE Hughey's proposal for support of international student growth and campus globalization, including the job description for a potential Associate Vice Provost of International Education. The committee was impressed with the comprehensive proposal and financial planning for international growth, faculty initiatives, need-based financial aid and scholarships, diversity, recruitment, and retention initiatives. But members' concern was focused on the proposed Associate Vice Provost of International Education job description. CPE

members all agreed this position should be at the Vice Provost level filled by someone with expertise in the area of international student issues. Further, this senior administrator should be afforded authority over resources. Members are concerned the proposed budget maybe inadequate given the challenges in this area.

Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) Writing Update

ELWR is a UC Systemwide writing requirement. The committee discussed exam scores and AP course credit to satisfy the Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) and in light of the ways in which these tests have changed CPE agreed that the International Baccalaureate (IBH) English A: Literature or AP Literature exam is fine for ELWR satisfaction, but not the SAT exam due to changes in the essay presentation. At UCSC, there was a study of SAT scores regarding the correlation to placement for ELWR. After the study, no correlation between scores and placement in Core courses was found. The score of 680 on the SAT does satisfy ELWR, but many students still required help with developing writing skills.

ELWR Coordinator Hope–Parmeter updated members on students who were not ELWR satisfied and need to be enrolled in ELWR classes (writing courses) to satisfy the requirement before their fourth quarter or face having enrollment problems the subsequent quarter. Students are not signing up to take the required courses. The present email notification does not seem to be working. Several ideas were presented such as setting prerequisites or placing holds on enrollment. After the end of their fourth quarter, students face being barred from enrollment but can pass the C1 requirement by passing the AWPE Exam on campus during spring quarter, or taking a Community College course (and then take the AWPE.) The data that was provided to the committee also included the passing rate of international students and it is not yet clear if this group needs more support. Members had planned to review the data at the end of spring quarter, and will review it thoroughly in fall quarter. Members sent a request to Registrar Sanger for other possibilities that can be developed in AIS, and CPE will consult with him in fall quarter.

International Student Concerns with Support for Writing and ELWR Satisfaction

Members were advised from writing instructors that international students have different sets of skills and styles of English composition due to their cultural backgrounds, for example: academic writing in the U.K. is very different from American academic writing. Writing for American academic standards tends to be very challenging for students accustomed to other academic cultures.

This year the Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) scores were very low due to the prompt, which students found confusing. The level of student participation also dropped and their overall essay passing rate was down. The normal passing rate is 50%, this year, only 39% passed. Furthermore only 13% of the international student population passed. CPE members requested data on international student progress at UCSC, but unfortunately, the report came in after the committee stopped meeting for the year. The report will be reviewed by the 2014 -15 committee membership. Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education (VPDUE) Hughey has offered to consult next year on the outcome of the report. He points out the study does raise significant concerns with respect to satisfaction of the Entry-Level Writing Requirement (ELWR), an issue that all UC campuses are struggling with. 43% of the international students who were ELWR-unsatisfied at the start of fall quarter satisfied the requirement by the start of

spring quarter; in comparison to 75% of the domestic students who began as ELWR-unsatisfied. CPE has adopted the following initiatives for undergraduate international students, starting fall 2014: month long summer sessions for international-students ten-day orientation, international-specific ELWR-unsatisfied writing courses, specialized language courses in English, alternative Core course structures, and a peer mentor program. These initiatives are aimed at achieving our ultimate goal of international student graduations. The Language and Applied Linguistics (LAL) Department (formerly the Language Program) has also been working with Admissions to advertise a course on writing linguistics to help the students after they arrive. Among those course offerings, there will be three 3-unit summer session courses: Writing, Conversation, and Navigating the Research University. The instructors are creating writing sections of 14 – 15 students each, based on materials related to international students' interests. Last fall the LAL Department introduced grammar and editing classes especially for international students to meet their needs.

Follow Up on Retention with Faculty Assistant on Matters of Retention and Time to Degree Jaye Padgett

CPE members consulted with Professor Jaye Padgett, who is a special assistant to CP/EVC Galloway on issues of student retention and success rates in our majors. He presented issues for student success and offered a list of recommendations the steering committee will address this year that came out of the report last year by the Undergraduate Student Success Task Force (USSTF). Some of the recommendations included:

- Creation of community
- Campus life
- Communication between units on campus
- Degree audit progress
- Mobile Apps adoption
- Predictive analytics: should the campus purchase data mining software from an outside vendor?

CPE will follow up on the report in fall quarter.

Recommendations for CPE 2014-15:

- Follow up in fall quarter with Special Assistant Padgett on the Student Success Steering Committee Spring 2014 report.
- Review new data on the MPE online results in table format from last year. The Mathematics Department will form a task force in the summer to review the question types and order for the MPE exam and will update CPE in fall quarter.
- Review the report on additional writing course sections, if any, with regard to progress of international students and ELWR.

Respectfully submitted;

COMMITTEE ON PREPARATORY EDUCATION

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August 31, 2014