

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSITY POLICY ON UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS

I. OVERVIEW

On May 20, 1988, The Regents of the University of California adopted a University of California Policy on Undergraduate Admissions. The Policy states in part that:

“Mindful of its mission as a public institution, the University of California...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 socio-economic backgrounds characteristic of California.”

In December 1995, following passage the previous July of Regents Resolution SP-1, a task force convened by the President of the University reviewed existing Guidelines for the Implementation of University Policy on Undergraduate Admissions and recommended substantive changes. The revised Guidelines were issued in July 1996 and revised in May 2000 to reflect the University’s newly adopted Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC) policy.

In May 2001, The Regents adopted Resolution RE-28, which rescinded Resolution SP-1 and reaffirmed the goals of the 1988 Policy as follows:

“the University shall seek out and enroll, on each of its campuses, a student body that demonstrates high academic achievement or exceptional personal talent, and that encompasses the broad diversity of backgrounds characteristic of California.”

Following the passage of RE-28, the President asked the Academic Senate to consider the adoption of evaluation procedures that would look at applicants in a comprehensive manner and would utilize a variety of measures of achievement.

The present revision of the Guidelines follows extensive deliberation on the part of the Academic Senate, its Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS), and its individual campus divisions and faculty admissions committees undertaken during the summer of 2001. The work of the Academic Senate built on themes already developed by the 1995 Task Force. For example, the report of the Task Force commented on the “need for a comprehensive review of the methods used for assessing academic performance, beyond utilizing criteria such as GPA and standardized test scores” and suggested that “the selection process could be altered in the future to include a more comprehensive approach to reviewing students’ academic accomplishments and personal backgrounds.” The work of the Academic Senate should be considered as yet another step in the continuing evolution of undergraduate admissions practices and policies.

Effective with applicants seeking admission for the fall 2002 term and thereafter, the following revised guidelines and procedures shall be followed for implementation of the 1988 University of California Policy on Undergraduate Admissions and RE-28, adopted in May 2001.

These selection guidelines apply to campuses that have to select from a pool of eligible applicants, and to students who have met the established UC eligibility requirements for admission¹. These eligibility requirements are established by the University in conformance with the specifications outlined in the California Master Plan for Higher Education, which specifies that the top one-eighth of the State's public high school graduates, as well as those community college transfer students who have successfully completed specified college work, be eligible for admission to the University of California.

These guidelines provide the framework within which campuses shall establish specific criteria and procedures for the selection of undergraduate applicants to be admitted when the number of eligible applicants exceeds the places available.

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

Campus admissions procedures should involve a comprehensive review of applications. BOARS defines comprehensive review as:

The process by which students applying to UC campuses are evaluated for admission using multiple measures of achievement and promise while considering the context in which each student has demonstrated academic accomplishment.

In designing campus procedures, campus admissions committees should adhere to the following guiding principles:

1. The admissions process honors academic achievement and accords priority to students of high academic accomplishment. At the same time, merit should be assessed in terms of the full range of an applicant's academic and personal achievements and likely contribution to the campus community, viewed in the context of the opportunities and challenges that the applicant has faced.
2. Campus admissions procedures should involve a comprehensive review of applications using a broad variety of factors to select an entering class.
3. No fixed proportion of applicants should be admitted based solely on a narrow set of criteria.
4. Campus policies should reflect continued commitment to the goal of enrolling classes that exhibit academic excellence as well as diversity of talents and abilities, personal experience, and backgrounds.
5. Faculty on individual campuses should be given flexibility to create admission policies and practices that, while consistent with Universitywide criteria and policies, are also sensitive to local campus values and academic priorities.

¹ These guidelines apply to those students eligible for admission. Up to 6 percent of new enrolled freshmen and 6 percent of new enrolled advanced standing students can be admitted by exception, as authorized by The Regents. Refer also to the [Policy on Undergraduate Admissions by Exception](#).

6. The admission process should select students of whom the campus will be proud, and who give evidence that they will use their education to make contributions to the intellectual, cultural, social, and political life of the state and the nation.
7. The admissions process should select those students who demonstrate a strong likelihood that they will persist to graduation.
8. Campus selection policies should ensure that no applicant will be denied admission without a comprehensive review of his or her file.

The faculty takes their responsibilities for admission and selection very seriously. BOARS anticipates that campuses will act autonomously in designing campus-specific policies and processes that are consistent with Universitywide policies and guidelines. BOARS will continue to monitor campus policies and work with faculty to continuously improve the processes and outcomes.

III. SELECTION CRITERIA

Campuses receiving applications in excess of the number required to achieve their enrollment target for a specific term shall select students for admission as follows:

A. Freshman Applicants

The following criteria provide a comprehensive list of factors campuses may use to select their admitted class. Based on campus-specific institutional goals and needs, admissions decisions will be based on a broad variety of factors to ensure attainment of the goals set forth in the 1988 University of California Policy on Undergraduate Admissions and RE-28.

1. Academic Grade Point Average (GPA) as calculated on all academic courses completed in the subject areas specified by the University's eligibility requirements (the a-f subjects), including additional points for completion of University certified honors courses (see 4, below). It is recommended that the maximum value allowed for the GPA shall be 4.0.
2. Scores on the following tests: the Scholastic Assessment Test I or the American College Test, and the College Board Scholastic Assessment Test II: Subject Tests.
3. The number, content of, and performance in courses completed in academic subjects beyond the minimum specified by the University's eligibility requirements.
4. The number of and performance in University approved honors courses, College Board Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, and transferable college courses completed. It is recommended that caution be exercised in order not to assign excessive weight to these courses, especially if considerable weight already has been given in the context of 1, above. Additionally, in recognition of existing differences in availability of these courses among high schools, it is recommended that reviewers assess completion of this coursework against the availability of these courses at the candidate's secondary school.

5. Being identified as eligible in the local context, by being ranked in the top 4% of the class at the end of the junior year, as determined by academic criteria established by the University of California.
6. The quality of the senior year program, as measured by the type and number of academic courses (see 3 and 4, above) in progress or planned.
7. The quality of academic performance relative to the educational opportunities available in the applicant's secondary school.
8. Outstanding performance in one or more specific academic subject areas.
9. Outstanding work in one or more special projects in any academic field of study.
10. Recent, marked improvement in academic performance, as demonstrated by academic grade point average and quality of coursework (see 3 and 4, above) completed and in progress, with particular attention being given to the last two years of high school.
11. Special talents, achievements, and awards in a particular field, such as in the visual and performing arts, in communication, or in athletic endeavors; special skills, such as demonstrated written and oral proficiency in other languages; special interests, such as intensive study and exploration of other cultures; experiences that demonstrate unusual promise for leadership, such as significant community service or significant participation in student government; or other significant experiences or achievements that demonstrate the applicant's promise for contributing to the intellectual vitality of a campus.
12. Completion of special projects undertaken either in the context of the high school curriculum or in conjunction with special school events, projects or programs co-sponsored by the school, community organizations, postsecondary educational institutions, other agencies, or private firms. These projects may offer significant evidence of an applicant's special effort and determination or may indicate special suitability to an academic program on a specific campus.
13. Academic accomplishments in light of the applicant's life experiences and special circumstances. These experiences and circumstances may include, but are not limited to, disabilities, low family income, first generation to attend college, need to work, disadvantaged social or educational environment, difficult personal and family situations or circumstances, refugee status, or veteran status.
14. Location of the applicant's secondary school and residence. These factors shall be considered in order to provide for geographic diversity in the student population and also to account for the wide variety of educational environments existing in California.

B. Advanced Standing Applicants

Advanced standing applicants shall be selected by each campus using the criteria listed below as well as criteria 11-14 listed above. Priority consideration for admission of advanced standing applicants shall be given to upper division junior transfers from California Community Colleges.

Criteria to Select Advanced Standing Applicants

1. Completion of a specified pattern or number of courses that meet breadth or general education requirements.
2. Completion of a specified pattern or number of courses that provide continuity with upper division courses in the major.
3. Grade point average in all transferable courses, and, in particular, grade point average in lower division courses required for the applicant's intended major.
4. Participation in academically selective honors courses or programs.

(Refer to items 2 through 6 in Section A above for additional criteria to consider.)

IV. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

A common filing period for submission of applications shall be established by the Office of the President in consultation with the campuses. These dates shall be observed by all campuses and may be extended only if a campus determines that additional applications are required to meet enrollment targets. All applications submitted during the prescribed dates shall receive equal consideration for admission.

Applicants shall file one application on which they shall indicate all the campuses where they wish to be considered for admission.

Campuses shall observe and publish a common notification period for notifying applicants of their admission status.

V. ACCOMMODATION OF UC ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

UC eligible resident applicants, who have not been admitted at any of the campuses of their choice shall be offered a space at other UC campuses where space is available. This process, called referral, reaffirms the long-standing University commitment to provide a place for every eligible California applicant who wishes to enroll.

In addition to the referral process, campuses may choose to offer other enrollment alternatives to UC eligible applicants. Examples of such alternatives may include:

1. Fall term admission to a different major,
2. Deferred admission to another term; or,
3. Enrollment at a community college with provision for admission at a later time, if a stated level of academic achievement is maintained (for freshman applicants only).