

To: Chairs and Directors  
From: Penny Portillo  
Date: 10/17/2011

Dear Chairs and Directors,

In the 10/10/11 Chairs and Directors meeting, we discussed the topic of School requirements for Humanities undergraduates. Should departments determine their own degree requirements instead? As the faculty consider the academic value of school requirements, this document is intended to examine the budget issues surrounding school requirements.

In considering the next budget cut, estimated at \$1.3M (plus \$500K that we did not absorb from this year's cut), it is very likely we will need to decrease lecturer and TA expenses. This becomes clear from the attached chart categorizing School expenses. Though the permanent budget includes support for 654 TA sections, the school has traditionally funded additional TA sections and, in recent years, the associated fee remission. These school-funded TA's added up to about \$500K last year.

The classes that we must offer to students in order for them to fulfill the Core and language requirement are largely taught by lecturers and TAs. The requirements could be eliminated, modified, or incorporated by departments into their major requirements.

Some budgetary implications of such changes are noted below:

- 1) If the second-year language requirement were eliminated at the school level without significant department requirements replacing it, the enrollments in first and second-year language classes would significantly decrease, along with the associated lecturer and TA costs.

About 63% of students enrolled in 2<sup>nd</sup> year language classes are Humanities majors. If 60% of these students chose not to take 2<sup>nd</sup> year language, 25-30 sections could be eliminated. One would expect a decrease in first-year language classes as well. This is because many Humanities students enroll in first-year language classes simply to prepare for the 2<sup>nd</sup> year sequence to meet the School requirement. Currently about 700 humanities students take first year language. If that decreased by 60%, 15-20 fewer sections could be offered.

The savings would be \$250,000 to \$500,000 depending on whether lecturers or

TAs originally taught the eliminated sections. If some of the departments decide to require some 2<sup>nd</sup> year courses as a major requirement, this estimate could then be updated.

Other impacts would need to be considered, such as the support of graduate programs in the languages, and the re-deployment of some TA's from language classes to other classes, e.g. literature in translation and GE classes.

As faculty consider whether to make this change, it is worth reviewing language requirements at other campuses. Some information is attached, so that our language requirement can be compared to other UC campuses. In general, most campuses offering Humanities majors do not require more than the 1C level. In many cases, this can be satisfied with high school language classes or AP scores.

- 2) If Humanities Core Course were not a degree requirement for Humanities majors, the number of students enrolled would likely decrease.
  - a. With decreased enrollments, the lecturer and/or TA costs would decrease. However, some of the TA/lecturer funds would need to be allocated to other departments hosting lower-division writing courses such as Writing 39B and 39C.

This would save money for the following reason. Most students who currently enroll in Humanities Core only need two quarters of composition to fulfill the lower-division writing requirement. About 2/3 of incoming freshmen at UCI have met Entry-level writing prior to entry, either by a sufficient AP score or by passing the AWPE. One third do need to take either Writing 39A or Humanities (Core) 1A/SA. Of these, most take Writing 39A.

Only 89 students this year are enrolled in Humanities 1A/SA, which is the section of Core designed for students who have not met entry-level writing. If these students were not enrolled in Humanities Core, they would need to take Writing 39A prior to 39B and 39C.

The other 589 students in Core this quarter do not need 3 quarters of composition to meet GE; they only need two quarters such as HumCore 1B and 1C or Writing 39B and 39C. Had Core not been available, the students would have taken 39B and 39C, and the 26 writing sections of

Humanities Core 1A would not have been needed.

If Core were still offered but was not mandatory as a School requirement, enrollments in Humanities 1A would likely decrease. If it decreased by 200 students, the savings is estimated at \$88,035(TA costs) or \$69,680(lecturer costs).

- b. Enrollments in other Humanities courses would increase, because students would still need to take courses toward the Humanities and Arts General education requirement. The student-credit-hours would shift from Humanities Core to the departments offering the other courses. To mitigate the risk of students choosing Arts courses, SOH could still require some number of humanities courses as a School requirement (see #3)
- 3) As the Dean notes in her memo, the School requirements could be modified to allow a choice for students. She lists some possible revisions. The options of replacing a portion of the School requirements with Humanities electives would ensure that the student-credit-hours remain in the school. If students enrolled in courses with a capacity of 35-300 instead of 15-25 (language and composition classes), this would result in a marked increase in student-credit-hours.

As the financial pressures drive up class size, departments will need to prioritize which small classes are more important for students. If a student will only be taking a handful of classes with 20-25 students, departments should weigh the academic merit of whether those should be primarily language or composition courses taught by lecturers or upper-division seminars taught by faculty.

Of course, the faculty and HEC will need to consider the academic rationale for the School requirements. This document simply seeks to document the financial aspects. If more data on course enrollments would be helpful, let me know.

Best,  
Penny Portillo