

**FRESHMAN ADMISSIONS AT BERKELEY:**  
A Policy for the 1990s and Beyond

A Report of the Committee on  
Admissions and Enrollment  
Berkeley Division, Academic Senate  
University of California

Professor Jerome Karabel, Chair



1989

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
INTRODUCTION.....	1
I.    A Brief History of Berkeley Admissions to 1980.....	5
II.   The Social and Political Context of Admissions at Berkeley.....	11
III.  The Berkeley Admissions Process in the 1980s.....	16
IV.  Principles to Guide the Admissions Process.....	25
V.   Proposed Changes in Freshman Admissions to Berkeley.....	29
VI.  Concluding Remarks.....	45
 Appendix A: Regents' Policy on Undergraduate Admissions.....	 46
Appendix B: Ethnic Distribution of Undergraduates, 1981-1988.....	47

## TABLES AND FIGURES

	<u>PAGE</u>
Table 1: Fall Term Freshman Applications, 1974-1988.....	2
Table 2: UC Berkeley Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) Mean Scores Fall Freshmen.....	7
Figure 1: Projected California High School Graduates (Public and Private) in California, 1990-2004.....	15
Table 3: Ethnic Distribution of New Freshmen at UC Berkeley, Fall 1981-1988.....	17
Table 4: Fall Freshman Admits by Admissions Tier Fall 1986-1988.....	21
Figure 2: Freshman Registrants 1988-1989 (Year-Round) All Colleges at Berkeley.....	23
Table 5: Fall Freshman Yield by Admissions Tier 1986-1988.....	31
Table 6: Student Estimated Annual Parental Income - Fall 1987 Entering Freshmen.....	36
Table 7: Fall Freshman Tier 3 Admits by Complemental Group 1986-1988.....	39
Table 8: Flexible Freshman Admissions Targets for Secondary Review Categories.....	40

## INTRODUCTION

As the oldest and most prestigious campus of the University of California and as one of the world's leading universities, the University of California at Berkeley has long been the first choice of thousands of talented high school seniors both inside and outside of California. Yet it is only in recent years that the competition for places in the freshman class has become truly ferocious; indeed, just sixteen years ago -- in 1973 -- all UC-eligible students (i.e. all California residents in the top eighth of the state's graduating seniors) who wished to attend Berkeley were admitted. And even a decade ago, Berkeley was able to accept over two-thirds of its applicants (see Table 1).

During the 1980s however, the Berkeley campus witnessed a remarkable increase in applications. Between 1981 and 1984, the number of applicants rose from 9,006 to 12,381 -- an increase of 37.5 percent. But the major upsurge in applications did not begin until 1986, the year in which applicants to the University of California were no longer limited to their first-choice campus and "multiple filing" was introduced. This change resulted in 20,291 applications for the entering freshman class of 1986, and the number of applications continued to climb thereafter, reaching 22,439 in 1988. As a point of comparison, the number of applicants to Stanford and Harvard has tended in recent years to be in the vicinity of 16,000 and 14,000 respectively.<sup>1</sup>

The increasingly intense competition for admissions has left Berkeley with no alternative but to turn away many highly qualified applicants, disappointing thousands of worthy students in the process. The procedures used in making these difficult decisions are properly objects of public scrutiny, and in recent years they have aroused growing controversy. This controversy has reached perhaps its

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<sup>1</sup> "Freshman Applications to Stanford Drop 6 Percent," Stanford News, January 31, 1989; Harvard University, Office of Admissions and Financial Aids, "Annual Report of the Admissions and Financial Aids Committee to the President, 1987-88," 1988.

**Table 1****FALL TERM FRESHMAN APPLICATIONS, 1974-1988**

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	APPLICANTS	ADMITS	REGISTRANTS
1974	4706	3908	2830
1975	5035	3896	3064
1976	5524	4119	3169
1977	6754	4551	3299
1978	7296	5045	3729
1979	8547	5678	4030
1980	9115	4885	3373
1981	9006	4886	3064
1982	9175	5663	3560
1983	10118	6910	4368
1984	12381	6900	4168
1985	11913	6329	3772
1986	20291	7398	3315
1987	21661	8146	3625
1988	22439	7731	3533

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Source: Office of Student Research, UC Berkeley

highest pitch in the widely-publicized conflict on Asian American admissions -- a controversy that, as Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman has acknowledged, damaged relations between Berkeley and the Asian American community and undermined the trust and respect that Asian Americans have traditionally felt toward the University.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, Berkeley's vigorous policy of affirmative action for historically under-represented minorities has also aroused bitter controversy on and off the campus, with some suggesting that the University has gone too far and others suggesting that it has not gone far enough.<sup>3</sup> In each of these conflicts, the zero-sum character of the struggle -- a struggle in which fundamental group interests and values are at stake -- has placed unprecedented pressure on the University to explain and to justify its admissions practices.

Yet if the sharp upturn in applications in the 1980s has created serious problems, it has also presented Berkeley with an extraordinary set of opportunities. The growing numbers of qualified applicants should make it possible for the campus to maintain and, indeed, to raise its academic standards at the same time that it broadens and deepens the process of diversification of its student body that was begun a quarter of a century ago. This will not be an easy process, and it is sure to arouse additional controversy along the way. We are confident, however, that a policy can be devised that is attentive both to Berkeley's position as perhaps the

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<sup>2</sup> Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman, Speech to the Hayden Committee, California State Legislature, 26 January 1988. It should be noted, however, that in April 1989 members of the Asian American Task Force on University Admissions and Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman issued a joint statement that, while acknowledging that changes in admissions policy introduced in 1984 had a disproportionately negative impact on the enrollment on Asian Americans (see also "Report of the Special Committee on Asian American Admissions of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate," February 1989), Berkeley has since taken "important steps toward responding and has engaged in developing new procedures and policies that would ensure fairness and provide reassurance to the Asian community."

<sup>3</sup> Among the more prominent public critics of Berkeley's policy of affirmative action, who have suggested that it has gone too far, are John H. Bunzel, "Affirmative-action Admissions: How It 'Works' at UC Berkeley," The Public Interest, Fall 1988; Donald Werner, "College Admissions: Shaky Ethics," The New York Times, June 1988; and James S. Gibney, "The Berkeley Squeeze," The New Republic, 11 April 1988.

nation's leading research university and to its responsibility to serve all of the people of California.<sup>4</sup>

It is with this objective in mind that we now embark on a brief detour into the history of admissions at Berkeley.

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<sup>4</sup> A five-volume study of graduate programs in thirty-two disciplines sponsored by the Conference Board of Associated Research Councils recently ranked Berkeley as the nation's leading research university; see Lyle U. Jones et al. (ed.), An Assessment of Research Doctorate Programs in the United States (Washington: National Academy Press, 1982). For earlier studies that reached the same conclusion, see Kenneth D. Roose and Charles J. Andersen, A Rating of Graduate Programs (Washington: American Council on Education, 1970) and Allan M. Carter, An Assessment of Quality in Graduate Education (Washington: American Council on Education, 1966). A useful summary of the major studies of American graduate education in the twentieth century is contained in David S. Webster, "America's Highest Rated Graduate Schools, 1925-1982," Change, May/June 1983.

## Section I

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF BERKELEY ADMISSIONS TO 1980

The cornerstone of the current admissions policy at all campuses of the University of California, including Berkeley, is the *Master Plan for Higher Education in California* written in 1960 and formally approved by the State Legislature in 1964. Prior to its adoption, approximately 15 percent of California high school graduates were eligible to attend the University of California -- a proportion that made the Berkeley campus one of the nation's most selective public universities. Citing the desire to "raise materially standards for admission to the lower division," the 1960 Master Plan raised these standards still higher by limiting eligibility to those graduates of California public high schools in the top one-eighth (12 1/2 percent) of their class.<sup>5</sup> This policy remains in place today and was ratified most recently by the 1987 report of the Commission for Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education, *The Master Plan Renewed*.<sup>6</sup> As a result of this "top 12 1/2 percent" policy, the University of California is -- along with the University of Michigan, the University of Virginia, and the University of North Carolina -- among the most selective state universities in the United States. And within the University of California system of eight undergraduate institutions, competition for admission to the Berkeley campus is the most intense.

As an institution of national and, indeed, international prominence, Berkeley in the 1950s and 1960s attracted talented and ambitious students from around the

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<sup>5</sup> California State Department of Education, Liaison Committee of the State Board of Education and The Regents of the University of California, *A Master Plan for Higher Education in California, 1960-1975*, Sacramento 1960: 72-73.

<sup>6</sup> Commission for The Review of The Master Plan for Higher Education, *The Master Plan Renewed: Unity, Equity, Quality, and Efficiency in California Postsecondary Education*, Sacramento, July 1987. For a description of the criteria currently used to establish eligibility for the University of California, see the *Berkeley 1988-1989 General Catalog*: 29-31.

country. One indicator of their talent and ambition is the fact that more holders of bachelor's degrees from Berkeley have gone on to receive doctoral degrees than from any other institution in the country.<sup>7</sup> Unlike other University of California campuses, but like the University of Wisconsin and the University of Michigan, Berkeley drew substantial numbers of students from out-of-state; though no precise figures are available, in some years during the 1960s the proportion of freshman originating from outside of California reached more than 15 percent.<sup>8</sup> Part of Berkeley's distinctive reputation for academic excellence and cosmopolitanism derived from this capacity to attract -- and its willingness to accept -- these students.

Yet despite Berkeley's impressive record of accomplishment, it would be wrong to romanticize the Berkeley student body in the 20 years after World War II. While the top students were outstanding by any standard, the less adept among them were in fact quite weak academically. In 1947, for example, the mean combined verbal and math SAT for Letters and Science freshmen was 937.<sup>9</sup> In 1960, after a period of rapid population growth in California, the mean SAT for the freshman class as a whole was 1113, as compared to mean SAT scores of 1181 in 1986 (see Table 2). Then, as now, retention was a serious problem; of those who entered Berkeley as freshmen in 1955, for example, only 51 percent had graduated ten years later and 20 percent did not even return for their sophomore year.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> National Research Council, *Doctorate Records File*, Washington, D.C., 1989. The most recent available data indicate that Berkeley undergraduates led the nation in receipt of doctoral degrees in each of the nine years from 1979 to 1987 inclusive. The total number of doctoral recipients with Berkeley baccalaureates during this period was 3,212; The University of Michigan was second with 2,644.

<sup>8</sup> Eleanor Langlois, unpublished memorandum on out-of-state students. Office of Institutional Research, University of California at Berkeley, April 25, 1989.

<sup>9</sup> W.M. Laetsch, unpublished memorandum on SAT scores, 1978-1987. University of California at Berkeley, 29 January 1988.

<sup>10</sup> University of California at Berkeley, Office of Institutional Research, "Student Performance and Attrition at the University of California at Berkeley: A Follow-Up of the Entering Freshman Classes of Fall 1955 and Fall 1960," January 1968.

Table 2

**UC BERKELEY SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) MEAN SCORES  
FALL FRESHMEN**

YEAR	MEN		WOMEN		TOTAL FOR MEN & WOMEN		PERCENT TESTED*
	VERB	MATH	VERB	MATH	VERB	MATH	TOTAL
1960	548	606	544	519	546	567	—
1968	575	632	562	564	569	603	91
1970	556	626	549	554	553	599	83
1971	540	613	527	543	535	586	85
1972	544	615	527	561	537	593	92
1973	544	619	521	535	534	584	84
1974	541	623	526	558	535	596	90
1975	526	617	511	556	520	592	85
1976	527	620	514	554	522	592	90
1977	529	627	519	561	525	599	88
1978	528	618	522	561	525	593	94
1979	528	626	519	564	524	599	94
1980	540	628	521	567	532	602	83
1981	538	625	517	570	529	601	84
1982	537	628	518	567	528	600	85
1983	534	636	517	574	526	608	92
1984	552	638	529	585	541	614	96
1985	554	642	536	590	546	618	97
1986	564	657	541	594	553	628	97
1987	561	653	539	591	551	626	97
1988	565	659	542	596	554	631	96

Note: Freshmen on all campuses of the University were tested with the SAT in the fall of 1960 and testing became an admission requirement in 1968. Data for 1969 are omitted from the table because they are inaccurate.

\* Percentage of new freshmen upon whom the table's scores are based.

The standard deviation for total SAT scores in 1987 was: 108 (Verbal) and 112 (Math).

The standard deviation for total SAT scores in 1988 was: 104 (Verbal) and 105 (Math).

Source: Office of Student Research, UC Berkeley

Through 1964, sheer eligibility to the University of California guaranteed admission to the Berkeley campus. The student body in the early 1960s was, by current standards, strikingly homogeneous. Perhaps 90 percent of entering freshmen were white, and most of them hailed from the state's middle and upper-middle classes. A 1964 study of the University of California as a whole revealed, for example, that half of California's families had annual incomes of less than \$8,000 although less than a quarter of the families from which students at the University originated had incomes that low.<sup>11</sup>

In 1966, the first survey of the ethnic composition of the Berkeley student body revealed that 2.7 percent of the 26,000 students then registered were of Chinese ancestry and 2.5 percent of Japanese ancestry.<sup>12</sup> While these numbers were small, they reflected Berkeley's openness to Asian Americans -- an openness that contrasted sharply with the discrimination that they faced in other walks of American life, including many private universities. On a much smaller scale, Berkeley was to California's Chinese and Japanese what the City College of New York (CCNY) had earlier been to New York City's Jews: a pathway to upward mobility to which entry was granted not on the basis of who one was, but rather what one had achieved.<sup>13</sup>

A 1968 survey revealed, however, that the much larger Black and Hispanic communities of California had still to achieve a substantial presence on the

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<sup>11</sup> W. Lee Hansen and Burton A. Weisbrod, Benefits, Costs, and Finance of Public Higher Education, (Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1969), 69.

<sup>12</sup> University of California at Berkeley, "Report of the Special Committee on Asian-American Admissions of the Berkeley Division of the Academic Senate," February 1989: 13.

<sup>13</sup> For an analysis of the role of the City College of New York in the educational and social mobility of Jews, see Sherry Gorelick, City College and the Jewish Poor, (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1981). Treatments of the historical obstacles faced by Jews in American higher education include Harold S. Wechsler, The Qualified Student: A History of Selective College Admission in America, (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1977; Marcia Graham Synnott, The Half-Opened Door: Discrimination and Admissions at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton, 1900-1970, (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1979); and David Levine, The American College and the Culture of Aspiration 1915-1940, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986).

Berkeley campus; a mere 2.8 and 1.3 percent of Berkeley undergraduates in 1968 were, respectively, Black and Hispanic.<sup>14</sup> The first effort to address the issue of racial and socioeconomic differentials in access to the University of California had come four years earlier in 1964, in the context of the civil-rights movement and the rediscovery of poverty in America. The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) had been established to provide access for promising students who, for social or economic reasons, might otherwise have been unable to attend college. EOP was expressly designed for low income and educationally disadvantaged students coming primarily, but not exclusively, from minority backgrounds.<sup>15</sup>

Another measure designed to increase the number of minority and low income students was the adoption in 1968 by the Regents of a proposal to increase from 2 to 4 percent the number of students admitted to the University of California in exception of the normal eligibility standards. The Master Plan of 1960 had provided for some flexibility in the admissions process by allowing 2 percent of the freshman class to be selected from the 87 1/2 percent of California's graduating high school seniors who were ineligible to attend the University; part of the motivation for this measure was undoubtedly the desire to admit a sufficient number of athletes to permit competition in intercollegiate sports. In 1979, the Regents again increased the proportion of students admitted in exception (now known as Special Action) by another 2 percent, this time for the purpose of bringing in more racially and socially disadvantaged students. This policy of admitting up to 6 percent of the student body through Special Action remains in place at all UC campuses, including Berkeley.

Overall, the first decade (1964-1974) of Berkeley's effort to diversify its student body produced little strain on the admissions process. While a small number of UC-eligible students were "re-directed" from Berkeley to second- or third-choice

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<sup>14</sup> University of California, Office of the Vice President-Planning and Analysis, University of California, "Summary of the Fall 1968 Ethnic Survey," 14 February 1969.

<sup>15</sup> University of California at Berkeley, Office of Admissions and Records, "History of the Admissions Policy for the Educational Opportunity Program," University of California at Berkeley, 1988.

campuses, the vast majority were accepted. In the College of Letters and Science, which has long enrolled more than 70 percent of all freshmen, all eligible students who wished to attend were accepted through 1973.

In anticipation of a possible admissions crunch caused by the growing number of high school graduates, however, the University of California Council of Chancellors had in 1971 already agreed on a "50/50 criterion" -- 50 percent of applicants to be selected on a purely academic basis and 50 percent on the basis of other factors such as disadvantage and California residency.<sup>16</sup> On the Berkeley campus, competition for admissions did in fact gradually increase during the mid- and late-1970s, with a growing number of UC-eligible students for whom Berkeley was the first choice being re-directed to other UC campuses. Nonetheless, the number of students turned away from Berkeley remained relatively modest; of 7,296 students (including a number who were not UC-eligible) who applied for the fall of 1978, only 2,251 were rejected (see Table 1).

The racial and ethnic diversification of the student body remained a systemwide objective in the late 1970s, and all UC-eligible applicants from historically under-represented minority groups were admitted at all UC campuses, including Berkeley. In addition, significant numbers of minority students were admitted to Berkeley from among the ranks of Special Action applicants (whose numbers continued to include, as they do today, a sizable group of non-minority athletes). Despite these efforts, minority enrollments remained disappointing as the 1970s came to a close, with only 3.9 percent of the 1979 freshman class Black and 4.0 percent Hispanic.<sup>17</sup> At the same time, demand for a place in the freshman class had begun to climb upward, giving the admissions process in 1980 more of a zero-sum character than had been the case a mere decade earlier.

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<sup>16</sup> Patrick S. Hayashi, "History of Undergraduate Affirmative Action Admissions by College", testimony prepared for Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman before the Shack Committee, 12 May 1988.

<sup>17</sup> University of California at Berkeley, Office of Student Research, "Ethnic Distribution of New Freshmen at UC Berkeley, Fall Terms, 1979-1983," 3 November 1983.

## Section II

### THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF ADMISSIONS AT BERKELEY

In formulating their admissions policies, all institutions of higher education, private as well as public, must take seriously into account the social and political context in which they operate. As a public, taxpayer-supported institution, Berkeley has a central component of its mission the responsibility to serve the people of California. During the past two decades, the State Legislature has been increasingly explicit about what it considers to be the public-service responsibility of the University of California, emphasizing the need for it to serve all of the state's citizens. Thus in 1973, the Joint Committee on the Master Plan, in the first major revision of the 1960 Master Plan, recommended that "Each segment of California public higher education shall strive to approximate by 1980 the general ethnic, sexual and economic composition of the recent high school graduates."<sup>18</sup> This principle of broad representativeness was ratified by Assembly Concurrent Resolution #151, passed in 1974, and once again, by Assembly Concurrent Resolution #83 passed in 1983.<sup>19</sup> Most recently, the Joint Committee for Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education recommended that "Each segment of California public higher education shall strive to approximate by the year 2000 the general ethnic, gender, economic, and regional composition of recent high school

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<sup>18</sup> Joint Committee for Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education, Report of the Joint Committee on the Master Plan for Higher Education, California Legislature, September 1973.

<sup>19</sup> University of California at Berkeley, Office of the Chancellor-Budget and Planning, "Freshman Admissions at Berkeley," February 1988.

graduates, both in first-year classes and subsequent college and university graduating classes."<sup>20</sup>

These pressures from Sacramento, while taken seriously by the University, do not, however, explain the origins of Berkeley's affirmative action policy. As noted earlier, the University had developed an Educational Opportunity Program as far back as 1964 -- long before the State Legislature was pressing the issue of increasing the enrollment of minority and low income students. In the context of the civil rights movement and the upheavals that shook America's campuses and urban centers during the 1960s, Berkeley -- like other leading institutions of higher education, both public and private -- recognized a responsibility to promote expanded opportunities to minority populations.

Part of the impetus behind this decision was no doubt a fear that to do otherwise was to risk further damage to America's fragile social fabric; however, it should be emphasized that there was also an educational logic to Berkeley's commitment to affirmative action. This logic resided in the conviction that a more diverse student body with a broad variety of backgrounds and viewpoints was likely to produce a more dynamic intellectual environment and a richer undergraduate experience. As Harvard University President Derek Bok pointed out, surveys of graduating classes have shown repeatedly that students report that they have benefitted as much from informal interaction with one another as from their lectures and reading.<sup>21</sup> With California's population more heterogeneous than ever before, Berkeley's capacity to attract an exceptionally diverse student body

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<sup>20</sup> Joint Committee for Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education, California Faces . . . California's Future, 1988: 19. According to data provided by the California Post Secondary Education Commission, the ethnic composition of 1987 California public high school graduates (who comprise over 90 percent of all high school graduates in the state) was 61.1 percent white, 7.9 percent Black, 19.3 percent Hispanic, 8.7 percent Asian, 2.2 percent Filipino, and 0.8 percent American Indian; California Post Secondary Education Commission, "California College-Going Rates: 1987 Update," Sacramento, June 1988: 69.

<sup>21</sup> Derek Bok, Beyond the Ivory Tower: Social Responsibilities of the Modern University, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 97.

increasingly has been recognized for the extraordinary educational resource that it is.

As Berkeley has moved to fulfill its commitment to a more diverse student body, it has faced a number of obstacles. Prominent among them is the obdurate reality of large-scale differences in patterns of academic performance among California's various racial and ethnic groups -- differences that are reflected in a high school drop-out rate among Blacks and Hispanics at least 50 percent higher than among whites. Racial and ethnic differences in rates of eligibility for the University of California reveal an even more dramatic pattern: whereas only 4.5 and 5.0 percent of Black and Hispanic high school graduates respectively meet UC eligibility requirements, 15.8 percent of whites and 32.8 percent of Asians do so.<sup>23</sup> In trying to construct an admissions policy that is responsive to all of the major social groups that comprise California's population, these differences in rates of eligibility -- differences which are themselves deeply rooted in larger patterns of racial and ethnic inequality -- constitute a formidable problem indeed.

As Berkeley attempts to deal with these major differences in rates of eligibility, it will do so in a rapidly changing demographic context. While whites in 1960 constituted 82.7 percent of California's population, by 1980 their proportion had dropped to 66.6 percent. In the year 2000, it is estimated that whites will comprise only 53.6 percent, with Hispanics at 26.8 percent, Asians and others at 11.8 percent, and Blacks at 7.9 percent of the state's population.<sup>24</sup> Sometime between 2000 and 2010 -- one projection targets the year 2003 -- non-Hispanic whites will no longer

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<sup>22</sup> Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education, Issue Papers, The Master Plan Renewed, Sacramento, August 1987: 17.

<sup>23</sup> California Post Secondary Education Commission, "Eligibility of California's 1986 High School Graduates for Admission to its Public University: A Report of the 1986 High School Eligibility Study," Draft Report, Commission Agenda, Item 16, 8 February 1988.

<sup>24</sup> Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education, Background Papers, The Master Plan Renewed, Sacramento, August 1987: 10-11.

constitute a majority, making California the first mainland state without a majority racial group.<sup>25</sup>

This is an extraordinary degree of racial and ethnic diversity -- unusual for an entire nation, much less a single state. Yet in many ways, California resembles a nation more than it does most states, with a 1989 population of more than 28 million and an economy variously judged to be the world's sixth or seventh largest. By the year 2000, California is likely to have a population of well over 31 million, more than twice the number who resided in the state when the landmark 1960 Master Plan was devised.<sup>26</sup> And by 2004, over 400,000 students are expected to graduate from California's high schools annually (see Figure 1).

These demographic trends are already transforming the state's public school system. Already, Black, Hispanic, and Asian children comprise the majority of California's students from kindergarten through eighth grade, and they will soon be a majority through the twelfth grade. In 17 counties from Sacramento southward, between one-fifth and half of the children now speak a language other than English at home.<sup>27</sup> The rapid approach of the time when there will be no majority group in the state is thus clear. This is an unprecedented situation, and it presents unprecedented challenges and opportunities for the Berkeley campus. How well Berkeley can respond to these challenges and opportunities will be one crucial measure of its success as California struggles to adjust to the reality of multiculturalism.

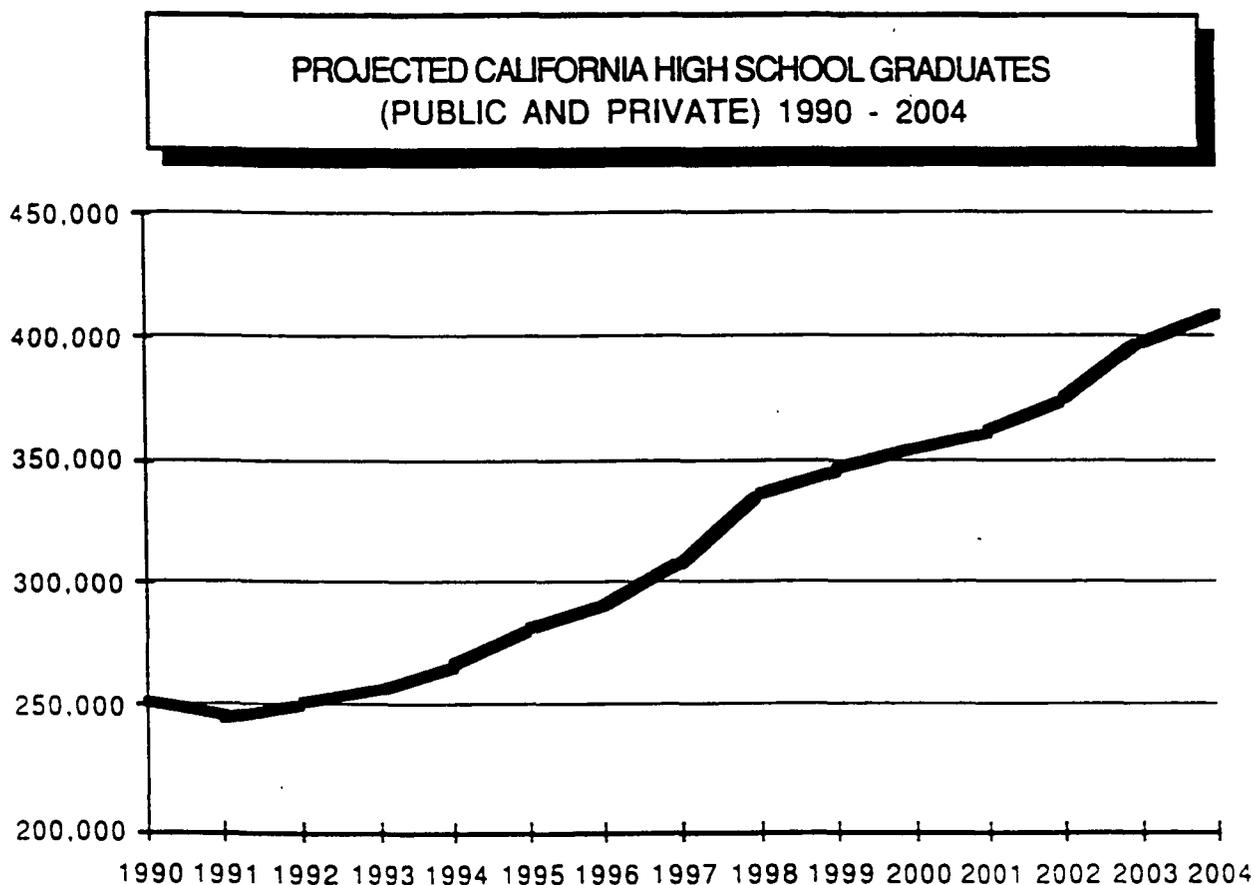
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<sup>25</sup> California Post Secondary Education Commission, "Report of the Executive Director to the California Post Secondary Education Commission, 23 January 1989," Commission Agenda, Item 20:1.

<sup>26</sup> Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education, Background Papers, The Master Plan Renewed, Sacramento, August 1987: 9-10.

<sup>27</sup> California Post Secondary Education Commission, "Report of the Executive Director to the California Post Secondary Education Commission, 23 January 1989," Commission Agenda, Item 20: 1.

Figure 1



Source: Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education,  
The College Board, Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association,  
High School Graduates: Projections by State, 1986-2004,  
Boulder, Colorado, 1986: 25.

### Section III

#### THE BERKELEY ADMISSIONS PROCESS IN THE 1980s

The decade of the 1980s has seen increasing competition for a place in the freshman class at Berkeley and, perhaps for that very reason, growing public controversy about the fairness of its admissions practices. A few facts will illuminate some of the primary results of the policies of the last eight years. Most visible, there has been a remarkable increase in the proportion of historically under-represented minorities (Native Americans, Blacks, Hispanics, and Filipinos) in the fall freshman class from 15.3 percent in 1981 to 36.6 percent in 1988 (see Table 3). During the same period, there has been a sharp drop in the proportion of whites from 57.9 to 37.0 percent, with a slight drop in the proportion of non-Filipino Asians from 22.7 to 20.8 percent.<sup>28</sup>

One indicator that the far-ranging diversification of the student body that has taken place in the past decade has not been at the expense of conventional academic standards is the fact that the percentage of new freshmen with combined SATs less than or equal to 1000 declined from 24.8 percent in 1978 to 20.5 percent in 1987.<sup>29</sup> During these same years, the proportion of freshmen with very high SATs (defined 1400 or more) more than doubled, from 4.2 to 11.0 percent.<sup>30</sup> Moreover, the

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<sup>28</sup> In contrast to the pattern among fall freshmen, however, the proportion of non-Filipino Asians among all undergraduates has increased between 1981 and 1988 from 19.5 to 22.2 percent. The reason for this (as well as for the lower rate of decline in the enrollment of white undergraduates) is threefold: that the spring freshman class is far more Asian and white than the fall freshman class, that minority students are less well represented among transfer students than among fall freshmen, and that dropout rates differ by race and ethnicity, with Asians and whites having the lowest attrition rates. For data on the ethnic distribution of all Berkeley undergraduates, see Appendix B.

<sup>29</sup> W.M. Laetsch, unpublished memorandum on SAT scores, 1978-1987. University of California at Berkeley, 29 January 1988.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

Table 3

**Ethnic Distribution of New Freshmen  
at UC Berkeley, Fall 1981-1988**

PERCENTS	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
<b>CITIZENS &amp; IMMIGRANTS</b>								
American Indian	.3	.3	.4	.6	.7	.9	2.1	1.8
Asian								
Chinese	14.7	14.0	13.8	10.1	10.8	11.6	10.4	11.4
East Ind./Pak.	.6	1.0	.9	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.6	1.8
Japanese	3.3	4.4	3.9	3.1	3.4	2.4	2.3	1.6
Korean	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.4	4.2	4.1	3.8	4.1
Pacific Islander	.1	.1	.2	.0	.0	.1	.0	.1
Other Asian	1.0	1.3	1.8	1.4	1.6	1.2	1.5	1.8
<b>ASIANS WITHOUT     FILIPINOS</b>	22.7	24.2	24.1	19.6	21.5	20.9	19.6	20.8
Filipinos	3.4	3.4	3.9	4.7	5.4	5.8	5.7	5.4
<b>ASIANS WITH     FILIPINOS</b>	26.2	27.6	28.0	24.3	26.9	26.7	25.4	26.2
Black	5.2	5.6	5.6	7.3	7.8	8.2	12.5	10.8
Hispanic								
Chicano	4.2	3.5	4.1	5.5	6.9	8.4	10.5	10.8
Latino	2.1	2.2	2.0	3.3	3.7	4.0	6.5	7.8
<b>HISPANICS</b>	6.4	5.7	6.1	8.8	10.5	12.4	17.0	18.6
White	57.9	57.7	56.7	55.7	48.0	45.6	39.8	37.0
Other	2.9	2.2	2.3	1.5	2.0	1.7	.2	.8
No Ethnic Data	1.1	.9	.9	1.7	4.1	4.5	3.0	4.9
<b>CITIZENS AND IMMIGRANTS</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Office of Student Research, UC Berkeley

average combined SATs (verbal and math) during this period of rapid change in the racial/ethnic composition of the student body rose from 1130 in 1981 to 1185 in 1988 (see Table 2).<sup>31</sup>

In the past decade, then, Berkeley has made great strides in diversifying its student body while at the same time raising the overall academic level of its freshman class. What made this possible was the rising volume of applications, but it has also been this very rise that has given the admissions process at Berkeley much more of a zero-sum character than in years past. The various controversies that have surrounded the admissions process -- among them, the at-times bitter conflicts over both Asian admissions and affirmative action -- cannot be understood without grasping that all policy decisions on admissions have taken on a zero-sum character.

Berkeley's basic strategy in confronting this dilemma has been to divide the admissions pie into several distinct components. A key component of this strategy is the policy of relying overwhelmingly on those California high school graduates who are eligible for the University of California -- a pool which, in light of the dropout rates in California schools, comprises roughly the top 9 percent of the states's 18 year-olds.<sup>32</sup> For a taxpayer-supported, public institution, these standards are quite stringent indeed.

As all of the other UC campuses (as well as virtually every selective public and private college in the country), Berkeley has consciously rejected a policy of admitting students purely on the basis of grades and test scores. While such a policy

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<sup>31</sup> While the proportion of students with relatively low SATs has declined, their racial composition has, however, changed. In 1978, 69.3 percent of freshmen with SATs under 1000 were white or Asian, but only 13.9 percent came from these groups in 1987. (see Laetsch, *ibid.*).

<sup>32</sup> Continuing its long-standing tradition of openness to outstanding students from out of state, Berkeley has continued to accept significant numbers of students who meet the higher requirements for applicants who are not California residents. During the 1980s, out-of-state students have typically comprised, according to estimates provided by the Office of Student Research, about one-seventh of freshman registrants despite the fact that in recent years they have generally provided more than one-fifth of the applicants.

would enable Berkeley to fill its freshman class with students from roughly the top 3 or 4 percent of California's graduating seniors, the class that would be yielded by this process would be overwhelmingly white and Asian.<sup>33</sup> Apart from being contrary to the campus' long-standing commitment to diversity, such a policy would, we believe, lead to a relative homogeneity of backgrounds and viewpoints that would detract from the kind of spirited cultural and intellectual exchange that should be at the center of the Berkeley experience.

Rather than selecting its entire class on the basis of grades and test scores alone, Berkeley has in the past few years reserved a fixed proportion of its freshman slots -- roughly 50 percent in 1986 and about 40 percent since then -- for students who qualify solely on the basis of their academic index scores.<sup>34</sup> Students who are admitted through this procedure are referred to as "Tier 1 admits."

A second group of students whose academic index scores were not quite high enough for them to gain admission into Tier 1 are then reviewed on the basis of their academic index scores, as well as a variety of "supplementary" criteria (about which there has been persistent controversy), including economic background, as essay, California residency, and high school course work. Tier 2 candidates are awarded points on the basis of these supplementary criteria as well as their academic index scores, and those students with the highest total number of points are admitted. Because the number of students admitted into Tier 2 in a given year

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<sup>33</sup> According to analyses conducted by Berkeley's Office of Budget and Planning, a class admitted exclusively on the basis of the academic index (see footnote #34 below) would be less than four percent Black, Hispanic, and Native American combined. See Loris P. Davanzo, memorandum to Roderic B. Park, Office of Budget and Planning, University of California at Berkeley, 18 August 1988. In 1987, these groups comprised 28.0 percent of California public high school graduates.

<sup>34</sup> The Academic Index consists of a formula based on  $1000 \times$  high school GPA (with maximum score of 4.0) plus the total of scores on the SAT (maximum score 1600) plus three achievement tests (maximum score of 2400). A performance score on the Academic Index is thus  $4000$  (high school GPA) +  $4000$  (standardized tests) =  $8000$ . The top 40 percent of the fall freshman class is currently admitted purely on the basis of this Academic Index. For a presentation of statistics on the Academic Index as a detailed discussion of the freshman admissions process, see "Freshman Admissions at Berkeley," Office of the Chancellor-Budget and Planning, University of California at Berkeley, 1988.

varies according to the number of Tier 3 admits, the size of Tier 2 varies from year to year. Over the last three years, Tier 2 has varied from 18 percent in 1986 to 21 percent in 1987 and back down to 16 percent in 1988 (see Table 4).

The third slice of the pie consists of students selected from what is called, for want of a better term, the "complemental" admissions category. University officials have stated that the term "complemental" is used in the sense of "that which makes whole or brings to perfection".<sup>35</sup> The primary purpose of Tier 3 is to bring to the campus students who have overcome disadvantages of some sort or who exhibit unusual excellence in one or another realm of non-academic activity. While the students in Tier 3 do not have academic index scores which would make them competitive with students in Tiers 1 and 2, they are all UC-eligible and their presence adds considerable diversity to the student body.

Among the complemental groups in Tier 3 are athletes, the disabled, Filipinos, rural students, affirmative action students (Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans), and students with special talents in such fields as music, drama, and debating. Three of these groups -- athletes, the disabled, and affirmative action students -- have been guaranteed admission if they meet UC eligibility requirements, a point to which we shall return later. Between 1986 and 1988, the proportion of fall freshman admits in Tier 3 grew from 28.1 percent to 38.9 percent (see Table 4).

Students who meet the standard of UC eligibility thus comprise about 94 percent of the applicants accepted into Berkeley as fall freshmen. The remaining slots are filled with students admitted "in exception" or, as they are more commonly known today, as Special Action students. These are largely students whose racial or economic background has disadvantaged them or they are students with "special talents" (typically athletic). Applicants accepted through Special Action are supposed to have a reasonable chance of graduating from Berkeley, though data that

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<sup>35</sup> Chancellor Ira Michael Heyman, "Statement on Asian American Admissions at the University of California, Berkeley," 6 January 1988.

**Table 4****Fall Freshman Admits by Admissions Tier  
Fall 1986-1988**

	1986		1987		1988	
	ADMITS	% OF TOTAL	ADMITS	% OF TOTAL	ADMITS	% OF TOTAL
TIER 1	3506	47.4%	3084	37.9%	3015	39.0%
TIER 2	1345	18.2%	1739	21.4%	1260	16.3%
TIER 3	2081	28.1%	2891	35.5%	3007	38.9%
SPECIAL	466	6.3%	432	5.3%	449	5.8%
<hr/>						
TOTAL	7398	100.0%	8146	100.0%	7731	100.0%

Tier 1 = Academic Index Score (AIS) Alone  
Tier 2 = AIS Plus Supplemental Points  
Tier 3 = Complemental Groups

Source: Office of Student Research, UC Berkeley

we shall present later raise questions about the extent to which this is in fact the case. Between 1986 and 1988, Special Action students comprised from 5.3 to 6.3 percent of the students admitted as fall freshmen (see Table 4).

Finally, beginning in 1985, Berkeley began to accept significant numbers of applicants for entry as freshmen in the spring semester. These students, selected from among the ranks of applicants who are not admitted into the fall freshman class, constitute an important -- and often neglected -- slice of the freshman admissions pie (see Figure 2). Chosen primarily on the basis of their academic index scores, these are often students whose desire to attend Berkeley is intense and whose academic records usually place them just below Tier 1 and Tier 2 admits. Ethnically, spring registrants are preponderantly white and Asian; of the 698 new freshman registrants in spring 1989, 46.6 percent were white, 44.6 percent were Asian, and 6.1 percent declined to state their ethnicity.<sup>36</sup>

The great accomplishment of the overall admissions policy of the past few years has, in our view, been its capacity to continue the process of diversification of Berkeley's student body at the same time that it has maintained and even raised the academic level of the freshman class. At the same time, however, there has been an undeniable erosion of public trust and confidence in the basic fairness of Berkeley's admissions practices -- an erosion that poses a serious long-term threat to the relationship between the University and the larger community which it serves.

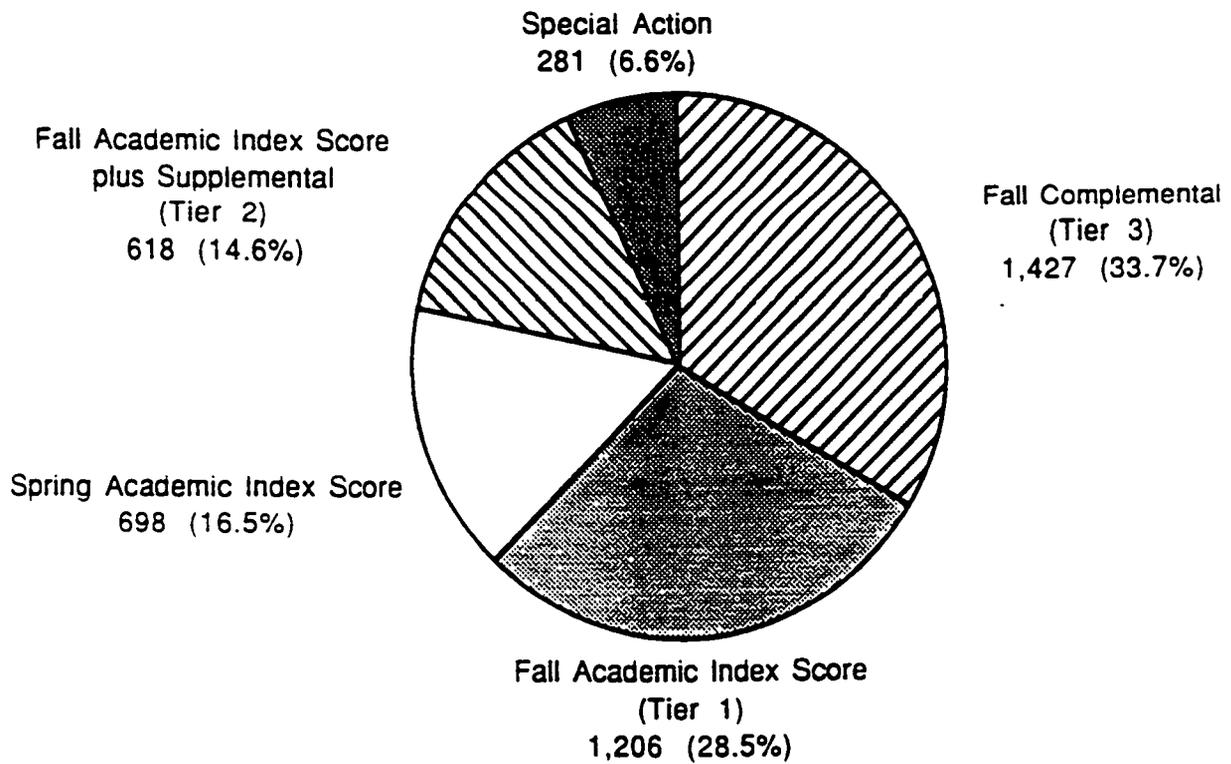
The time has thus come for a sober and forthright assessment of Berkeley's admissions policies, with the goal of seizing upon the opportunities provided by the upsurge in applications to select a student body that exhibits even higher levels of academic excellence and diversity than does the current one. Before describing the specific changes that we propose, it is incumbent upon us to enunciate some of the underlying principles upon which Berkeley's admissions policies should rest. That

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<sup>36</sup> These data on spring admissions were provided by the Office of Student Research.

Figure 2

**FRESHMEN REGISTRANTS 1988-89 (YEAR-ROUND)  
All Colleges at Berkeley**



Source: Office of Student Research, UC Berkeley

task accomplished, we will then describe some revisions of the current policy that should, we believe, go into effect for the fall of 1991.

## Section IV

### PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Places in the freshman class at Berkeley are scarce and highly valued, and how they are allocated has important implications for the distribution of educational and social opportunity in the State of California. It is therefore essential that the state's citizens believe that the criteria governing admissions to the Berkeley campus are equitable and that application of these criteria is carried out fairly. For nothing less than the legitimacy of the University depends upon these convictions.

A fair and equitable admissions policy is not, we wish to emphasize, a neutral one. Indeed, each and every change in the Berkeley admissions policy that we have considered would benefit some groups at the same time that it would disadvantage others. The ideal of a neutral admissions policy is thus a chimerical one, for any selection criterion that one might imagine favors some qualities over others and has, as an inherent consequence, a disproportionately negative impact on some group.

Yet if an admissions policy cannot be neutral, this does not mean that it cannot have a basis in reason and justice. What we as a Committee with both faculty and student members ask of Berkeley's admissions policy is twofold: that it have an educational foundation and that those who are responsible for altering it be constantly aware of its social consequences. It is with this in mind that we have derived ten principles (whose ordering should not be taken to reflect relative importance) on which the Berkeley freshman admissions policy of the future should rest:

*Principle One: As an institution of international renown and as one of the nation's leading research universities, Berkeley has an obligation to admit students with exceptionally distinguished academic records. The cornerstone*

of a great university is academic excellence, and no institution can long remain first rate without a substantial number of outstanding students. Berkeley must continue to honor unusual academic achievement, and the best way to do this is to give priority in admissions to students of exceptional academic accomplishment.

*Principle Two: As a taxpayer-supported public university, Berkeley must strive to serve all of California's people. What this means concretely is that Berkeley must attempt to incorporate into its freshman class students from all segments of the state's population. This in turn implies an energetic effort to seek out the most talented students from within the state's various racial and ethnic communities.*

*Principle Three: Berkeley should actively seek diversity -- socioeconomic, cultural, ethnic, racial, and geographic -- in its student body. It should do so for the sound educational reason that a broad diversity of backgrounds, values, and viewpoints is an integral part of a stimulating intellectual and cultural environment in which students educate one another. In addition, Berkeley should seek a diverse student body in recognition of its responsibility to train the leadership of a racially, ethnically, and culturally pluralistic society.*

*Principle Four: Berkeley will absolutely not tolerate quotas or ceilings on the admissions or enrollment of any racial, ethnic, religious, or gender groups. Such quotas or ceilings are both immoral and illegal. Moreover, Berkeley will not tolerate discrimination in the application of any of the criteria governing its admissions practices.*

*Principle Five: In its admissions criteria, Berkeley will recognize outstanding*

*accomplishment in a variety of spheres, including (but not limited to) art, athletics, debating, drama, music.* The presence of students with exceptional levels of skill and interest in particular endeavors will be recognized in the admissions process, and students with special talents will be actively sought, for their participation in campus life enhances the overall educational and cultural atmosphere.

*Principle Six: While continuing to grant preference to California residents, Berkeley will continue to admit out-of-state students.* The presence on campus of these students, whose numbers in recent years have generally not exceeded one-seventh of the freshman class, adds significantly to the diversity of the student body and plays an important role in preserving Berkeley's traditions of cosmopolitanism and tolerance. While higher standards must prevail in admitting non-California residents, Berkeley should continue its long-standing policy -- which it has shared with other nationally prominent state universities, including the Universities of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Virginia -- of admitting highly qualified students from out of state.

*Principle Seven: Berkeley should accept only those students who have a reasonable chance of persisting to graduation.* While the policies of vigorous diversification and actively seeking out students with special talents (including athletic ones) imply that some applicants with one or more academic deficiencies will be admitted, these students should show evidence of being capable of completing a bachelor's degree. As part of its policy of admitting such students, it is imperative that the University provide them with adequate support services.

*Principle Eight: The admissions process should include a human element and must not be based on grades and test scores alone.* The identification of

such qualities as creativity, exceptional service to the community, and the capacity to overcome hardship cannot be accomplished on the basis of impersonal formulas such as academic indices. While being sensitive to the potential that essays and other "subjective" criteria hold for discrimination, the admissions process should not shrink from exercising human judgment in seeking applicants with desirable qualities that do not lend themselves to quantification.

*Principle Nine: In constructing and altering Berkeley's admissions practices, the faculty should insist upon at least a co-equal role with the administration. Admissions is an area that raises fundamental issues of educational policy; it is therefore essential that the faculty participate in setting the policies that select the students whom it will teach. Senate committees with responsibility for admissions should be diverse by ethnicity and gender, and they should continue to include voting student members with full rights of participation.*

*Principle Ten: The admissions criteria and practices of the College of Letters and Science as well as those of the Professional Schools should continue to be described in detail and to be made fully available to the public. Any alterations in these criteria and practices should similarly be made fully available to the public. Berkeley has been a pioneer in placing the details of its selection processes in the public domain, and it is essential in the current context of intense public interest in admissions that it continue along this path.*

## Section V

### PROPOSED CHANGES IN FRESHMAN ADMISSIONS TO BERKELEY

The move from general principles to concrete policies is not an easy one. This is especially so when some of the guiding principles that we have enumerated, while not ultimately incompatible, are sometimes in tension with one another. A satisfactory admissions policy is thus a balanced one -- one that succeeds in establishing a reasonable equilibrium among legitimately competing goals, values, and interests.

In making recommendations for specific changes in Berkeley's admissions practices, we have been careful to do so in a fashion consistent with the admissions policy officially adopted by the Regents on May 20, 1988. This policy states: "The University seeks to enroll on each of its campuses a student body that, beyond meeting the University's eligibility requirements, demonstrates high academic achievement or exceptional personal talent, and that encompasses the broad diversity of cultural, racial, geographic, and socioeconomic backgrounds characteristic of California" (see Appendix A). According to the "Guidelines for Implementation for University Policy on Undergraduate Admissions," issued by the Office of the President on July 5, 1988, this policy means that: "At least 40 but not more than 60 percent of freshmen admitted by each campus shall be strictly selected on the basis of "academic criteria." The remaining freshmen shall be selected on the basis of "special talents," "special circumstances adversely affecting applicants' life experiences," and "ethnic identity, gender, and location of residence." The latter factors are included "in order to provide for cultural, racial, geographic and socioeconomic diversity in the student population."<sup>37</sup>

The changes that we propose in Berkeley's admissions policy are the product

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<sup>37</sup> University of California, Office of the President, "Guidelines for Implementation of University Policy on Undergraduate Admission," 5 July 1988: 2.

of long deliberations at meetings of this Committee as well as extensive, albeit informal, consultation with interested parties both on and off the Berkeley campus. They are designed to be consistent both with the principles enunciated earlier in this report and with the guidelines set by The Regents and the Office of the President. It is our intention that these recommendations go into effect for the freshman class that will enter Berkeley in the fall of 1991.

*Recommendation 1: The proportion of the fall freshman admits selected by academic criteria alone should be increased from 40 to 50 percent. This change, which returns Berkeley's policy to the one which prevailed through 1986, would honor outstanding academic accomplishment by reserving half the places in the freshman class for students with exceptionally strong academic records. This seems especially appropriate in light of the fact that fewer Tier 1 admits choose to enroll at Berkeley than do admits from other categories (see Table 5). The adoption of this recommendation would also communicate to the public that no student with an academic record strong enough to place him or her in the top half of Berkeley admits will be rejected.*

*Recommendation 2: Eliminate the second tier of the current admissions policy, which admits students on the basis of academic index scores and supplementary points. A fundamental problem with Tier 2 from its inception in 1986 was that it was an essentially residual category whose size fluctuated with the number of students accepted in Tiers 1 and 3. Furthermore, the awarding of supplemental points for such factors as high-school curriculum, exemption from Subject A, and the essay set in motion a seemingly endless series of disputes about which factors would be included and how many points they should receive. This process eroded public trust in the fairness of the University's admissions procedures and lent a spurious degree of numerical precision to the inherently subjective tasks of evaluating*

Table 5

Fall Freshman Yield by Admissions Tier  
1986-1988

	1986 YIELD	1987 YIELD	1988 YIELD	AVERAGE YIELD
TIER 1	38.1%	34.5%	40.0%	37.6%
TIER 2	58.1%	51.0%	49.1%	52.6%
TIER 3	44.0%	47.5%	47.5%	46.6%
SPECIAL ACTION	60.3%	69.0%	62.6%	64.0%
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TOTAL	44.8%	44.5%	45.7%	45.0%

Source: Office of Student Research, UC Berkeley

non-academic qualifications. By expanding Tier 1 from 40 to 50 percent, Berkeley would admit by strictly academic criteria the majority of the students accepted through Tier 2 between 1986 and 1988. Some of the remaining Tier 2 enrollees would be admitted through a more flexible "secondary review" process, described below.

*Recommendation 3: A new Tier 2 should be established consisting of the old "complemental" categories from Tier 3 as well as three new categories; the 45 percent of the fall freshman class admitted into the new Tier 2 will be selected through a process of "secondary review" described below. The primary purpose of the new Tier 2 will be to create a more flexible way of broadening and deepening Berkeley's process of diversification while simultaneously raising the academic level of the freshman class. Accomplishing both of these objectives should be possible because of the remarkable recent increase in the volume of applications. In the revised procedure, applicants who do not meet the academic index scores necessary for admission through Tier 1 but who fall into one or more designated categories will be subject to a secondary review process. The process would work in the following way:*

1. Based in large part on the number of students admitted in each complementary category in recent years, flexible targets will be established for each secondary review category. These targets would have a rough lower and upper bound, but the lower bound would not be met if the number of qualified applicants were insufficient. Similarly, the upper bound in a particular category could be exceeded if there were an unusually strong pool of applicants in a particular secondary review category. There will be absolutely no quotas.
2. Within each secondary review category (with only one

exception, discussed below) roughly half of the target would be met by accepting those applicants with the highest academic index scores. The remaining students would be selected by decisions based on two or more individual readings of the overall academic record (including trends, course difficulty, areas of special strength, etc.), special accomplishments, the essay, evidence of capacity to overcome obstacles, and contribution to the overall diversity of the class. The members of the selection committee reviewing the applicant's materials should be diverse in ethnicity and gender and sensitive to the potential for ethnic, racial, and gender discrimination involved in the use of non-objective criteria. At the same time, they will not shrink from exercising their professional judgment as to which applicants are likely to persist to graduation and contribute most to campus life.

3. Since the flexible targets for each secondary review category reflect only a rough approximation of the number of applicants who will actually be accepted, there will be a process during each admissions cycle of adjusting some targets upwards and others downwards, depending on the relative strength and weakness of the various applicant pools. This adjustment process will be carried out by the staff of the Office of Admissions and Records in consultation with the Admissions and Enrollment Committee of the Academic Senate (A&E) and the Admissions Coordination Board (ACB). The flexible targets for each category will themselves be adjusted on an annual basis by the A&E Committee and the ACB based on a careful appraisal of the University's overall educational and social mission. New secondary review categories could be created with the approval of the A&E Committee and the ACB.

A few features of the admissions process in the new Tier 2 are worth remarking upon. Most noteworthy, perhaps, is the fact that under the policy of secondary review, no group would any longer enjoy "total protection" (i.e., guaranteed admission on the basis of meeting UC's eligibility requirements). In light of the extraordinary competition for places in Berkeley's freshman class, it is difficult to continue to justify admission on the basis of sheer eligibility alone. In the context of increasing pressure on the admission process, Berkeley needs added flexibility in its selection practices -- a flexibility that is not compatible with guaranteeing admission to all UC-eligible applicants from particular categories, regardless of the number who apply. One indication that the current policy may not be viable in the long term is the sharp increase in Tier 3 admissions from 28.1 to 38.9 percent between 1986 and 1988 (see Table 4), with most of the increase coming from categories receiving total protection.

The withdrawal of total protection should not be interpreted, however, as a retreat from Berkeley's commitment to bringing to the campus substantial numbers of minority students, athletes, and the disabled. The flexible admissions target for each group would be set primarily on the basis of recent practice, and we therefore anticipate that there will be no drastic fluctuations in the numbers from each of these groups. To ensure that applicants from the previously protected categories receive full consideration, we recommend that the file of each candidate (except for those already accepted on the basis of purely academic criteria) be evaluated by at least two readers. This will guarantee that each applicant will be considered as an individual and will make it possible for unusual circumstances to be taken into account in making the final admissions decision.

For minority students, in particular, it is essential that Berkeley communicate that it remains fully committed to a vigorous affirmative action program. One crucial way of reaffirming this commitment is once again to state Berkeley's desire to realize the goals set forth in the campus' Five-Year Affirmative Action Plan. As part of its efforts in this domain, the Admissions and Enrollment Committee

should, moreover, conduct (in cooperation with the Admissions Coordination Board) an annual review of the extent to which the campus affirmative action goals for undergraduate students are being realized.<sup>38</sup> This review would include an evaluation of patterns of graduation as well as enrollment.

In order to create a secondary review process that takes into account the elimination of the old Tier 2 at the same time that it seeks to add to the rich diversity of the freshman class, we are recommending the creation of three new secondary review (previously "complemental") categories:

*Recommendation 3A: A new secondary review category of students who come from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds should be created; this category should be open to all disadvantaged students, regardless of race or ethnicity.* While Berkeley has made considerable progress in diversifying the racial and ethnic composition of its student body, it has made remarkably little progress in diversifying the socioeconomic composition of the freshman class. In 1987, for example, only 22 percent of Berkeley freshmen came from families with incomes of less than \$30,000 (roughly the national median).<sup>39</sup> Overall, the median 1987 family income of students who responded to the survey of the freshman class was \$53,500, with 27 percent reporting family incomes above \$75,000 (see Table 6). Between 1977 and 1987, the proportion of Berkeley freshmen whose fathers had graduated from college increased from 64 to 68 percent; among all California men aged 45 to 49 in 1980, however, only 27 percent had completed college. Among the mothers of Berkeley freshmen during these same years, the degree of over-representation of the

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<sup>38</sup> The campus' five-year affirmative action plan is currently being revised, and the new plan is scheduled for completion during the academic year 1989-1990. Until the new plan is finished, the previous plan should, in our view, still be considered the basis for campus affirmative action goals; see Student Affirmative Action Advisory Committee, "Five-Year Plan for Undergraduate Student Affirmative Action," University of California at Berkeley, August 5, 1983.

<sup>39</sup> University of California at Berkeley, Office of Student Research, "1987 Freshman Survey."

**Table 6**

**STUDENT ESTIMATED ANNUAL PARENTAL INCOME -  
FALL 1987 ENTERING FRESHMEN**

Percent in Each Income Category						
Income Category	WHITE	AMERICAN ASIAN*	INDIAN	BLACK	CHICANO	ALL FRESHMEN
UNDER \$30,000	11	24	24	34	40	22
\$30,000-49,999	18	25	35	24	31	24
\$50,000-74,999	31	27	18	29	19	28
\$75,000 and above	40	25	24	13	10	27
Median Income	\$67,000	\$51,000	\$47,000	\$39,000	\$34,000	\$53,500
(No. in Sample)	(503)	(306)	(17)	(161)	(208)	(1360)

\*Asian includes Filipino.

Source: CIRP/ACE Annual Freshman Survey - UC Berkeley Freshmen.

highly educated was, if anything, even more pronounced; thus, while between 47 and 56 percent of them had graduated from college, only 14 percent of California women aged 45 to 49 in 1980 had done so.<sup>40</sup>

A genuinely diverse freshman class must be (as has been recognized by the Regents and the Office of the President as well as the State Legislature) socioeconomically as well as racially and ethnically heterogeneous. Eligibility for the current Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) is a valuable indicator of cultural and economic disadvantage, but applicants who are socioeconomically disadvantaged in the Berkeley context often do not qualify for the stringent standards of eligibility required of EOP applicants.<sup>41</sup> The A&E Committee will, accordingly, draw up its own guidelines to determine which students will be eligible for secondary review on the basis of socioeconomic disadvantage.

*Recommendation 3B: A new secondary review category of mature or "re-entry" students will be created.* The presence on campus of older or re-entry students, many of whom have extensive work experience and are highly motivated, adds to the intellectual and cultural richness of campus life. Yet frequently such students, the majority of whom are women, find it difficult to qualify for Berkeley, either because of relatively low standardized test scores (often the product of having been out of school for some years) or gaps in their now-distant high school records. Because of the distinctive contribution that such students bring to the campus and their often unconventional

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<sup>40</sup> University of California at Berkeley, Office of Student Research, "1977-1987 Freshman Survey." 1980 Census of Population, Volume 1, Characteristics of the Population, Chapter D, Detailed Population Characteristics, Part 6, California, Section 1. Issued November, 1983 by U.S. Department of Commerce; Table 203.

<sup>41</sup> In order for a student to be eligible for EOP, neither parent can have attended a four-year college and the family's contribution to the student's education cannot exceed \$1,000. In addition, the student must be eligible for financial aid and be a California resident.

records, they warrant secondary review. As it will do with socioeconomic disadvantage, the A&E Committee will draw up guidelines to determine which applicants will qualify as mature or "re-entry" students.

*Recommendation 3C: A new secondary review category of students whose academic index scores narrowly missed gaining them admission into Tier 1 should be created.* Students who barely missed making the top half of Berkeley admits should have a second opportunity to be accepted. Since these students are virtually indistinguishable from one another academically, applicants in this group (which we shall designate "special promise") will -- unlike the other secondary review categories -- be selected primarily on the basis of non-academic criteria. In the event that some other secondary review categories fail to meet their rough targets, students in this "special promise" category should receive serious consideration for any additional places that may become available.

In setting the flexible targets that will guide the secondary review process in Tier 2 in the fall of 1991, the principal determinate will be the number of admits in the various complementary categories of Tier 3 over the past few years. During the period 1986-1988, the number of admits in some of these categories showed considerable fluctuation from year to year as did the total number of Tier 3 admits (see Table 7).<sup>42</sup> For those secondary review groups that were already established as complementary groups, we have tried to set targets that are broadly consistent with their average pattern over the 1986-1988 period.

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<sup>42</sup> For a discussion of each complementary group, see "Freshman Admissions at Berkeley," *ibid.* By a 1988 decision of the Admissions and Enrollment Committee of the Academic Senate, the high test score category was eliminated; the rationale for this decision was that, especially in a highly competitive context, it did not make sense to admit students with exceptional test-taking ability whose overall academic record was relatively undistinguished.

Table 7

**Fall Freshman Tier 3 Admits by Complemental Group  
1986-1988**

GROUP	1986		1987		1988		AVERAGE NUMBER	AVERAGE PERCENT
	ADMITS	% OF TOTAL	ADMITS	% OF TOTAL	ADMITS	% OF TOTAL		
Athletes	257	12.4%	302	10.5%	300	10.0%	286	10.8%
Disabled	51	2.5%	39	1.4%	29	1.0%	40	1.5%
Special Talent	0	0.00%	0	0.0%	12	0.4%	4	0.2%
Administrative Review	65	3.1%	28	1.0%	55	1.8%	49	2.0%
High School w/o Stand. GPA*	48	2.3%	41	1.4%	58	1.9%	49	1.9%
Rural High School	0	0.00%	83	2.9%	185	6.3%	89	3.4%
High Tester	106	5.1%	189	6.5%	313	10.4%	203	7.6%
Affirmative Action	1330	63.9%	1900	65.7%	1799	59.8%	1676	63.0%
Filipino	224	10.8%	309	10.7%	256	8.5%	263	9.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2081</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2891</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3007</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2660</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\*Without standard grade-point average.

Source: Office of Student Research, UC Berkeley

**Table 8****Flexible Freshman Admissions Targets  
for Secondary Review Categories**

<u>TIER 2</u>	<u>FLEXIBLE TARGET</u>
Affirmative Action	1600-1800
SES	550-650
Special Promise	350-450
Athletes	250-300
Rural and Other HSs	150-200
Filipino	100-150
Special Talent and Administrative Review	50-100
HS Without Standard GPA	40-60
Re-entry Students	40-60
Disabled	30-50
<hr/>	
Approximate Total	3160-3820

For Tier 2 admissions in the fall of 1991, we have set flexible targets -- actually ranges rather than precise numerical goals -- for each secondary review group. We have based these estimates on the assumption that approximately 3,500 places will be available in Tier 2 (see Table 8); should the size of the freshman class and hence the number of slots available for Tier 2 change, the flexible target should be viewed as representing rough percentages rather than numbers. Of the three new groups, we have set the largest target for the socioeconomically disadvantaged -- a target of approximately 550-650, that even if met would leave the student body skewed toward the children of high income professionals and managers who have completed college. The "special promise" category of students whose academic indices were almost high enough to gain them admission to Tier 1 would have a flexible target of 350-450 students -- very roughly the number of students admitted into the lower end of the old Tier 2 and approximately 5 percent of all fall freshman admits. Finally, we have set a modest target for "re-entry" students of 40 to 60 in part because we are unsure about how many applicants will qualify for this category.

For the groups that were previously Tier 3 complementary groups, we have tried to avoid sharp departures from past practices. We have, however, slightly expanded the rural high school category because we wish to add to it some students from non-rural schools that have in recent years had few or no students admitted into Berkeley. We have also combined the special talent and administrative review categories and hope that the somewhat higher target will encourage Berkeley to accept more students with exceptional musical, artistic, dramatic, and other skills; indeed, it is our intention that at least one-half of the students admitted in this category exhibit one or more special talents. Finally, we have somewhat reduced the rough Filipino target because an increasing number of Filipinos are qualifying for Tier 1 and because meeting this target would be sufficient to insure that there would

be a substantial number of Filipinos among the student body.<sup>43</sup>

*Recommendation 4: The number of Special Action admits should not exceed 5 percent of all fall freshman admits, and the number of Special Action registrants should not exceed 6 percent of all fall registrants. Berkeley's capacity to accept students from among the seven-eighths of California high school graduates who are not UC-eligible is indispensable to a flexible admissions process. Furthermore, Special Action brings to the campus many promising students who have overcome substantial hardships as well as students who have attained unusual levels of excellence in non-academic pursuits.*

It is crucial to the academic integrity of the University, however, that students admitted through Special Action have at least a reasonable chance of graduation from Berkeley.<sup>44</sup> In this regard, the available data are not encouraging, for only about 31 to 33 percent of the Special Action students who entered Berkeley between 1978 and 1982 graduated in five years compared to approximately 61 to 63 percent of regular admits.<sup>45</sup> We thus propose that the University allocate no more than one place in twenty in the fall freshman class to Special Action students. At least two-thirds of these students should be from socially or racially disadvantaged backgrounds, and

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<sup>43</sup> According to a simulation based on the 1988 admissions process, 1.5 percent of students admitted into an expanded Tier 1 (50 percent of admits) would be Filipino; see Tom Cesa, "Memo in Response to the February 3, 1989 Information Request." Office of Student Research, February 17, 1989. Students admitted through Tier 1 would not count as part of the flexible target for secondary review groups.

<sup>44</sup> Our policy on Special Action, it should be noted, is fully consistent with the guidelines recently passed by the Academic Council of the Statewide Academic Senate and the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools; see "Policy Governing Freshman Admissions in Exception to the Eligibility Requirement," in Notice of Meeting, Assembly of the Academic Senate, 29 November 1988, pp. 50-54.

<sup>45</sup> University of California at Berkeley, Office of Student Research, "Retention Rates by Admissions Status," June 20, 1988.

all of them (as well as any UC-eligible admits who arrive with academic deficiencies) must be given adequate support services.

*Recommendation 5: Berkeley should continue to offer qualified UC-eligible students who are not admitted into the fall freshman class the option of applying for spring enrollment; these applicants should be selected primarily on the basis of academic criteria, though Berkeley's commitment to a diverse student body should also be taken into consideration in determining whom to admit.* The 1985 decision to admit substantial numbers of students in the spring term was a resourceful and innovative way of giving highly-qualified students rejected for fall entry a second chance to gain admission to Berkeley. With the standards for admission into Tier 1 getting ever more difficult, it is desirable that the University provide a vehicle of entry for students who have an intense desire to attend Berkeley. Spring admission provides such a vehicle and is, therefore, a crucial component of a flexible and balanced admissions policy.

*Recommendation 6: As part of its effort to extend the process of diversification, Berkeley will need better data on the socioeconomic composition of its applicant pool as well as of the state's graduating seniors; in cooperation with other UC campuses, Berkeley should, therefore, formally request that the appropriate state agencies provide it with the data that it will need to carry out its policy of admitting a socioeconomically diverse student body.* In order to pursue seriously the socially diverse student body that the Regents, the Office of the President, and the State Legislature have encouraged it to enroll, Berkeley will need essentially the same kind of data that it now possesses about race and ethnicity. What this means specifically is that it must request that the Systemwide Administration ask all applicants (and not just EOP applicants) for information on parental education and

occupation; that the California Post Secondary Education Commission (CPEC) conducts its extremely informative eligibility studies in such a fashion as to provide eligibility rates by socioeconomic status as well as race and ethnicity; and that the State Board of Education provide data on the socioeconomic composition of the state's graduating high school seniors. In the absence of such data, the goal of a more socioeconomically diverse student body is likely to remain an elusive one.

## Section VI

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

Each year, well over 20,000 students apply for admission into the freshman class at Berkeley. The sheer numbers pose formidable obstacles to the construction of a careful and deliberate decision-making process, and they have vastly increased the pressure on the university to explain -- and to justify -- its selection practices. Never before has the zero-sum character of the admissions process been so visible, and never before has it so threatened the relationship between the University and the community it serves.

Yet if the enormous upsurge in applications has confronted Berkeley with serious problems, it has also presented it with unparalleled opportunities. If one conclusion stands out from our deliberations, it is that a wise and judicious admissions policy should now make it possible to attract a student body that is academically stronger than ever before at the same time that it extends the process of diversification which began a quarter of a century ago.

Amidst the minutiae of debates about particular admissions policies, however, Berkeley must remain guided by a larger vision of its mission. In the 1990s, this mission must include taking a leadership role in the construction of a genuinely pluralistic environment in which the best students from all segments of California's diverse population can meet and debate in an atmosphere of enlightenment and commitment. This is a vision that is well worth pursuing, and it is a particularly appropriate one for an institution which has long prided itself on maintaining the highest academic standards, while continuing its tradition of service to the public that has so generously supported it.

**APPENDIX A:      Policy on Undergraduate Admissions  
Adopted by The Regents, May 1988**

**University of California Policy on Undergraduate Admissions**

The undergraduate admissions policy of the University of California is guided by the University's commitment to serve the people of California and the needs of the state, within the framework of the California Master Plan for Higher Education.

The entrance requirements established by the University follow the guidelines set forth in the Master Plan, which requires that the top one-eighth of the state's high school graduates, as well as those transfer students who have successfully completed specified college work, be eligible for admission to the University of California. These requirements are designed to ensure that all eligible students are adequately prepared for University-level work.

Mindful of its mission as a public institution, the University of California has an historic commitment to provide places within the University for all eligible applicants who are residents of California. The University seeks to enroll, on each of its campuses, a student body that, beyond meeting the University's eligibility requirements, demonstrates high academic achievement or exceptional personal talent, and that encompasses the broad diversity of cultural, racial, geographic, and socioeconomic backgrounds characteristic of California.

Because applicant pools differ among the campuses of the University, each campus shall establish procedures for the selection of applicants to be admitted from its pool of eligible candidates. Such procedures shall be consistent with the principles stated above and with other applicable University policies.

**Appendix B: Ethnic Distribution of Undergraduates  
at UC Berkeley, Fall 1981-1988**

PERCENTS	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
<b>CITIZENS &amp; IMMIGRANTS</b>								
American Indian	.5	.5	.4	.4	.5	.6	.9	1.1
Asian								
Chinese	12.4	12.4	12.3	11.8	11.8	12.0	11.8	12.1
East Ind/Pak	.5	.6	.7	.9	1.1	1.2	1.4	1.5
Japanese	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.4	3.3	2.9	2.4
Korean	2.0	2.4	2.7	3.0	3.3	3.6	3.6	3.9
Pacific Islander	.1	.1	.1	.1	.1	.1	.1	.1
Other Asian	.7	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.1
<b>ASIAN</b>								
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	19.5	20.4	20.9	21.0	21.4	22.0	21.6	22.2
Filipino	2.0	2.2	2.6	3.0	3.3	3.6	4.0	4.3
Black	3.8	4.1	4.5	4.9	5.1	5.5	6.5	7.0
Hispanic								
Chicano	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.8	4.4	4.9	5.8	6.7
Latino	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.7	4.4
<b>HISPANIC</b>								
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	4.4	4.9	5.4	6.2	7.1	7.8	9.4	11.1
White	65.0	63.2	62.0	60.6	57.8	55.0	51.9	48.5
Other	2.9	3.0	2.9	2.6	2.5	2.4	1.8	1.4
No Ethnic Data	1.9	1.6	1.2	1.2	2.3	3.2	3.9	4.4
<b>CITIZEN &amp; IMMIGRANT SUBTOTAL</b>								
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Office of Student Research, UC Berkeley