

**COUNCIL ON UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS & RELATIONS WITH SCHOOLS**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2020-21**

**To the Irvine Divisional Assembly:**

The Council on Undergraduate Admissions & Relations with Schools (CUARS) respectfully submits its report of activities for the 2020-21 academic year.

**I. Council Operations**

CUARS is charged with making recommendations regarding policies on admissions, enrollment, and outreach activities to the administration and to the Academic Senate, and providing faculty coordination for outreach activities. The Council monitors outreach programs directed toward academic enrichment of the campus through a diverse student body and advising the campus administration on the disbursement of any funds designated for such programs. The Council maintains liaison with the systemwide Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) in overseeing all matters relating to the admission of undergraduate students.

Sergio Gago-Masague, Assistant Professor of Teaching in Computer Science, chaired the Council in 2020-21 and served as the representative to BOARS. Kevin Bradford, Associate Professor of Teaching in Marketing, served as Vice Chair. Both provided leadership to the CUARS meetings as appropriate.

The Council met nine times during the year. The meetings were attended by eleven appointed members, the Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions (Ex Officio), the Librarians Association of the University of California, Irvine (LAUC-I) Representative, the Associated Graduate Students (AGS) Representative, and the Associated Students of University of California, Irvine (ASUCI) Representative. Throughout the year, the Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions kept CUARS informed of admissions and enrollment management issues and provided comments and advice when requested.

**II. Divisional Issues/Policies**

**A. Member Training**

CUARS members attended a training provided by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions to help members understand the intricacies of the admissions process.

**B. Campuswide Honors Collegium Presentation and Discussion**

Campuswide Honors Collegium (CHC) Faculty Director Ted Wright presented to members about admissions into the program. He shared that there are multiple pathways into the program depending on a student's situation, but the most common path is via invitation. He also noted that, after changing the admissions process to no longer favor students from more privileged backgrounds, CHC has seen a 40% increase in first generation students, and some growth in low-income students as well. Director Wright also noted that the program has started seeing an increase in Hispanic students, likely due to the focus on low-income and first generation students, but it has been unsuccessful at increasing numbers of Black students. CHC's goal this year is to double Black enrollment by outreaching to urban high

schools and promoting the Black Thriving Initiative.

Director Wright also reported that the program was very successful recruiting students who received both an invitation to CHC and a Regents' Scholarship offer; the yield rate for this group was 74%. He noted another tool for increasing yield is the Honors Experience Day, an event where CHC invitees visit campus and attend events throughout the day.

#### **B. Yield Modeling Group**

Associate Vice Chancellor Morales shared that she would like to form a group to determine the goals and approach to making decisions about the applicant pool. Enrollment Management would work to ensure that whatever criteria the group determines is applied to applicants and that these criteria are meeting campus goals and aligning with the strategic plan. Several members expressed interest in joining this group, however, meetings did not materialize; Chair Gago-Masague intends to pursue the group again in the next academic year.

#### **C. Admissions Cycle Updates**

At the January meeting, Executive Director Leaman reported that the UC system saw a dramatic increase in applications, in contrast to many colleges around the country. UCI saw a 10% increase in first-year student applications, with approximately 78,000 coming from California students (an increase of 8%). Domestic nonresident applications increased 46%. Black student applications increased 20%, with a 15% increase from California Black students. Transfer applications increased 7%. Executive Director Leaman credits the outreach efforts of Office of Undergraduate Admissions staff in combination with the changes in testing requirements for the increase in applications. There was a decline, however, in international transfer applications. Readers are taking more time on the applications this year, which Executive Director Leaman sees as a positive change. He also notes that the Office of Undergraduate Admissions will be using the term "test free" rather than "test blind" to avoid using ableist language.

#### **D. Admission by Exception Committee**

Executive Director Leaman reported that a three-member committee makes decisions on applicants being evaluated for admission by exception, and that he would like for CUARS members to serve on the committee. Members expressed concern about issues of faculty privacy and workload. Executive Director Leaman noted that he would follow up with specific members with a plan for applicants from each school.

#### **E. Outreach Presentation**

Director of Outreach, Bryan Jue, and Director of Non-Resident Outreach, Charlie Schwartz, led members through a presentation of outreach efforts during the pandemic. To help students move from admission to signing an SIR, outreach staff held 955 virtual events, including pre-recorded, semi-live, and live events with panels and presentations. In addition, staff used social media and Slate for messaging. Director Jue introduced members to a new platform called Conduit, which functions like a streaming channel where applicants can access targeted content. Directors Jue and Schwartz asked members to return to their Schools to ask about content that they could provide for Conduit.

#### **F. Non-Academic Read Scores**

At the March meeting, Executive Director Leaman and Director of Systems and Operations in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions Shawn Trondsen shared two options they are considering for how read scores are administered.

The first option would move from a 1-3 read score to a 1-5 score in multiple categories. These options could include academic achievement, math preparation, non-cognitive variables, personal insight question responses, and others. Executive Director Leaman noted that other campuses around the nation use this method. The second option would instead ask readers to score the applications in context and then simply note separately if the application exhibited evidence of items like leadership.

At the April meeting, Executive Director Leaman presented the first two options developed by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. The first option features four categories being rated on a 1- 4 scale in addition to an overall recommendation for admission. The second combines the four categories into two and also includes an overall recommendation. Executive Director Leaman noted that each of these options would require more training for readers and 4-6 more hours of training are funded for the next cycle, but the following cycle would be less of a burden.

Director Trondsen presented the third and fourth options and an additional option specific to transfer students. Option three has two 1-4 scores (Academic Achievement in Context and Overall Admissions Recommendation) in addition to checkboxes a reader could use to indicate special preparation in other areas. Option four includes a single 1-4 scale with additional checkboxes and a calculated math score.

At the June meeting, Chair Gago-Masague discussed CUARS' previous vote on the four proposed freshman admission non-academic read score proposals. Following this meeting, members voted to approve option one. This means that, for the next application cycle, readers will provide four scores and a general recommendation. Additionally, members approved a non-academic score approach for transfer students.

### **G. Bylaw Revision**

Members voted to approve a significant revision to the CUARS bylaw; Assembly approved the revision at its June meeting. The following changes will go into effect for the next academic year:

1. The Council will make revision suggestions and offer final approval of all reader training materials.
2. The Council will include the Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management as an ex-officio member.
3. The Council must approve any changes made to admissions and enrollment management policy.
4. The Council will be known as the Council on Enrollment Management and Admissions (CEMA).

The following change will be implemented for the 2022-23 academic year:

1. The Council will add two at-large members.

### **H. Selection Criteria Discussion**

Director Trondsen led members through a presentation detailing how selection occurs for applicants. He began by noting several of the enrollment targets that must be met in selection, including freshman, transfer, and school-based targets, clarifying that

selection happens from two distinct pools: California residents and non-California residents. He noted that they try to attract and retain the most talented students regardless of background and work toward diversity goals, including UCI's status as a Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) and an Asian American and Native Pacific Islander-serving institution (AANAPISI).

He noted that an outside consultant, Maguire, evaluates industry trends and historical data to provide a likely outcome for selection based on iterations provided by the selection committee. These models are used by the selection committee for guidance on selection decisions, with all final decisions approved by the Executive Director.

### **III. Systemwide Issues/Policies**

#### **A. Ethnic Studies A-G Requirement**

Chair Gago-Masague led members through a proposal to BOARS that would add ethnic studies to the UC's A-G admissions requirements. There are three current proposals as to how to integrate the proposal into A-G, including requiring a semester of ethnic studies in the 'A' History and Social Studies requirement, explicitly making ethnic studies an alternative to U.S. and World History, and requiring a semester of ethnic studies as a replacement for the one semester "College Elective" requirement in the G category. BOARS approved an option that aligns UC's Ethnic Studies (ES) requirement with CSU's to provide transfer students with consistent requirements across the two university systems.

### **IV. Guests**

Jeffrey Barrett, Chair, Academic Senate  
Kate Brigman, Executive Director, Academic Senate  
Patty Morales, Associate Vice Chancellor of Enrollment Management  
Bryan Jue, Director of Outreach, Office of Admissions  
Charlie Schwartz, Director of Non-Resident Outreach, Office of Undergraduate Admissions  
Shawn Trondsen, Director of Systems and Operations, Office of Undergraduate Admissions

### **V. Consultants**

Ted Wright, Faculty Director, Campuswide Honors Collegium

### **VI. Council Membership**

#### **Members**

Sergio Gago-Masague, ICS, Chair  
Kevin Bradford, Business, Vice Chair  
Stanley Bailey, Social Sciences  
Jennifer Bornstein, Arts  
Travis Huxman, Biological Sciences  
David Kirkby, Physical Sciences  
Daniel Mumm, Engineering  
Emily Penner, Education  
Maria Rendon, Social Ecology  
Dominik Wodarz, Health Sciences  
Ian Munro, Arts (Fall 2020 substitute)  
Athanasios Sideris, Engineering (Fall 2020 substitute)  
Joanne Zinger, Social Ecology (Fall 2020 substitute)

**Ex Officio**

Dale Leaman, Executive Director of Undergraduate Admissions

**Representatives**

Krystal Tribbett, Librarians Association of the University of California, Irvine

Peijun Gao, Associated Students, University of California, Irvine

Jennifer Nguyen, Associated Students, University of California, Irvine

Abhery Das, Associated Graduate Students, University of California, Irvine