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March 2, 2016


The Honorable Mark Leno  
Chair, Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
1020 N Street, Room 553  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Senator Leno:

Pursuant to Section 66015.10 of the Education Code, enclosed is the University of California's annual report to the Legislature on the Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR).

If you have any questions regarding this report, Associate Vice President Debora Obley would be pleased to speak with you. She can be reached by telephone at (510) 987-9112, or by e-mail at [Debora.Obley@ucop.edu](mailto:Debora.Obley@ucop.edu).

Yours very truly,

  
Janet Napolitano  
President

Enclosure

cc: Senate Budget and Fiscal Review  
The Honorable Marty Block, Chair  
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee #1  
(Attn: Ms. Anita Lee)  
(Attn: Ms. Cheryl Black)  
The Honorable Kevin McCarty, Chair  
Assembly Budget Subcommittee #2  
(Attn: Mr. Mark Martin)  
(Attn: Ms. Amy Rutschow)  
Ms. Peggy Collins, Joint Legislative Budget Committee  
Ms. Amy Leach, Office of the Chief Clerk of the Assembly  
Mr. Jim Lasky, Legislative Counsel Bureau  
Mr. E. Dotson Wilson, Chief Clerk of the Assembly  
Mr. Daniel Alvarez, Secretary of the Senate  
Mr. Michael Cohen, Department of Finance  
Mr. Christian Osmena, Department of Finance

Ms. Maritza Urquiza, Department of Finance  
Ms. Tina McGee, Legislative Analyst's Office  
Mr. Mac Taylor, Legislative Analyst's Office  
Mr. Jason Constantouros, Legislative Analyst's Office  
Provost and Executive Vice President Aimée Dorr  
Executive Vice President & Chief Financial Officer Nathan Brostrom  
Senior Vice President Nelson Peacock  
Vice President Judy Sakaki  
Associate Vice President Debora Obley  
Associate Vice President and Director Steve Juarez  
Executive Director Jenny Kao  
Executive Director Kieran Flaherty  
Associate Director David Alcocer  
Manager Bruce Kennedy  
Executive Advisor Marsha Sato

**Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR)**

Legislative Report

March 2016



UNIVERSITY *of* CALIFORNIA

## UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

### Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) Fall 2015

The following report is forwarded in compliance with Section 66015.10 of the Education Code, which states:

- (a) The University of California is requested to annually notify the governing board of each high school of both of the following:
  1. The number of graduates who enrolled in the university in the previous year and the number of graduates who were required to take the entry level writing requirement.
  2. The comparable numbers of all California high school graduates who enrolled in the university.
- (b) The University of California is requested to provide an annual summary of the information specified in subdivision (a) to the Department of Finance and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee.

This document is the annual report responding to this legislative request.

#### Background

The University of California Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) is a reading and writing proficiency requirement that is intended to assure that entering freshman students have the writing skills necessary to succeed in lower-division university-level courses. UC students must be able to understand and to respond adequately to written material typical of reading assignments in freshman courses, and this ability must be demonstrated in student writing that communicates effectively to university faculty.

The Academic Senate's University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) oversees the ELWR. This requirement may be satisfied by successfully completing a course or program of study in English composition during the first year of enrollment at UC. In addition, prior to enrollment at the University of California, a student may satisfy the ELWR by attaining a score approved by the Committee on one of the following examinations:

1. the University of California Analytical Writing Placement Exam (formerly known as the Subject A Examination);
2. the SAT Reasoning Test, Writing (last administered January 2016);
3. the ACT, Combined English/Writing (last administered June 2015);
4. the ACT, English Language Arts;
5. the Advanced Placement English Language and Composition Examination;
6. the Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition Examination;
7. the International Baccalaureate Higher or Standard Level English A: Literature Examination; or
8. the International Baccalaureate Higher or Standard Level English A: Language and Literature Examination.

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An additional option for completing the writing requirement prior to enrolling at the University is the successful completion of a transferable college-level course in English composition of 3 semester or 4 quarter units.

Each May, the University offers its Analytical Writing Placement Examination (AWPE) to incoming freshmen who have not satisfied the ELWR by that date. The AWPE defines a basic level of proficiency in reading and writing for incoming students and sets a baseline of expectations that extends across all UC campuses. As the University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE) observed at its April 2002 meeting, “it is very important to have a single University of California standard that clearly communicates to students, parents, teachers, and schools the academic reading and writing abilities expected of entering freshmen.”

This report summarizes the outcomes of the ELWR for freshmen who entered the University for the fall 2015 term and provides fall 2014 data as a point of comparison (see TABLE 1 and TABLE 2).

### Information to Schools

Each year, the University notifies California high school principals and county and district superintendents that comprehensive ELWR performance results are available on the AWPE Results website ([www.ucop.edu/elwr/examdata/results/](http://www.ucop.edu/elwr/examdata/results/)). These results may be useful to guide high school curriculum development that could improve the academic preparation of students.

The AWPE website ([www.ucop.edu/elwr/](http://www.ucop.edu/elwr/)) contains previously administered examinations, the scoring guide, and annotated sample student essays with reader comments exemplifying each scoring level. These resources are intended to help clarify the ELWR standard of competence.

### Entry Level Writing Requirement Data on Entering Freshmen

The attached tables display ELWR data for fall 2014 and 2015 entering freshmen.

Of the 33,067 freshmen who entered the University for the fall 2015, 76.7 percent (25,365) met the ELWR prior to their enrollment. This rate is similar to the fall 2014 outcome of 76.6 percent (26,199) for newly enrolled freshmen. The percent of fall 2015 freshmen who fulfilled the ELWR includes students who successfully passed the AWPE (6,005, or 18.2 percent) as well as students who met the requirement through other means – 58.5 percent of entrants (19,360).

Fewer enrolled students, proportionally and in number, took the AWPE in 2015; 39.1 percent took the 2015 exam (12,933 out of 33,067 enrollees) compared to 42.1 percent of the 2014 cohort (14,410 out of 34,202 enrollees). The AWPE pass rate was slightly lower for fall 2015 at 46.4 percent (6,005 out of 12,933 examinees) from 49.9 percent the previous year (7,189 out of 14,410 examinees). The proportion of students who met the ELWR through other means prior to enrolling increased from 55.6 percent (19,010) in 2014 to 58.5 percent (19,360) in 2015. The number of students required to meet the ELWR during their first year of enrollment at the University in 2015 dropped slightly (7,702 in 2015 compared to 8,003 in 2014), however, the rate remained consistent (23.3 percent in 2015 and 23.4 percent in 2014).

The percentage of students who fulfilled the ELWR prior to enrolling differs by UC eligibility status. For fall 2015, the completion rate for regularly admitted enrollees was 76.9 percent or 25,309, while the completion rate for students admitted by exception was 33.5 percent (56 students). While the ELWR completion rate for

regularly admitted enrollees remained the same for 2015 and 2014, the 2015 rate was slightly higher for students admitted by exception than the prior year's rate of 31.6 percent (66).

The percentage of all fall students who fulfilled the ELWR prior to enrolling varies by campus. In 2015, this ranged from a high of 92.8 percent at Berkeley to 40.9 percent at Merced. This pattern closely mirrors individual campus applicant pools and selectivity rates and is consistent across both years.

Passing the AWPE is one method of satisfying the ELWR prior to enrollment, and it is the primary method used when satisfactory scores on other tests are not met. A student who has not satisfied the ELWR prior to enrollment must do so as early as possible during the first year of attendance by successfully completing a specific course leading to satisfaction of the requirement. The following tables display information regarding the fulfillment of the ELWR for new entering freshmen from California high schools for fall 2014 and fall 2015.

**Table 1**

<b>Table 1: Fulfillment of Entry-Level Writing Requirement (Subject A) for New Freshmen from California High Schools, Fall 2014</b>											
Campus	Admitted*	Enrolled	Met Requirement		Took AWPE Exam			Met Requirement Through Other Means		Did Not Meet Requirement	
			n	%	Exam	Passed AWPE Exam	n	%	n	%	
<b>REGULAR (ELIGIBLE ADMIT)</b>											
Berkeley	7,266	3,840	3,483	90.7	765	451	11.7	3,032	79.0	357	9.3
Davis	18,162	4,573	3,433	75.1	1,986	976	21.3	2,457	53.7	1,140	24.9
Irvine	18,820	4,484	3,146	70.2	2,358	1,178	26.3	1,968	43.9	1,338	29.8
Los Angeles	9,346	4,119	3,737	90.7	1,002	570	13.8	3,167	76.9	382	9.3
Merced	10,426	1,529	693	45.3	1,147	405	26.5	288	18.8	836	54.7
Riverside	18,199	4,093	2,718	66.4	2,427	1,099	26.9	1,619	39.6	1,375	33.6
San Diego	16,097	3,748	3,275	87.4	1,072	601	16.0	2,674	71.3	473	12.6
Santa Barbara	19,126	4,139	3,398	82.1	1,460	853	20.6	2,545	61.5	741	17.9
Santa Cruz	18,459	3,468	2,250	64.9	2,069	1,023	29.5	1,227	35.4	1,218	35.1
Total	135,901	33,993	26,133	76.9	14,286	7,156	21.1	18,977	55.8	7,860	23.1
<b>ADMISSION BY EXCEPTION</b>											
Berkeley	4	4	4	100.0	1	1	25.0	3	75.0	0	0.0
Davis	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Irvine	18	12	2	16.7	5	0	0.0	2	16.7	10	83.3
Los Angeles	63	56	18	32.1	27	10	17.9	8	14.3	38	67.9
Merced	79	14	3	21.4	12	3	21.4	0	0.0	11	78.6
Riverside	72	27	9	33.3	20	4	14.8	5	18.5	18	66.7
San Diego	15	8	4	50.0	4	1	12.5	3	37.5	4	50.0
Santa Barbara	40	28	7	25.0	10	1	3.6	6	21.4	21	75.0
Santa Cruz	69	60	19	31.7	45	13	21.7	6	10.0	41	68.3
Total	360	209	66	31.6	124	33	15.8	33	15.8	143	68.4
<b>ALL STUDENTS</b>											
Berkeley	7,270	3,844	3,487	90.7	766	452	11.8	3,035	79.0	357	9.3
Davis	18,162	4,573	3,433	75.1	1,986	976	21.3	2,457	53.7	1,140	24.9
Irvine	18,838	4,496	3,148	70.0	2,363	1,178	26.2	1,970	43.8	1,348	30.0
Los Angeles	9,409	4,175	3,755	89.9	1,029	580	13.9	3,175	76.0	420	10.1
Merced	10,505	1,543	696	45.1	1,159	408	26.4	288	18.7	847	54.9
Riverside	18,271	4,120	2,727	66.2	2,447	1,103	26.8	1,624	39.4	1,393	33.8
San Diego	16,112	3,756	3,279	87.3	1,076	602	16.0	2,677	71.3	477	12.7
Santa Barbara	19,166	4,167	3,405	81.7	1,470	854	20.5	2,551	61.2	762	18.3
Santa Cruz	18,528	3,528	2,269	64.3	2,114	1,036	29.4	1,233	34.9	1,259	35.7
Total	136,261	34,202	26,199	76.6	14,410	7,189	21.0	19,010	55.6	8,003	23.4
Source: University of California Office of the President, Office of Student Affairs.											
*Admission counts are duplicated. Except for the admission counts, data are for new enrolled freshmen.											

**Table 2**

<b>Table 2: Fulfillment of Entry-Level Writing Requirement (Subject A) for New Freshmen from California High Schools, Fall 2015</b>											
Campus	Admitted*	Enrolled	Met Requirement		Took AWPE Exam			Met Requirement Through Other Means		Did Not Meet Requirement	
			n	%	Exam	Passed AWPE Exam	n	%	n	%	n
<b>REGULAR (ELIGIBLE ADMIT)</b>											
Berkeley	8,710	3,934	3,651	92.8	639	370	9.4	3,281	83.4	283	7.2
Davis	16,248	4,196	3,074	73.3	1,674	790	18.8	2,284	54.4	1,122	26.7
Irvine	18,901	4,402	3,135	71.2	2,279	1,046	23.8	2,089	47.5	1,267	28.8
Los Angeles	9,338	4,051	3,631	89.6	1,008	531	13.1	3,100	76.5	420	10.4
Merced	10,877	1,772	725	40.9	1,347	400	22.6	325	18.3	1,047	59.1
Riverside	19,380	3,898	2,465	63.2	1,943	815	20.9	1,650	42.3	1,433	36.8
San Diego	16,449	3,744	3,368	90.0	939	517	13.8	2,851	76.1	376	10.0
Santa Barbara	17,570	3,820	3,120	81.7	1,379	723	18.9	2,397	62.7	700	18.3
Santa Cruz	17,565	3,083	2,140	69.4	1,638	786	25.5	1,354	43.9	943	30.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>135,038</b>	<b>32,900</b>	<b>25,309</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>12,846</b>	<b>5,978</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>19,331</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>7,591</b>	<b>23.1</b>
<b>ADMISSION BY EXCEPTION</b>											
Berkeley	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Davis	5	5	2	40.0	2	0	0.0	2	40.0	3	60.0
Irvine	40	19	5	26.3	13	4	21.1	1	5.3	14	73.7
Los Angeles	55	50	16	32.0	31	13	26.0	3	6.0	34	68.0
Merced	63	10	3	30.0	5	1	10.0	2	20.0	7	70.0
Riverside	73	26	6	23.1	13	1	3.8	5	19.2	20	76.9
San Diego	9	6	6	100.0	0	0	0.0	6	100.0	0	0.0
Santa Barbara	33	29	7	24.1	11	5	17.2	2	6.9	22	75.9
Santa Cruz	166	22	11	50.0	12	3	13.6	8	36.4	11	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>33.5</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>66.5</b>
<b>ALL STUDENTS</b>											
Berkeley	8,710	3,934	3,651	92.8	639	370	9.4	3,281	83.4	283	7.2
Davis	16,253	4,201	3,076	73.2	1,676	790	18.8	2,286	54.4	1,125	26.8
Irvine	18,941	4,421	3,140	71.0	2,292	1,050	23.8	2,090	47.3	1,281	29.0
Los Angeles	9,393	4,101	3,647	88.9	1,039	544	13.3	3,103	75.7	454	11.1
Merced	10,940	1,782	728	40.9	1,352	401	22.5	327	18.4	1,054	59.1
Riverside	19,453	3,924	2,471	63.0	1,956	816	20.8	1,655	42.2	1,453	37.0
San Diego	16,458	3,750	3,374	90.0	939	517	13.8	2,857	76.2	376	10.0
Santa Barbara	17,603	3,849	3,127	81.2	1,390	728	18.9	2,399	62.3	722	18.8
Santa Cruz	17,731	3,105	2,151	69.3	1,650	789	25.4	1,362	43.9	954	30.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>135,482</b>	<b>33,067</b>	<b>25,365</b>	<b>76.7</b>	<b>12,933</b>	<b>6,005</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>19,360</b>	<b>58.5</b>	<b>7,702</b>	<b>23.3</b>

Source: University of California Office of the President, Office of Student Affairs.

\*Admission counts are duplicated. Except for the admission counts, data are for new enrolled freshmen.