Executive Summary

Purpose (per Bylaw 87): To set standards and criteria for undergraduate admissions and monitor campus efforts to recruit and enroll an excellent and diverse undergraduate student body.

Issues of General Concern to Faculty:

- The Committee on Admissions, Enrollment and Relations with Schools (CAERS) returned to its former status as a stand-alone committee, as opposed to operating as a standing committee of the Undergraduate Council (UgC).

- CAERS approved a request to discontinue the practice of admitting to the College of Letters and Science (L&S) students who have not been admitted to their chosen major in the College of Engineering (COE) and have not selected an alternate major in L&S.

- CAERS recommended to the Dean of the College of Engineering that he pursue efforts to increase enrollment in light of the large number of very good applicants to engineering.

CAERS held 16 regularly scheduled 90-minute meetings during the 2013-14 academic year and consulted with relevant campus administrators regarding specific issues within its purview. The Committee invited individual consultation with former EVC Gene Lucas and former Interim EVC Joel Michaelsen. CAERS Chair Vickie Scott also met with Assemblyman Das Williams who chairs the Higher Education Committee within the State Legislature. The committee benefits from the expertise of several regularly participating consultants who assist CAERS in monitoring and guiding UCSB’s admission and enrollment efforts. All of the committee’s deliberations are informed by relevant UCSB and/or systemwide student data.

Campus Issues

Recommended Transfer Preparation Course Lists

As a follow-up to the approval of new transfer admission pathways by the UC Academic Senate in Spring 2012, CAERS oversaw the process of consulting with departmental faculty and academic deans to identify appropriate recommended transfer preparation coursework for each of UCSB’s undergraduate majors. Two rounds of review were conducted before the respective course lists were finalized by CAERS and made publicly available by the Office of Admissions.

Transfer Admissions Guarantee Program

CAERS has become aware of demographic changes among the students who seek admission to UCSB via the Transfer Admissions Guarantee (TAG) Program, which have increasingly eroded the Program’s effectiveness in achieving its original goals. This year the College of Engineering.
experienced that considerably stronger applicants were ranked below less qualified TAG applicants as a result of the College’s obligation to honor TAG. In one COE major, the number of transfer students who qualified for admission via TAG outnumbered the number of admission slots available. Based on the compelling rationale provided by the College as well ongoing observations by Admissions staff, CAERS unanimously approved a request from Associate Dean Glenn Beltz to discontinue the use of TAG for all COE majors, effective for the 2014-15 admissions cycle. The College was urged to maintain its efforts to ensure that a diverse selection of applicants is admitted to each of the engineering majors.

UC San Diego will soon be discontinuing its involvement with TAG altogether, which is expected to result in some increase in the number of students who apply to UCSB via the TAG pathway. CAERS is monitoring the situation, but has determined that there is still sufficient capacity to continue providing this option for L&S Majors.

AVC for Undergraduate Education

CAERS responded to the proposed job description for the position of AVC for Undergraduate Education and L&S Dean of Undergraduate Education. Members were generally supportive of the desire to create a position that would promote enhanced leadership in the vast area of undergraduate education. While it seemed to members that combining the two proposed roles into one position might create some new administrative efficiencies, concern was expressed about whether this might result in an imbalance of authority that could potentially disadvantage the College of Creative Studies and the College of Engineering.

Enrollment Concerns

Having observed the tremendous increase in demand for admission to the College of Engineering, coupled with the high quality of the students that COE is turning away, CAERS gathered information regarding applicants to COE and resulting admissions. In 2009, the campus received 4650 applications for admission of new freshman to COE as compared to over 12,000 for the 2014-15 school year. The number of students admitted and the number who ultimately enrolled at UCSB, however, has remained flat for the last 10 years due to the fact that COE has been allowed to enforce self determined enrollment targets for individual majors. This has resulted in a much more competitive admissions process and a significant decline in the admit rate. In 2006, 69 applicants with at least a 4.0 high school GPA were denied admission; by 2014 that number jumped to nearly 1600, and nearly 2500 applicants with scores of at least 700 on the SATR-Math test were not admitted to COE. Many of these are under-represented minority students who have the potential to increase diversity within engineering majors, a factor that is highly valued campus-wide and monitored within UCSB’s academic program review process.

CAERS recommended in a June 2014 memo to COE Dean Rod Alferness that he actively seek ways to remove existing barriers to COE’s ability to accommodate more students and that enrollment growth be pursued within all engineering majors.

Meanwhile, highly ranked, popular departments and programs in the College of Letters and Science, which are more heavily impacted by over enrollment than ever, do not have the option to place a cap on undergraduate admissions. CAERS continues to be concerned about problems associated with steadily increasing demand for certain majors and plans to consult broadly regarding this issue in the coming year. The admissions of non-resident students is a revenue stream issue that CAERS is expected to support so as to ensure that UCSB meets both its resident and non-residents targets. The appropriate
balance of California residents, out-of-state domestic students, and international students is an ongoing concern that CAERS continues to evaluate.

Systemwide Issues

Chair Scott regularly updated CAERS members regarding issues that were being pursued by the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS), some of which are listed below.

1. Challenges related to maintaining compliance with the California Master Plan for Higher Education
2. Eligibility in the Local Context and UC’s diminishing capacity to offer the referral guarantee
3. Evaluation of a-g course requirements
4. Comparability of CA residents to out-of-state admits
5. Implementation of new transfer pathways
6. The future of Transfer Admission Guarantees
7. Recommended preparatory coursework for transfer students
8. Redesign of the SAT Exam and use of the SAT Writing Test

Committee input was requested and shared with BOARS on the following matters:

Compare Favorably Report

CAERS reported to BOARS that UCSB remains an overwhelmingly California-centric campus with total campus enrollment at more than 90% residents. Slightly fewer out of state applicants were admitted in 2013 (2607) than in 2012 (2771) and slightly more international applicants (2346 in 2013 vs. 2102 in 2012). Average GPAs and standardized test scores for California residents, out-of-state, and international applicants were all within the same ranges -- and out of state and international applicants, on average, matched or exceeded the academic measures of the California resident students. Long-term trends indicate that UCSB is becoming more selective for all categories of applicants, due to the rising volume of applications and the stature and recognition of the University.

ELC and ETR Students with SAT Scores of 1400 or Below

CAERS considered a report prepared for BOARS by Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP) that summarizes background characteristics and compares the probability of admission for students designated as ELC or ETR who have SAT scores of 1400 or below. CAERS also reviewed probation, retention, and graduation data for admitted UCSB students designated as ELC or ETR who had SAT scores of 1400 or below. It was observed that students in this group are managing to catch up and most are graduating within 6 years or less. It was noted that it would be helpful to know which majors these students are pursuing. UCSB’s Retention Workgroup is also looking at this issue, and observed that many of the ones who have ended up on probation took Chemistry and Calculus during their first quarter at UCSB. It was acknowledged that whether and how much these students are working should also be taken into consideration. Based on what the committee has observed thus far, members agreed that UCSB does not need to implement an SAT score floor at this time.

Redesigned SAT and Writing Test

CAERS reviewed an April 2014 Statement on the Importance of Writing at UC in which BOARS and the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) unequivocally state their view that writing is a critical factor for success at UC. The statement references the redesign of the SAT exam
and notes that UCOPE and BOARS will be assessing what role the new Essay section should play in providing guidance on appropriate preparation for UC and in evaluating students who apply for admission. CAERS unanimously agreed that all applicants to UC should be required to complete the Writing Test.

Maria Isabel Bueno Cachadina
Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook
Francis Dunn
Hua Lee
Bradley Paden
Lisa Przekop – Ex Officio
Cheng-Zhong Qin
Andre Wyss
Vickie Scott, Chair

Jake Speyer, AS Representative (Fall)
Ansel Lundberg, AS Representative (Winter, Spring)

Consultants:
Donna Coyne, Associate Director, Office of Admissions
Mary Jacob, Senior Enrollment Dean for Enrollment Services
Bob Ngo, Principal Enrollment Planning Analyst, Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment
Steven Velasco, Director, Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment

Analyst:  Debra Blake