

# Report of the CRSC CAT Subcommittee<sup>1</sup>

May 15, 2009

## **BACKGROUND**

### The Charge

The Task force was charged by Provost Perzigian on April 2, 2009. A summary of the charge follows.

*Within the context of the USO Strategic Plan, Senate Bill 311 on the delivery of developmental education, and UC's Collegiate Structures Initiative II, make recommendations regarding:*

- *The physical and administrative home of the CAT while ensuring UC's commitment to student access, success and diversity;*
- *Provision of developmental resources for both baccalaureate and associate degree students;*
- *Partnership possibilities with Cincinnati State and/or the regional campuses.*

In elaborating on this charge, the Subcommittee felt it important to discuss the following:

- Appropriate delivery of developmental and extended delivery courses and support services to students who are determined by UC placement processes to need the academic courses currently delivered by the CAT, including
  - Uptown campus baccalaureate students;
  - Students currently admitted through the CAT portal but who, in the new university structure, can be holistically admitted to an Uptown campus baccalaureate program;
- Appropriate entry portals, pathways and support for those students not eligible for holistic baccalaureate admission who are currently admitted through the CAT portal;
- Appropriate position placement opportunities for CAT faculty and staff currently teaching and supporting the students identified above.

### External Context

**USO Priorities** – In the USO strategic plan the first priority is for students to be better prepared while in high school. Absent that success, the USO strategic plan assigns the role of developmental education to the Community Colleges and Regional Campuses

**SB 311** – By 2014, graduates of Ohio high schools must meet the Ohio Core requirements. If they do not, they may not begin their college education in a state-supported 4-year college or university. (Many students currently admitted through the CAT portal do not meet the Ohio Core. Biggest deficits are in Algebra II and Science.) Beyond the increased HS graduation requirements, UC will begin to see a reduction in subsidy for the teaching of developmental courses on Uptown campus, with total elimination slated at 2019. (The Governor has already eliminated Access Challenge subsidy that allowed for lower tuition levels for CAT students effective Autumn 2009.)

**National Trends** - UC and campuses across the county are operating in very challenging economic times that are causing many changes and enhanced efficiencies associated with how we teach and provide other services.

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The growth segment in higher education is anticipated to be at community colleges and regional campuses. Few traditionally educated academics are prepared to teach these students. Faculty in CECH are exploring the possibility of establishing a certificate program to prepare faculty for such roles.

**Internal Context**

After the discontinuation of University College, the Center for Access and Transition was established in 2004 to maintain the university’s mission of providing access for underserved populations. According to the steering committee’s final report, the CAT would serve as an open enrollment gateway to baccalaureate education at the University of Cincinnati and would admit any student earning a high school diploma or a GED. The CAT Assessment Report completed in 2008 speaks eloquently to the accomplishments of CAT faculty and staff in support of the student populations referenced above and also notes in several instances that the program is in some ways both experimental and evolving.

The CAT delivers both developmental courses and extended delivery baccalaureate level courses and an integrated set of support services (intrusive advising, supplemental instruction, additional tutoring, etc.) consistent with best practices in the field. The support services have been delivered in a generally consistent manner since 2004. Services and staffing ratios have changed little. It is probably accurate to assume that the faculty teaching methodologies have deepened and matured with the opportunity to focus on the attributes of these particular students. It is also accurate to report that the profile of those admitted to the CAT has changed since 2004. It is no longer purely open access; test score and GPA minima are now in place based on the opportunity to assess student success.

As the data below indicate, the most recent CAT class has a profile considerably better than the first CAT class in 2004.

**First-Time Full-Time Degree Seeking Undergraduates**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Headcount</b>	628	752	621	519	587
<b>Avg ACT</b>	17.3	16.6	16.6	17.4	18.6
<b>Avg SAT</b>	869	839	821	835	884
<b>Avg HSGPA</b>	2.300	2.373	2.543	2.550	2.644
<b>% in top 10% of HS Class</b>	0.7%	0.9%	3.8%	1.8%	2.3%
<b>% in top 20% of HS Class</b>	1.2%	3.1%	8.9%	6.2%	7.2%

Retention as a success measure has improved as well and the students who entered in Autumn 2008 are expected to be retained at approximately 70% after their first year.

	<b><u>2004</u></b>	<b><u>2005</u></b>	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>	<b><u>2008</u></b>
<b>First Year Retention Rate</b>	<b>53.3%</b>	<b>51.5%</b>	<b>56.8%</b>	<b>63.4%</b>	
<b>Second Year Retention Rate</b>	<b>36.5%</b>	<b>32.4%</b>	<b>39.1%</b>		
<b>Third Year Retention Rate</b>	<b>33.9%</b>	<b>27.4%</b>			

Since 2004,

- 3856 students have been confirmed as freshmen to the Uptown campus through the CAT portal and 3595 of these chose to enroll and register for classes;
- 1737 students have been approved to transition to baccalaureate programs or Uptown campus pre-baccalaureate or pre-professional programs;
- ~1460 students who began in the CAT are now enrolled in spring quarter classes;
- 188 enrolled students hold Senior Status with at least a 2.0 GPA;

- 48 students have graduated with baccalaureate degrees; 7 graduated with associate's degrees; and
- 5632 additional students admitted to the Uptown campus have enrolled in at least one course taught by the CAT.

Because of the pressure to complete developmental coursework as quickly as possible so that students may progress toward their degrees, CAT teaching loads and associated credit hours generated in Autumn Quarter are quite heavy and then drop off significantly as students transition or attrit and as baccalaureate students complete requirements. This factor as well as small class sizes and low advising loads has resulted in a difficult budget model.

As admissions criteria for regularly admitted baccalaureate students have increased, service pressure on the CAT has decreased – especially in English. Math supports remain at significant levels.

### **Plan Perspectives**

The USO strategic plan emphasizes mission differentiation, which implies that a research campus should not be an access campus in the traditional sense of admitting all high school graduates who apply. Nonetheless, UC's tradition of access remains an important value. On the uptown campus it began with the University College and Evening College and has continued with the CAT. Access has also been an important mission on UC's regional campuses: Raymond Walters College and Clermont College. More recently, the access mission is reflected in initiatives, like Strive, that promote preparedness and academic success among urban youth. It is also reflected in the recently refined pathways that help students from Cincinnati State, Sinclair, and the regional campuses move to the Uptown campus. Under the USO plan and UC's restructuring, access will continue but will take the form of these latter pathways. UC is committed to promoting the access of qualified students who wish to continue their baccalaureate education after beginning in access institutions.

Consistent with the USO strategic plan and SB311, UC desires to support the efforts of parents, counselors, teachers and K-12 administrators to deliver the message that preparation matters – this is a key tenet of the Strive philosophy.

UC desires to maintain its commitments to student success and economic access for students determined to be ready for college (through objective and holistic assessments). UC has a 9 year tradition adopting retention strategies learned through Success Challenge. We have the opportunity to adopt teaching and learning strategies honed through the CAT to further enhance student success.

UC desires to maintain a diverse academic community that reflects our larger community.

UC is adopting a One University model that encourages and requires disciplinary affinity across campus locations and programs.

UC is adopting greater levels of cost sensitivities and efficiencies across the board – regardless of specific CSI 2 initiatives. Higher education nationally is experiencing a kind of “gut check” – this plan is not immune to those pressures.

UC must treat CAT faculty and staff who are committed to our students and our mission professionally, sensitively and respectfully both during and after the Subcommittee charge is met. As faculties merge, this requires that the university examine equity in workload, opportunity and rewards. It also suggests the need for a two-track tenure path for faculty with different expectations regarding research and teaching. For all CAT faculty, the university should make sure the reappointment, promotion and tenure standards under which they were hired will be appropriately honored.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Meeting the Needs of Our Students

The CAT currently serves two categories of students: students who are admitted to the CAT and students who are admitted (using regular or holistic admissions standards) to baccalaureate programs but need to take developmental courses. As CAT has established and increased admission standards, there is a third category of students who initially applied for Uptown campus admission but are turned away. These students are referred to Raymond Walters/Clermont or our community college partners and take their developmental courses at those campuses.

With the implementation of SB311 there will be no more admissions to the CAT, but we need to recognize that there are three groups of students currently served by the CAT whose needs should be addressed:

- Regular admits needing developmental courses;
- Holistic admits needing developmental courses;
- Students denied initial admission to the Uptown campus.

The number of students that fall into each category will depend on a variety of administrative decisions linked to CSI2 and SB311, as well as what is going on in the marketplace. These numbers will, in turn, affect how resources are allocated to serve them.

**Regular Admits Needing Developmental Courses (Group 1)** - Over time this category of students will likely decline as a result of increased admissions standards. The number may also be affected by changes in placement testing and by budgetary considerations.

Transporting these students to other campuses to take developmental courses has monetary costs, creates scheduling issues and removes them for periods of time from their normal academic and social environments. Thus the Subcommittee recommends that the University continue to meet the needs of these students for developmental courses with courses offered on the Uptown campus when feasible.

The Subcommittee also recommends that the University re-assess the appropriate levels and intensity of support for these students, understanding that student success requires attention to a range of needs related both to instruction and advising. To the extent feasible, advisor-to-student ratios for such students should meet national norms and permit development of more intensive, ongoing advisor-to-student relationships.

**Holistic Admits Needing Developmental Courses (Group 2)** – When the university stops admitting students to the CAT, the Subcommittee believes the University should continue to admit (using holistic assessments) a subset of those students to programs on the Uptown campus. (This group would likely include student-athletes formerly admitted to CAT.) The number of students in this category will rise when admissions to the CAT end. The number may also be affected over time by changes in admission standards and by budgetary considerations.

Although it is beyond the scope of the Subcommittee's charge, we believe the increase in the size of this group offers an opportunity for the university to explore the possibility of admitting students to the university, rather than to specific colleges or programs, a practice that is common nationally. If that option isn't feasible, then we expect many of these students will be admitted to Exploratory Studies or Uptown campus pre-programs.

As with regular admits needing developmental courses, the Subcommittee recommends that the University meet the needs of holistically-admitted students for developmental courses with courses

offered on the Uptown campus when feasible. The Subcommittee also recommends that the University provide appropriate support services on the Uptown campus, most likely through an augmented Center for Exploratory Studies. These support services will be available to regular admits taking developmental courses as well.

**Denied Students (Group 3)** – The number of students in this category will rise dramatically when admission to the CAT ends. Because many of these students have the capacity and motivation to pursue a baccalaureate degree, the Subcommittee recommends that the University enhance existing partnerships to assure

- Seamless referrals to Raymond Walters/Clermont or to community colleges (most likely Cincinnati State), and
- Clear pathways to baccalaureate programs for those who are prepared to pursue them.

The Subcommittee recommends that UC's regional campuses and community college partners offer developmental courses and support services to meet the needs of these students on their campuses. Where possible, feasible and appropriate, UC should encourage collaboration in areas such as best practices and standards in developmental curricula and pedagogy as well as advising.

Further, to build connections with the Uptown campus (thereby increasing the likelihood that these students will ultimately pursue baccalaureate programs at UC), the University should explore an intentional, intensive and collaborative front-end approach to transition that cultivates "pathways" by providing students who intend to transition to UC's Uptown campus with early exposure to Uptown campus expectations, culture, personnel, and resources (perhaps through a bridge-like structure).

As one aspect of this, the Subcommittee also recommends that the University consider expanding its provision of Uptown campus space, services and facilities to these students – at cost and dependent on availability. As examples such students may be eligible to live in UC residence halls, use the library, or participate in intramurals.

### **The Administrative and Physical Home for CAT Faculty and Staff**

UC is currently discussing the implementation of a One University model that would connect all the faculty in a particular discipline in a single department regardless of the campus on which they are located.

Until the One University model is implemented (or if it never is), the Subcommittee recommends that:

- CAT faculty should be administratively located at Raymond Walters with their disciplinary counterparts (some CAT faculty may be more appropriately reassigned to A&S or CECH);
- CAT faculty should be physically located on the campus where they teach the majority of their courses.

When the One University model is implemented, the Subcommittee recommends that:

- CAT faculty, like RWC and Clermont faculty, should be administratively located with their Uptown campus disciplinary counterparts;
- CAT faculty should be physically located on the campus where they teach the majority of their courses.

In either case, the Subcommittee recommends that CAT faculty have the opportunity to teach non-developmental courses that meet the needs of students and the administrative unit where they are located. Such an opportunity would help balance faculty loads and provide continuity for students. With

continued growth projected for UC undergraduate enrollment, there will be a need for additional sections of general education math classes.

In either case, the Subcommittee also recommends follow up work by faculty teaching developmental courses to make sure these courses and their follow-on baccalaureate courses be appropriately aligned no matter where they are taught.

FYE seminar instructors are not necessarily tied to a particular discipline, but they should not get lost in the shuffle. The Subcommittee notes the importance of these seminars in promoting student persistence and development and recommends that these instructors be physically and administratively located to maximize the synergies that can be gained from the links between these seminars and other first year courses.

The assignments noted above do not preclude, if it is consistent with university strategy, assigning current CAT faculty to CECH to teach/mentor in a developmental education program currently under design. In particular, since better preparation of students at the K-12 level is a vital USO, regional and national priority, the University should recognize and employ the experience and expertise of CAT faculty and staff when partnerships (e.g., Strive) are created to address these priorities.

Finally, the Subcommittee recommends that CAT advising and learning support staff be assigned to the Center for Exploratory Studies or other advising units based on

- An assessment of the needs of Uptown campus students (regular and holistic admits) taking developing courses,
- The intensity of support required by the students served, and
- The need for coordination with other central and college based learning support functions.

In terms of physical location, the Subcommittee recommends that the university continue to provide math and writing center support on the east side of the Clifton campus to assure easy availability to all students on the Uptown campus.

In making all these assignments, the University should recognize the successful synergies that currently exist within the CAT and make sure that new faculty and staff alignments either maintain/enhance these synergies or create new synergies that help the University serve this population as effectively and appropriately as the CAT has done.

### **Regional Campuses and Cincinnati State**

The Subcommittee's recommendations involve the enhancement of partnerships and pathways between UC's Uptown campus and its regional campuses or Cincinnati State. It is particularly important to this process that faculty on all the campuses involved establish appropriate mechanisms for assuring the alignment of developmental course with each other and with the baccalaureate courses for which the developmental courses provide preparation.

**The Role of Raymond Walters and Clermont** - RWC and Clermont currently serve as access portals to the University of Cincinnati. The recommendations in previous sections are consistent with their current mission and the mission envisioned through the USO. Clear pathways exist that support students beginning their college careers on the regional campuses and concluding them on the Uptown campus. In addition, the recommendations above allow for consideration of the establishment of an Uptown campus out-post of a regional campus

**Partnership with Cincinnati State** – Consistent with the objectives of Strive, some students currently admitted to the CAT will find Cincinnati State (CSTCC) as a good option in the future. Cost, location

and availability of academic programs are all factors. UC has developed effective pathways and articulation agreements with Cincinnati State. The Strive Promise Grant will encourage students from the urban core who do not meet baccalaureate standards to start at Cincinnati State and then transition to UC with financial assistance.

Both UC and Cincinnati State can strengthen these partnerships by working together to enhance course alignment at the developmental and baccalaureate level and by strengthening links between UC advisors and CSTCC advisors. Facilities and resources available at UC are likely to be extended to CSTCC students under the omnibus agreement currently being drafted. The USO encourages creative collaboration across institutional types. UC and Cincinnati State together are a very valuable resource for Southwest Ohio.

Enrollment projections predict a significant increase in demand for developmental education over the next ten to fifteen years. Demographic projections predict that such education needs to be delivered at an “affordable” tuition rate. A UC/CSTCC partnership offers aspects of both to students with developmental needs.

Possible scenarios include one or more of the following:

- Expanding the 2+2 pathways relationship with CSTCC. Some Group 3 students would be referred to CSTCC but would be closely advised regarding their path to UC and a baccalaureate degree through the expanded Advising Center in Exploratory Studies. This would have an impact on student enrollments, faculty, and revenues. We would likely have to cut some faculty lines as a result. Cuts could be minimized by the substantial enrollment increases on the Uptown campus and at RWC and Clermont with reassignment of some faculty.
- Building a 1+3 program with CSTCC. Some Group 3 students would be referred to CSTCC with a contingent admission to UC. UC would lose some revenues and students at first but may actually build enrollments by attracting more CSTCC students to continue at UC. Both UC and CSTCC would have an interest in marketing this collaboration.
- Building a rolling transfer program with CSTCC similar to what CAT has with the baccalaureate colleges now. Some Group 3 students would be referred to CSTCC with contingent admission to UC. Students could transfer when their performance indicates they are ready. As with the second option, UC would lose some revenues and students at first, but may actually build enrollments over time.

With any or all of these scenarios it is important to communicate to the public and to the high schools in the region how well the partnership serves students.

### **Implementation**

When the various subcommittee reports are received and integrated into a plan, the Subcommittee recommends the creation of an implementation team to assure a successful transition for students, faculty and staff.

Regarding partnerships between UC and Cincinnati State we encourage the implementation team to build on existing Strive networks and infrastructure.