2016-17 Annual Report of the Committee on Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education

In fulfilling the charge set by the Berkeley Division by-laws, the Committee on Admissions, Enrollment, and Preparatory Education (AEPE) accomplished the following activities during the 2017-18 academic year. Professor Ignacio Navarrete served as chair and Professor Kim Voss served as vice chair.

I. Admissions Policies and Review Guidelines
   • Freshman Admissions Policy (September 16, 2016)
   • Freshman Selection Procedures (October 14, 2016)
   • College of Chemistry Freshman Reader Guidelines (October 14, 2016)
   • College of Engineering Freshman Reader Guidelines (October 14, 2016)
   • Management, Entrepreneurship, & Technology (MET) Freshman Reader Guidelines (October 28, 2016)
   • Student-Athlete Admissions Policy (October 28, 2016)

II. Key AEPE Issues

Policy Revisions

A. Student-Athlete Admissions Policy
   • AEPE approved several additions to the Student Athlete Admissions Policy including a new section for transfer students on October 28, 2016.

B. Freshman Policies
   • Letters of Recommendation: The letters of recommendation (LORs) was the subject of much discussion in the 2016-17 academic year. UC Berkeley repeated what was done in the 2015-16 academic year and only invited applicants identified as “Possible” admits to submit up to two LORs. The invited applicants then request one or two letters. Their references submit a letter. Not all applicants request a letter and not all applicants who request letters get them sent by their references.
     - Of more than 85,000 freshman applicants, 29.4% (24,986) were invited to submit letters of recommendation. Of those invited to submit, 79% requested at least one letter from a recommender, with more than 68% requesting two letters. More than 77% of those invited to submit ended up submitting letters for review with their files.
• **Faculty Review:** The 2017 Freshman Selection Procedures provided a way for faculty to bring disciplinary expertise to the admissions process. The procedures specify that “a select set of applications (typically from the “Possible” ranks) will be subject to review by a group of faculty organized within Colleges and Divisions.
  o AEPE Chair Navarrete sent out a Cal Message on January 23, 2017 to faculty and invited them to participate in the freshman admissions process. Thirty faculty volunteered and helped in the admissions process.
  o This year, volunteered faculty had to participate in a two-hour online training before they reviewed applications. In the previous year, the training was in person.
• Topics for the Summer Study will focus on 1) reviewing the efficacy of overlays and 2) faculty participation in the admissions process.

**Contributors to Committee Meetings**

• Chris Patti, Chief Campus Counsel, explained laws and policies on confidentiality with respect to applications and admissions.
• Amy Jarich, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor of Admissions and Enrollment and OUA Director, gave updates on the admissions cycle.
• Greg Dubrow, Director of Analysis, Policy, and Planning, OUA, presented freshman and transfer applicant/admit/SIR profiles throughout the year, and additional data as requested by the committee.
• Susan Pendo, Associate Director, OUA, and Director Dubrow conducted a “mini norming session.”
• Jay Larson, Associate Athletics Director, Compliance met with AEPE on December 2, 2016 to discuss the approved student-athlete admission policy. The committee approved the revision to add “pending admission” in the National Letter of Intent.
• Bob Jacobsen, L&S Dean of Undergraduate Studies met with AEPE on April 21, 2017 to discuss the academic progress criteria.

**Committee Member Participation**

• Committee members participated in the Faculty Review of applications.
• Chair Navarrete represented AEPE on the Coordination Board for Admissions, Financial Aid, and Enrollment Management.
• Chair Navarrete co-chaired on the Student Athlete Admissions Committee (SAAC).
• Vice Chair Kim Voss represented AEPE on the Enrollment Management Working Group.
• Professor Frank Worrell represented AEPE on the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) and reported on that committee’s meetings throughout the year. Chair Navarrete and Professor Mark Brilliant were alternates.
• Professor Richard Sloan represented AEPE on the Student Athlete Admissions Committee (SAAC).

III. **AEPE review of Academic Senate and Campus Policies and Issues**
• Overview of Changes to UC Berkeley Freshman Admissions Policy (AEPE White Paper)
  *Comments forwarded to Division Chair Robert Powell on September 23, 2016.*
• UC Augmented Review Policy
  *Comments forwarded to BOARS Chair Henry Sanchez on April 21, 2017.*

IV. **Unfinished Business and Future Action Items**
• Analysis of the second cycle of new freshman admissions policy.

*See Appendix A for student athlete admissions update.*
APPENDIX A: STUDENT ATHLETIC ADMISSIONS UPDATE

The Student Athlete Admissions Committee (SAAC) was established by AEPE to consider the applications of recruited student athletes who fail to meet the standard of UC eligibility (A-G requirements, minimum 3.0 high school GPA, etc.), and who therefore have to be admitted “by exception.” In 2016-17, SAAC was co-chaired by the chair of AEPE, Ignacio Navarrete, and by the Director of Admissions, Amy Jarich. Its membership includes the chair of the Undergraduate Council (Mark Stacey), the Faculty Athletic Representative (Bob Jacobsen), the L&S Dean for Undergraduate Studies (Richard Rhodes, representing Bob Jacobsen), and an at-large member of AEPE (in 2016-17, Richard Sloan). SAAC is assisted in its work by numerous representatives of the Office of University Admissions (OUA) and of the Intercollegiate Athletics Department (IA), as well as by Derek van Rheenen, Director of the Athletic Study Center (ASC).

SAAC tracks its work based on a reporting year that identifies when the student athlete first matriculates at Berkeley. As of September 2017, we are still in the “2017-18” year in that we are considering applicants who will first matriculate during the current academic year. All of these applicants have filled out the UC application for matriculation in this academic year, the same application filled out by all other applicants for the current academic year. Soon we will begin to see applicants designated 2018-19, that is who will first matriculate in Berkeley in Fall 2018 and who will have filled out the next year’s application (still unavailable). Reporting years based on the year of matriculation rather than the year of application can cause some confusion to those unfamiliar with the system.

In replacing the former Athletic Admissions Policy, AEPE set a glidepath towards a goal of 80% of recruited athletes on each roster being UC-eligible, and no more than 20% admitted by SAAC. The current admissions cycle is the penultimate year of the glidepath, with a goal of 60% of each roster being UC eligible; with 2018-19, the full goal of 80% eligible will be in effect.

As just noted, the 2017-18 reporting year has not quite closed. So far, 266 recruited student athletes have been admitted. Of these, 241 (91%) met UC eligibility standards and were admitted by the OUA. As you can see, the proportion of recruited student athletes admitted in the current cycle met not only the interim (glidepath) goal of 60% UC-eligible, but indeed, the final 80% UC-eligible goal.

The admissions policy also set a goal of a minimum of 80% UC eligibility for the total roster of recruited athletes. This floor will go into full effect when the new admissions policy has been in place for four years; in fact, it has already been reached, as 87% of the total rosters (recruited student athletes in all sports) meet the UC eligibility criteria.

In making admissions decisions, SAAC considers not only the holistic qualities of the individual application (grades, test scores, psychosocial factors as gleaned from the essays and letter of
recommendation), but also the academic culture of the individual teams, the admissions record for the entire team roster, and the “carrying capacity” of the Athletic Study Center, its ability to provide support to student athletes.

It is noteworthy that only one team failed to meet this year’s 60% UC eligibility goal. That is a very small team, however, that this year recruited only two students, one of them UC-eligible. SAAC recognizes that for teams with very small recruiting quotas, even one non-UC eligible recruit can exceed the desired minimum for that year; in this case, the team’s overall roster, in which six out of seven are UC eligible, justified the admission of that one student.

Another team was only slightly above the interim 60% goal, at 67% UC-eligible. Once again, this was a relatively small team, with only six recruits for the year. In this case, SAAC again noted that the team roster as a whole was in good shape, and that the team has a good academic culture. Above all, we were convinced in our holistic evaluation process by the good qualities of the two applicants who were not UC eligible, and are confident about the appropriateness of the decision.

Looking at rosters as a whole, we see good progress among the teams that were formerly academically problematic. Thus 74% of the football players were UC eligible, including 86% of this year’s recruits; the figures for men’s basketball (75%, 87%), and women’s basketball (only 46% of the roster, but 100% of the current recruits), show similar trends. Only men’s gymnastics, 76% cumulative and 75% in the current year, fails to show an improvement trend and warrants closer scrutiny in the coming year.

Moving from team rosters to individual performances, we look at Cal GPAs earned by the student athletes admitted for the 2016-17 academic year. Of the 58 athletes admitted through the SAAC process, one had a 1.24 Cal GPA, but he is very much an outlier. The next lowest GPA was 1.70, and only 7 students had GPAs below 2.0 (7/58 = 12%). These 7 students were distributed over 4 teams, suggesting that no single team has a culture of academic failure.

SAAC is particularly concerned with international recruited student athletes. In 2016-17, 29% of international athlete applicants went through the SAAC process (versus 15% of domestic applicants), and they represented 30% of all SAAC cases. In 2017-18 (ongoing), 14% of international athletes have been SAAC cases and international athletes have been 24% of the total SAAC cases. The relatively high percentage of international athletes going to SAAC is due to the incompatibility of educational systems, which may preclude completion of A-G requirements, or reflect more stringent grading systems abroad. The downward trend is a result of SAAC’s ability, newly granted by AEPE in 2017-18, to reclassify applicants as not counting towards the “carrying capacity.” We encourage IA and OUA to bring problematic cases to SAAC, and if we see a good student who is only technically ineligible for UC admission, we prefer to see the case and adjudicate it, but not count it against a team’s maximum quota of SAAC admissions.
Similar policies are applied to transfer students who may be technically ineligible, for instance by not having completed the L&S breadth requirements, but who are otherwise academically promising.

Along these lines, in the current year SAAC is working on guidelines that will allow, after two years of good academic standing and progress towards a degree, a student initially admitted through the SAAC process to be reclassified so that s/he no longer counts against the team’s quota. Similar standards will also allow a student who was initially UC-eligible to be reclassified so as to count against the quota, if the student is not making good progress.

In sum, the new Athletic Admissions Policy is working well and achieving the desired effects. With the help of the IA and OUA staff, coaches are more aware of the need to recruit athletes who also have the potential to be successful Berkeley students, and the ASC is providing the support they need to achieve their academic goals.

Looking to the future, SAAC and AEPE’s goals extend beyond management of admissions, to raising graduation rates and ensuring that the available resources can provide the support necessary for a successful academic experience. In order to assess the success of the Athletics Admissions Policy, we need a better feedback loop, with information on progress towards degree, academic probation rates, graduation rates, etc. As we have more data, we will be better able to determine if the bar has been set at the right level, and if the policy is effective at securing the goals that have been set. We look forward to working with the Athletic Study Center, to aggregate and integrate their data with admissions data in order to provide consistent follow-up to and assessment of the Athletic Admissions Policy.