

The Regents of the University of California

**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

November 20, 1997

The Committee on Educational Policy met on the above date at Sunset Commons, Los Angeles campus.

Members present: Regents Atkinson, Connerly, Davis, Gonzales, Khachigian, Levin, McClymond, Montoya, and Soderquist; Advisory members Miura and Willmon

In attendance: Regents Brophy, Clark, Davies, Johnson, Leach, Nakashima, Parsky, Preuss, and Sayles, Faculty Representatives Dorr and Weiss, Secretary Trivette, General Counsel Holst, Assistant Treasurer Stanton, Provost King, Senior Vice President Kennedy, Vice Presidents Darling, Gomes, Gurtner, and Hopper, Chancellors Berdahl, Carnesale, Debas, Dynes, Greenwood, Orbach, Vanderhoef, and Yang, Executive Chancellor Golub representing Chancellor Wilkening, and Recording Secretary Nietfeld

The meeting convened at 9:35 a.m. with Committee Chair Gonzales presiding.

1. **THE CALIFORNIA VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY**

Provost Tomlinson-Keasey opened her presentation on the California Virtual University by describing some of the initiatives that have been undertaken by other universities. A well-known professor of classics at the University of Pennsylvania offered a class online to encourage interaction and conversation. His colleagues around the country learned about the class and asked whether their students could participate. The class grew to an enrollment of 350 students. The University of Michigan has indicated that by the year 2003 it expects that only twenty percent of its students will be living on campus. The Michigan Virtual Automotive College offers a great many courses online, ranging from beginning technical courses through advanced degrees in information for engineers and managers. The University of Michigan has done this by developing a partnership with a major industry in the state. Duke University offers the Global Executive MBA program, a two-year program that begins with three weeks in North America at Duke and ends with two weeks at Duke. In the interim there are two-week sessions in Asia, Europe, and South America as students study global issues. During these interim weeks, the classes are all online.

Stanford University's School of Engineering has been delivering education to industry for thirty years. This represents a model of how to develop partnerships with corporations that need to have continuing education for their engineers. The new technologies have not changed the concept, but they have made it easier for Stanford to send up-to-date information to its corporate partners.

Turning to the California Virtual Library, Provost Tomlinson-Keasey reported that, by executive order on April 4, 1997, Governor Wilson announced the appointment of a design team to create the California Virtual University (CVU). The design team consists of representatives from all three public higher education segments and the independent institutions. The team has completed a draft proposal describing the structure of the California Virtual University. In issuing his executive order, the Governor was responding to circumstances that currently pose significant challenges for higher education.

The "knowledge society" requires skills that reflect the technological base of the economy. Individuals without a college education will be unable to compete with their well-educated peers and will fall further and further behind on a variety of economic indices. Adults are finding it increasingly necessary to upgrade their educational skills for their careers to advance and are changing jobs frequently. To assist in these changes, adults need the opportunity to return to college or to take additional coursework.

California faces dramatic increases in its population that will result in a forty percent increase in projected enrollments for institutions of higher learning during the next decade. This is more than double the enrollment increases of any other state. This group of prospective California students will form one of the most diverse college-age populations in the United States. If the entire population is to be included in the economic recovery of the state, all racial groups must have access to higher education.

In addition, at a time when institutions of higher learning need to be expanding to meet these needs, State funds for higher education are limited.

The California Virtual University seeks to meet the educational needs of the citizens of California by providing expanded access within California to postsecondary education in order to meet some of the needs of the 450,000 additional students expected to enter California's higher education institutions over the next decade, preparing the workforce and ensuring the intellectual leadership needed to fuel the economic development of California through the provision of continuing access to education throughout the careers of working adults, and promoting the global export of California education and training.

Ms. Tomlinson-Keasey explained that, in contrast to the Western Governors University, which is intended to be a degree-granting entity, the California Virtual University will build on the quality and reputation of California's existing public and independent postsecondary institutions and hence will not offer degrees. Instead, the California Virtual University will make available the combined online and other distance-learning offerings of California's colleges and universities through an interactive catalog that is available on the Internet. In effect, the California Virtual University will serve as a gateway to courses, programs, certificates, and degrees offered by California institutions and will enhance marketing, availability, and access. Students seeking degrees must enroll in and work toward a degree program through an existing campus. This will ensure that a student has a home campus and

will be able to obtain student services and financial aid from that campus. It will also mean that the courses of study and degrees awarded will evidence the same kind of coherence and academic quality that are now provided for students enrolled in traditional campus programs.

The design of the California Virtual University mandates a decentralized, campus-based structure that leaves academic control in the hands of the participating campuses. Individual campuses will be responsible for determining the nature and scope of their offerings, for monitoring the quality of their offerings, for assessing the transferability of coursework from other institutions, for admitting students, and for determining degree requirements.

The catalog will take the form of a "virtual community" that provides information for students, faculty, employers, and corporate partners. In addition to courses and degree programs and a virtual "Faculty Center" and "Student Center," other services will be available at the Internet site, such as videotaped lectures or other programs and live online programming of interest to potential students. The catalog will provide links to campus home pages, bookstores, and other institutionally-based services such as UC's electronic application program, *Pathways*. Articulation and reciprocity are keys to the success of the CVU and will require continued segmental and campus support. The central catalog of the California Virtual University will provide links to other Internet sites such as the ASSIST program, an on-line catalog housed at UC Irvine which lists courses from other segments that satisfy specific requirements at UC campuses.

The University of California offerings will be focused particularly on the adult market and will respond to the need of this group for up-to-date information relevant to their careers. UC's initial contributions to the California Virtual University will therefore take the form of existing post-baccalaureate courses and certificate programs now offered through the divisions of University Extension. Initially, the University plans to make available approximately 350 courses and two certificate programs online through the California Virtual University. These courses will offer flexibility and convenience to adult learners.

For undergraduates, the University of California is committed to a residential program as an essential part of this experience. As part of the residential experience, students have opportunities to interact with their fellow students in both social and intellectual environments, and they are encouraged to interact with faculty. They participate in research with faculty and graduate students, and they undertake a variety of internships which add to their intellectual experience. As such, virtual courses are likely to be used in limited settings where they increase the flexibility and convenience that is offered to undergraduate students who have matriculated at the University of California. Offerings at the undergraduate level might serve students who have been admitted for winter or spring quarter, students who get out of sequence in a series of courses, students who need one course to graduate, students who need to challenge a course, or students with schedule conflicts.

To facilitate start-up of the California Virtual University, the design team has recommended that a State appropriation of \$9 million be sought for three years of operation to help fund ongoing planning, course development, infrastructure improvements, technical assistance, and the core catalog for the California Virtual University. After the initial appropriation, the California Virtual University will be self-supporting.

Regent Montoya asked why a prospective student would choose the California Virtual University over an institution such as Phoenix University. President Atkinson said that students will be attracted by the quality of the courses offered and the fact that many institutions of higher education will be involved.

Regent Johnson observed that keeping up with technological advances becomes increasingly more expensive. At the same time, the University of California was precluded from charging students a technology fee. She asked whether the University has a funding plan in place. President Atkinson pointed out that the University of California has been at the cutting edge of technological development for many years. Much of the infrastructure has been funded by research programs. He believed that the University would need to address cost issues as they arise because these costs are difficult to estimate. He noted that the sophistication of talent in this area at the University is remarkable, as is the level of funding that is being provided by foundations to support these efforts.

President Atkinson pointed out that the University of California currently serves the post-baccalaureate student seeking more education through its Extension courses. The Virtual University will play a role in this area, but UC will have to bring together the activities of on-campus faculty and Extension programs into a more meaningful whole.

2. **REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF THE CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION ELIGIBILITY STUDY**

President Atkinson recalled that the State's Master Plan for Higher Education requires that 12.5 percent of California's high school graduates be eligible to attend the University of California, while the top one-third are to be eligible to attend the California State University (CSU). On November 10, the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) released its 1996 study which was undertaken to identify the proportion of the public high school graduating class eligible for admission. The report, *Eligibility of California's 1996 High School Graduates for Admission to the State's Public Universities*, enables comparison between the Master Plan admissions guidelines and the actual eligibility rates for UC and CSU.

Provost King presented the purpose and history of the CPEC eligibility study, noting that these periodic studies which occur approximately every five years measure the fraction of the students who graduate from California's public high schools who meet eligibility requirements for admission to the State's four-year public universities. Eligibility studies are conducted

by CPEC in cooperation with UC, CSU and the State's public secondary schools. These studies began in the 1960s. Over the past fifteen years there have been four studies, covering the graduating classes of 1983, 1986, 1990, and 1996. The studies have employed the same design, which permits comparisons across the years of the rates of eligibility for UC and CSU. The studies have analyzed eligibility rates of each system in several ways--as a whole, by four major ethnic groups, by gender, and by regions of the state. In the 1996 study a new component was added which compared eligibility rates for rural, suburban, and urban high schools. For the 1996 study, the transcripts of 15,350 high school graduates were analyzed by UC and CSU to determine the level of academic preparation and standardized test completion achieved by students to meet current eligibility requirements of the two segments. This analysis provides a rich array of information on the relative levels of academic preparation achieved by the State's graduates. It will also serve as a data base for future analysis by the University.

Assistant Vice President Galligani, with the assistance of slides, discussed the detailed findings of the study, beginning with a display of the University's academic eligibility requirements in effect for the year studied, as follows:

- **Subject requirement:** 15 units of high school courses in the (a)-(f) pattern
- **Scholarship requirement:** 3.3 or higher grade point average or 2.82 - 3.29 GPA with a high score on the SAT I or ACT test
- **Examination requirement:** SAT I or ACT and three SAT II tests, two of which must be writing and mathematics Level 1 or 2

These requirements, which are determined by the Board on Admissions and Relations with Schools, have been in effect as presently constituted since 1994. The 15 academic units of coursework which are required for admission are two years of history or social science, four years of English, three years of mathematics, two years of laboratory science, two years of a language other than English, and two years of college preparatory electives. In 1994, the subject requirement was changed to include a second year of laboratory science and a second year of history or social science. The eligibility study reviews the academic background of public high school graduates in terms of college preparatory coursework completed while in high school, the grade point average earned, and standardized tests completed.

Mr. Galligani reported that the 1996 study found that 11.1 percent of public high school graduates met current University eligibility requirements. By contrast, the eligibility rate in 1990 was 12.3 percent. In 1996 an additional 9.5 percent of graduates completed all the required high school coursework and achieved a sufficient grade point average in this coursework but failed to take the full battery of standardized tests required by the University to meet minimum eligibility requirements for admission. This latter group of students is

classified as potentially eligible. There was an increase in the percentage of these students from 6.5 percent in 1990 to 9.5 percent in 1996.

President Atkinson emphasized that the students found to be potentially eligible would be fully eligible for admission if they had taken the required SAT II tests. The scores which students achieve on these tests do not influence their eligibility.

Regent Brophy asked why the University requires tests whose scores do not determine eligibility.

President Atkinson explained that SAT scores are not taken into consideration in determining eligibility if a student has a certain grade point average and has taken the necessary courses. The tests become important for students with GPAs in the 2.82 - 3.29 range.

Assistant Vice President Galligani pointed out that SAT II scores are considered in admissions decisions by the six general campuses that do not automatically admit all qualified students who apply. Completion of the tests only places candidates in the eligibility pool.

Mr. Galligani, in returning to his presentation, observed that in examining the data by ethnic groups, the study found that since 1990 the white eligibility rate has remained unchanged. There was a slight decrease in the eligibility rate of Latino students and a modest decrease in the rate of Asian American students. The eligibility rate of African American students experienced the greatest decline among all ethnic groups. Mr. Galligani reported that CSU data parallel UC decreases in eligibility rates across the board. Overall, the CSU eligibility rate dropped from 34.6 percent in 1990 to 29.6 percent in 1996. CSU does not have a corresponding potentially eligible population, as its requirements do not include the full battery of standardized tests that UC requires.

With respect to geographic location, CPEC found that suburban schools have the highest eligibility rates. While rural schools show a lower eligibility rate (7.1 percent) than urban schools (10.3 percent), when looking solely at completion of preparatory coursework without consideration for standardized tests completion, the difference between the rural and urban schools almost disappears. As in the past, the study also examines eligibility by regions in the state. The San Francisco bay area, Orange county, San Diego/Imperial county, and the central coast show higher-than-average eligibility rates. Also, between 1990 and 1996, while most regions show declines overall, eligibility rates have increased in the Central Valley, Riverside/San Bernardino area, and San Diego/Imperial County.

Mr. Galligani reported that the 1996 graduating class is the largest since 1979 and the most culturally, racially, economically, and linguistically diverse the State has known. Between 1990 and 1996, the public high school graduating class grew by approximately 9.5 percent. He noted that more graduates successfully completed the UC college preparatory coursework--20.6 percent of 1996 graduates versus 18.8 percent of 1990 graduates--but that a greater proportion of these students in 1996 did not proceed to take all the UC required

tests. These findings point out that differences in eligibility rates reflect a variety of societal, economic, and educational opportunity factors affecting students in the state.

In order to address some of the findings of the CPEC study, such as why many students who have completed the required coursework do not take the tests that will make them fully eligible to attend UC, as well as the drastic drop in eligibility rates of African American students, the University, in conjunction with CSU, CPEC, and the Department of Education, is in the process of designing a more in-depth study to be conducted in the near future to seek out the answers to these questions. Mr. Galligani added that the work of the Outreach Task Force had also addressed some of these concerns. The Board on Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) is already analyzing the data in the report and will be formulating recommended changes to the admissions requirements.

In response to a question from Regent Montoya, Mr. Galligani explained that CSU requires a series of courses similar to UC's (a)-(f) requirements and a grade point average of 3.0 in a breadth of courses rather than in the (a)-(f) pattern. He mentioned discussions under way between the faculty of the two institutions regarding a closer alignment of the course requirements in order to give students more flexibility in their choice of college preparatory courses.

Regent Connerly referred to the requirement that students take SAT II tests in order to be eligible for admission when in fact the test results do not affect eligibility. He suggested this was a type of economic discrimination. Faculty Representative Weiss noted that these test results are critical when campuses and departments rank applicants. Assistant Vice President Galligani added that the test requirement was instituted in the late 1960s in order to keep the eligibility rate at its proper percentage. With respect to Regent Connerly's concern, he reported that fee waivers are available for these examinations.

Regent Connerly suggested that the University's admissions process needs to be re-examined thoroughly because it appears to be very confusing. In addition, UC should synchronize its admissions procedures with CSU and the community colleges and should have a clearly-defined rationale for the admissions decisions that it makes.

Regent Khachigian observed that there may be pressure to reduce the University's entrance requirements in light of the findings of the report. She believed that, rather than lowering its standards, the University should work with K-12 to improve student performance.

President Atkinson commented that the study demonstrates an ever-increasing number of students are meeting the University's (a)-(f) requirements with a high grade-point average.

He believed that establishing these requirements was a major step which has had a profound effect in the state. With respect to CSU, the President reported that it had decided to accept students who were UC eligible, regardless of whether they had met CSU's subject requirements. Had CSU not done so, its eligibility rates would be much lower.

Regent Khachigian pointed out that the CPEC study is limited to four racial groups and wondered whether steps might be taken to pursue the use of multi-ethnic groupings. Provost King noted that such a decision would need to be made by CPEC.

Regent Parsky suggested that the University should focus on the group of students who are only potentially eligible for admission due to their failure to take certain tests as part of its outreach program. Mr. Galligani responded that one goal of the current outreach program is to make sure that students with a high level of eligibility take the required tests. As noted above, the University has an agreement with CSU, CPEC, and the Department of Education to study the questions that the CPEC study has raised. Regent Preuss pointed out that the pool would automatically increase dramatically if the SAT II test requirement was removed but urged that the University not consider this option. He believed that the students who chose not to take these tests had made the decision not to be eligible to attend the University of California.

In response to a question from President Atkinson, Mr. Galligani stated that if the SAT II requirement were removed, the fully eligible pool would increase by approximately 18 percent. President Atkinson agreed with Regent Preuss that because most universities do not require advanced tests, it is possible that some students have decided that they are not interested in attending the University of California and thus do not take these tests.

In response to a question from Regent Sayles, Mr. Galligani reported that about one-third of students who attend private schools are eligible to attend UC. He agreed to provide Regent Sayles with the ethnic breakdown of these students. In response to a further question, Mr. Galligani confirmed that grades from all schools are treated the same for purposes of eligibility. Advanced placement courses, however, earn one grade point more than regular courses do; as a result, a student could theoretically have a 5.0 GPA. Mr. Galligani recalled Professor Weiss' comments regarding the role of the SAT IIs in the admissions process, noting that after the GPA they are the second-best predictor of college achievement, with the SAT being the third-best predictor. Some campuses such as UCLA have been looking at the high school environment to see what opportunities the students are offered to learn. Students who do not have the opportunity to take certain advanced placement courses, for example, would not be not disadvantaged by this fact in determining admissions.

Regent Leach suggested that it would be important to determine why students who were academically qualified had chosen not to take the required tests. He noted that the percentage of African-American students who were either eligible or potentially eligible had grown from 2.4 percent in 1990 to 4 percent in 1996, which represents a 66 percent increase. Similarly, Latino student eligibility rose from 2.9 percent to 4 percent when potentially eligible students are included.

Regent Brophy observed that the admissions process was complex and that the members of the Board should have a better understanding of how it works. In particular, he noted that



this and all CPEC reports are transmitted to all members of the State Legislature; thus it would behoove the members of the Board to have a full understanding of its contents. He asked that the President schedule a special presentation for the Board on UC admissions.

In response to a question from Regent Soderquist, Mr. Galligani reported that the cost to take each SAT II is approximately \$35 and the cost for the SAT is \$40. The College Board allocates fee waivers to each high school for these tests.

Regent Soderquist emphasized Regent Brophy's request that the Board become better informed with respect to the admissions process because the Regents represent the University to the general public.

Regent Davies referred to the report of the Latino Eligibility Task Force, which had recommended that the SAT requirement be removed altogether. This argument was based on the understanding that the SAT does not predict well for certain groups. Assistant Vice President Galligani reported that studies show that both the SAT I and the SAT II do have predictive value. Provost King added that the test results are helpful when determining which students to admit to a particular college or major. There is a high correlation found between the test scores and students' success in courses for the major.

Regent-designate Miura observed that there is a tendency to assume that those students found to be potentially eligible were from underrepresented groups. The CPEC study found, however, that the percentages that would be gained by including these students would be mainly from the Asian American and white populations.

Regent Davis believed that it was important to encourage all qualified students to complete the eligibility requirements. He suggested the need for a mechanism to communicate to potential students that they would have the option of attending the University of California if they were to complete the required tests. In addition, he believed that in the long term the admissions process should be simplified.

President Atkinson pointed out that the University has the highest percentage of high school graduates attending UC in its history. If the potentially eligible students were convinced that they should complete all of the eligibility requirements, the eligibility pool would increase to twenty percent. This would necessitate an immediate adjustment of the admissions requirements in order to continue to conform to the Master Plan. He stressed that the purpose of the CPEC study was to determine eligibility. He believed that the University was doing an excellent job in communicating with high school students, as represented by the nearly eight percent of California high school graduates in attendance at UC.

Regent Davis stressed that access to the University of California should not be determined by the awareness of students of the need to take the SAT II.

Regent Connerly recalled the presentation on Latino eligibility made by Dean Garcia and suggested that there should be agreement among scholars with respect to the predictive value of the SAT. In addition, he believed that Dean Garcia had stated that the tests are expensive to take.

President Atkinson noted that there is no agreement among scholars although hundreds of studies have been done on the subject. With respect to the cost of the tests, the President pointed out that many students feel the need to take preparatory courses prior to taking the SAT; it is these courses that are expensive. The University is attempting to make arrangements with the Educational Testing Service to provide free preparation for students, although there is also debate as to the value of these courses.

Mr. Galligani offered to share validity studies of the SAT with the Regents and also to prepare a summary of the different views for the Board.

Faculty Representative Weiss assured the Regents that the faculty are as concerned as the Regents about the divergent information that is coming forward with respect to admissions. BOARS has taken on the responsibility of bringing to the Regents some recommendations to revamp the University's admissions process. In particular, BOARS is looking at subject requirements and at ways in which these requirements may be clearly communicated to the public. BOARS is also doing statistical modeling of the examination requirements to identify what is predictive for UC students. Professor Weiss reported that the faculty would welcome the opportunity to discuss admissions with the Regents. She also pointed out that the CPEC eligibility report had found that the percentage of women students who are eligible and potentially eligible has increased substantially over the past decade.

Regent Ochoa observed that, due to budgetary difficulties, many inner-city schools had eliminated high school counselors who advise students on entrance requirements. He also suggested that some inner-city schools may be perceived as being unable to prepare students to attend college.

Regent Preuss reiterated a concern which he had raised at a previous meeting regarding the University's difficult admissions process, which is an artificial barrier to entry for students. Assistant Vice President Galligani assured Regent Preuss that the administration is looking at the application process at comparison institutions and following up with student focus groups. He emphasized the ease of the Web-based application, *PATHWAYS*.

President Atkinson noted that both the Regents and the faculty had shown an interest in further discussion of the admissions process and stated his intention to speak with Committee Chair Gonzales regarding the scheduling of such a presentation.

Regent Gonzales observed that the report raised more questions than it answered, noting that many students make educational choices based upon their family situation or geographical

location. She stated that the Regents would look forward to further presentations on this subject.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Attest:

Secretary