



Comprehensive Review Progress Report

Comprehensive review is a policy designed to improve the quality and fairness of admissions decisions at the University of California by evaluating the full achievement record of all applicants. It was adopted by the UC Regents in November of 2001 and implemented for Fall 2002 admissions at the six UC undergraduate campuses that cannot accommodate all UC-eligible applicants.

When the Regents approved the policy, they asked that the faculty report periodically on the implementation of comprehensive review. The Academic Senate's Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) has compiled progress reports on comprehensive review's first two years of implementation. The reports show that academic quality has been preserved and access to educational opportunities provided to students from all parts of the state.

Rationale for Comprehensive Review at the University of California

UC uses comprehensive review to examine *all* information on the application rather than a narrow range of quantitative factors alone. Viewing applications this way recognizes that merit is demonstrated in multiple ways and allows the same kind of rigorous, individualized review found at other highly selective institutions across the country.

In recent years, increasing numbers of well-qualified students have applied for a limited number of seats at UC's most selective campuses. Comprehensive review guarantees a reading of each application and a more thorough and in-depth review. All students admitted under comprehensive review have already met the stringent eligibility requirements that guarantee them a spot in at least one UC campus – eligibility requirements based solely on high school grades, test scores, and the completion of required courses.

Summary of BOARS 2002 Progress Report Findings

BOARS assessed comprehensive review's implementation after the Fall 2002 admissions cycle. The key findings are outlined below:

- BOARS' primary finding is that **all six selective campuses were successful in implementing comprehensive review within UC policy and guidelines**. The six campuses using comprehensive review adopted policies and processes that conform with BOARS' principles and Regental policy, implemented these processes effectively, completed their admission decisions on time and met their enrollment targets.
- BOARS' review of process design and implementation on each campus showed that **campuses went to great lengths to ensure the consistency of their admission decisions and the integrity of their processes**. To ensure their decisions were correct and free of bias, the campuses strengthened their procedures for hiring and training readers, instituted multiple systems of checks and balances, and monitored outcomes of the reading process. Several campuses plan to add additional procedures in 2003 that will further strengthen the evaluation and scoring process.
- In reviewing the outcomes of campus admission processes, BOARS observed that **academic preparation, as measured by traditional indicators such as GPA, admissions test scores and the breadth and depth of**

high school coursework completed, has remained stable. For example, at UC's six selective campuses, high school GPA went up on three campuses, stayed the same on one, and declined slightly on two. SAT II writing scores went up on all campuses except one and the number of A-G courses completed in high school went up or stayed the same on all campuses except one.

- **The degree to which the selective campuses are accessible to low income families, underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, and students from geographically underserved areas generally has not declined and some campuses have seen modest increases.**

Summary of BOARS 2003 Progress Report Findings

BOARS comprehensive review assessment for the Fall 2003 admissions cycle concluded the following:

- **The BOARS 2003 progress report found virtually every measure of academic excellence growing stronger under the comprehensive review policy.** Over the past two years, the performance of admitted students in such academic indicators as the number of college preparatory classes completed, high school GPA, SAT I and SAT II scores, and the percentage in the top four percent of their high school class have all gone up.
- In addition, **the proportions of students admitted to selective campuses from low-income families, families with no previous experience with college, low performing schools and rural areas are also higher than they were before comprehensive review was implemented in 2001** for the freshman class applying to enter UC in the Fall of 2002.
- Moreover, despite increasing selectivity that means many applicants are not admitted at the University's most competitive campuses, **UC continues to enroll the same proportion of high-achieving students that it did before comprehensive review was implemented.** Among admitted students in the top one-third of UC applicants (as measured by high school GPA and test scores), between 63 and 65 percent enroll at UC, a proportion that has held steady for the past five years.
- This year, **faculty members on all six campuses employing comprehensive review read a sample of Fall 2002 application files to confirm that decisions were consistent with faculty policy and values. They did not find any problems with decisions made by admissions staff** and determined that the scores staff gave applications were "reasoned, consistent and defensible."
- **UC's verification of applicant-provided information did not find evidence of falsification.**