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Understanding Comprehensive Review

The 14 Factors

September 2019

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In this session we will provide a thorough overview of the UC Comprehensive Review. We will explore the 14 factors involved in the UC Comprehensive Review process and review methods used by each individual campus. We will also apply this knowledge through a discussion of specific application case studies.

Comprehensive Review

Individualized review campus-to-campus

Defines merit using multiple measures of accomplishment and promise

Considers the context in which the applicant has demonstrated achievement

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UC admission is becoming more selective each year, and gaining admission to a UC campus requires more than just meeting minimum eligibility requirements. Typically grades and test scores are important however, the way UC determines “best qualified” goes beyond traditional academic factors. This is where Comprehensive Review comes in.

The UC faculty has developed a Comprehensive Review Policy as a response to the need for campuses to make important distinctions among similarly qualified applicants. This policy has been in practice for over a decade for the freshman admission review process and has been adopted in some form or another at all nine undergraduate UC campuses.

Understanding the “achievement in context” is a vital aspect of individual campus reviews. Comprehensive review allows UC campuses to use different aspects of the application—high school environment, academic and personal accomplishments, family environment, and other circumstances—to make more informed decisions about a particular student’s achievement in the context of opportunity and life experiences.

Comprehensive Review as UC Admissions Policy

UC Academic Senate researched policy at request of UC President

UC Regents approved policy

Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools defined guidelines

Campus Admissions Committees implement policy in cooperation with admissions office

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February 15, 2001: Former UC President Richard Atkinson requested that the UC Academic Senate (faculty representation in the shared governance of the UC) conduct a comprehensive review of the University's admissions policies and provide a recommendation.

The policy was Approved by Board of Regents- (18 regents are appointed by the governor, One is a student appointed by the Regents; the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the Assembly, Superintendent of Public Instruction, president and vice president of the Alumni Associations of UC and the UC president. In addition, two faculty members — the chair and vice chair of the Academic Council — sit on the board as non-voting members.)

Guidelines were defined by Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (Committee within Academic Senate overseeing all matters relating to undergraduate admissions).

Each campus has its own Faculty Admission Committee which determines how the policy is applied. Faculty Admission Committees work with campus's admissions director and other senior managers to create, review, and refine the campus's comprehensive review process.

All campuses employ some form of a Comprehensive Review, in a variety of ways.

14 Factors of Comprehensive Review

Academic	Non Academic
Grade point average	Achievements in special projects
Test Scores	Special talents/achievements/awards
Performance in & number of courses Beyond the minimum A-G requirements	Improvement in academic performance
UC-approved honors and advanced courses	Participation in educational preparation programs
Eligibility in the Local Context (CA residents only)	Academic accomplishment in light of life experiences
Academic opportunities in schools	
Outstanding performance in one or more academic subject areas	

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When calculating the GPA to determine if a student's eligibility meets/exceeds the minimum GPA requirement, we limit the number of honors points to 4 courses (8 semesters), with no more than 2 courses (four semesters) from 10th grade. This total includes college-level courses in the A-G college-preparatory subjects that are transferable to UC. This is referred to as the UC GPA.

The local faculty can choose what factors to use. Each campus has the discretion to use these factors as they see fit. This plays into the selection factor at each campus.

Fixed Weight

Quantitative value placed on various criteria

Holistic

Qualitative – no fixed values or weights placed on any one criteria

Hybrid

Part quantitative, part qualitative

There are 3 main methodologies that the UC's use to evaluate applications: Fixed weight, holistic, and hybrid. All of these methods have evolved over time with the growth of the UC's. In a fixed weight system quantitative values are placed on various criteria. (Include examples for each) For a holistic review, a qualitative approach is taken where there is no fixed value placed on any one criteria. Finally the hybrid system marries the fixed weight and holistic approaches with both quantitative and qualitative components.

Campus Methodologies

Fixed Weight

Riverside

Holistic

Berkeley

Davis

Irvine

Los Angeles

San Diego

Santa Cruz

Hybrid

Merced

Santa Barbara

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In this slide you can see where each of our campuses falls into place. As you can see the majority of the UC campuses use a holistic review, but Merced and Santa Barbara used a hybrid, and Riverside uses a fixed weight review.

Similarities and Differences

Common Features

- Reviewers undergo mandatory training
- Every application is reviewed
- Every UC campus is selective to some degree

Differences

- Who reviews applications at each campus
- Volume & timeline when reviews are completed
- Number of times reviewed
- Campus Selection

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Because the UC system takes a decentralized approach to admissions where each campus operates independently when making their admission decisions, the application review process will vary from campus to campus. Still, there are similarities between all the different reviews.

All admission application readers undergo extensive professional training before reading a “real” application; Continuing training may also be conducted during the read-cycle.

Internal readers are those individuals within the admissions office such as evaluators, recruitment and outreach specialists, and other admissions team members.

External readers are those individuals outside of the admissions office. These individuals are often high school counselors, teachers, or leadership; campus outreach staff such as EAOP staff; independent counselors, graduate students, department staff, alumni, etc.

All applications are reviewed regardless of whether the student meets all of the minimum admissions requirements.

Multiple reads often occur as part of various quality control measures instituted by the campuses. Each campus may have different requirements on the number of times an application is read.

The admission rates and enrollment targets vary from campus to campus, and can even vary within each campus’s colleges, divisions, or majors.

The infographic is set against a blue background. At the top left, the title 'Personal Insight Questions' is written in white. Below it is a Venn diagram with three overlapping circles. The top circle is light green and contains the text 'Aligns to 14 C.R. factors'. The left circle is a darker green and contains the text 'Information not included in other parts of application or not fully explained'. The right circle is a yellowish-green and contains the text 'May be used for admission and scholarship processes'. The bottom circle is light green and contains the text 'Used to understand student context'. At the bottom left of the infographic are two logos: 'UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA' and 'COUNSELOR CONFERENCE'. To the right of the infographic is a photograph of two female students in a laboratory. They are both wearing white lab coats; the one in the foreground has 'UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA' printed on the sleeve. They are wearing purple gloves and looking at something in the student's hands. The background shows a window with a view of a city.

The PIQs relate to one or more of the 14 Comprehensive Review factors and help inform admission readers of the full context of the student – family, school, accomplishments, challenges, experiences. Students are encouraged to use the PIQs to address information that does not appear in other parts of the application, or to explain something on the application more fully.

Each of the campuses uses the PIQs to differing degrees, which points to the different methodologies and processes used at each campus. Some campuses use the PIQs for admission, some use for scholarships and some for both.

Case Studies



In this next section we are going to apply some of the information we have just reviewed by examining a few case studies from last year's applicant pool.

These case studies are meant to demonstrate the factors of comprehensive review. While information has been selected from real applicants, please note that not all the information on the application is included in full. Rather than deliberating admissions decisions we are going to focus on reviewing the factors used in UC Comprehensive Review.

Applicant One

Applicant Summary

- Major: Biological Sciences
- Dual Parent Family
- First Generation College
- English/Spanish spoken in home
- Self-reported family income ~\$30K
- College coursework
- ELC designation
- Applying for EOP

High School

- California public
- Urban public school
- 25 AP/HL courses offered
- ~80% eligible for free meal
- ~75% first generation college
- 200+ applications to UC each year

Applicant One – Academic Factors

GPA	
UW GPA	3.61
UCW GPA	3.92

A-G Count	
47 semesters	

Honors	
Grade 10	6
Grade 11	10
Grade 12	6

SAT with Essay	
Reading/Writing	700
Math	580
Essay	19
Total	1280

ACT with Writing	
English/Lang Arts	30
Writing	11
Math	24
Science	24
Composite	27

SAT Subject Exams	
Molecular Bio	660
Literature	610
Math II	520

AP Exams	
Spanish Lit	5
Eng. Lang & Comp	4
U.S. History	3
Biology	3
World History	3
U.S. Gov & Politics	PL
Eng. Lit & Comp	PL

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UW GPA = Unweighted GPA
UCW GPA = UC Weighted GPA

Applicant One – Coursework, Grade 9-10

9th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
H English 9AB	NH	B, A
Common Core Geometry AB	NH	A, A
H Biology AB	NH	A, A
Spanish for Spanish Speakers AB	NH	A, A

10th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
AP World History	AP	B, A
English 10AB	NH	B, A
Common Core Algebra 2	NH	B, A
Chemistry AB	NH	B, A
Introduction to Human Anatomy	CL	A
AP Biology	AP	B, B
General Psychology	CL	A

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Applicant One – Coursework, Grade 11-12

11th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
AP United States History	AP	A, A
AP English Language & Comp	AP	A, A
Pre-Calculus	NH	C, B
Abnormal Psychology	CL	A
AP Spanish Literature & Culture	AP	A, B
Government of the United States	CL	A
Medical Terminology	NH	A, A

12th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
AP Government & Politics U.S.	AP	IP, NO
AP English Lit & Composition	AP	IP, PL
Statistics & Probability	NH	IP, PL
Medical Office Procedures	CL	IP
Medical Insurance	CL	IP
Medical Terminology	CL	IP
Drawing AB	NH	IP, PL
Economics	NH	NO, PL

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Applicant One – Supplemental Factors

Honors and Awards

Award or Honor Name	Description	Type
Biology Olympiad	Given for participating in the biology olympiad.	Other
National Honors Society	Membership based on Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Character.	Academic
AP Scholar with Distinction	Given by the college board for achieving an average score of 3.5 on all APs taken	Academic
State Seal of Biliteracy	Given in recognition of students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by graduation	Academic

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Applicant One – Supplemental Factors Continued

Extracurricular Activities

Name	Description	Hrs/ Wk	Wks/Yr
Babysitting	Consists of taking care of 3 children and cleaning up after them	8	52

Volunteer Work

Name	Description	Hrs/ Wk	Wks/Yr
Hospital Volunteer	On weekends I volunteer at the main hospital in administration.	4	6
YMCA Youth Group	The program consisted of attending workshops and helping children in the afterschool program.	2.5	25

Applicant One PIQ Review and Supplemental Factors

PIQ One – Creative Side

- Discusses art and its importance as their outlet of expression
- Student discusses collages, interior decoration and formal drawing as a way to portray life experiences.
- Student states visual learner, which is another reason for love of art

PIQ Two – Significant Challenge

- Student discusses challenges with depression due to bullying in childhood
- Student overcomes suicide thoughts, cutting and other hardships with coping before overcoming these obstacles

PIQ Three – Favorite Academic Subject

- Interested in science (pursuit of career in medical field)
- Loves Anatomy and discusses how they enjoy learning different muscles, bones and cells of the body
- Utilized MCAT set to bridge concepts

PIQ Four – What Sets you Apart

- Student is excited to explore the possibilities of college including student clubs, sports and opportunity to explore more academic topics
- Has been restricted in HS so is excited to explore and take advantage of all opportunities available

Additional Comments: Student highlights student involvement in AVID, STEM and Community Svc

Applicant Summary – Applicant One

Supplemental Factors Present:

Good performance within GPA and exams.

Performance within A-G, often exceeding these standards.

Quality of the senior year (increased rigor with additional honors and college courses).

Outstanding performance in one or more academic areas.

Academic accomplishment in light of life experiences – Student addresses limits due to certain responsibilities and life challenges but still excelled academically as well as stayed involved in prep programs and volunteer work.

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Applicant Two

Applicant Summary

- Major: Civil Engineering/Environ. Studies
- Dual Parent Family
- First Generation College
- English/Spanish spoken in home
- College course
- Applying for EOP
- Moved to U.S. at age 14

High School

- California public
- Urban public school
- 25 AP/HL courses offered
- ~95.4% eligible for free meal
- ~95% first generation college
- ~ 62 applications to UC each year

Applicant Two – Academic Factors

GPA	
UW GPA	3.76
UCW GPA	3.85

A-G Count	
38 semesters	

Honors	
Grade 10	0
Grade 11	2
Grade 12	4

SAT with Essay	
Reading/Writing	520
Math	550
Essay	12
Total	1070

SAT Subject Exams	
Spanish	790
Math II	550

AP Exams	
Spanish Lit	4

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UW GPA = Unweighted GPA
UCW GPA = UC Weighted GPA

Applicant Two – Coursework, Grade 9-10

9th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
Common Core Alg 1	NH	A, A
Biology AB	NH	C, B
Mod World AB	NH	A, A

10th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
English 9AB	NH	A, A
Common Core Geometry AB	NH	A, B
Common Core Alg 2 AB	NH	A, A
Chemistry AB	NH	A, B
Spanish for Spanish Speaker 2AB	NH	A, B

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Applicant Two – Coursework, Grade 11-12

11th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
U.S. History 20 th Century	NH	B, B
English 10AB	NH	A, A
American Literature Composition	NH	A
PreCalculus	NH	A, A
AP Spanish Literature & Culture	AP	A, A
Painting 1AB (at Magnet)	NH	A, A

12th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
Princ of American Democracy	NH	IP, NO
American Literature Composition	NH	NO, PL
CSU Expository Reading/Writing	NH	IP, PL
AP Calculus AB	AP	IP, PL
Physics AB	NH	IP, PL
AP Spanish Language and Culture	AP	IP, NO
General Psychology	CL	IP
Economics	NH	NO, PL

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Applicant Two – Supplemental Factors

Honors and Awards

Course	Honors	Type
JROTC Cadet Challenge	Received 1st place medal for completing different exercises.	Other
National Biography Selection	1 of 3 students chosen from 300 applicants.	Academic

Extracurricular Activities

Name	Description	Hrs/ Wk	Wks/Yr
Cross Country	Captain of the team, supported runners by pushing them to do their best.	5	40
Track and Field	Received 3 medals: 2nd place 4x8 relay, 4th place 400 meters, and 4x1 relay 3rd place.	10	8
Soccer	JV captain sophomore year and Varsity captain junior and senior year.	16	10

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Applicant Two – Supplemental Factors Continued

Volunteer Work

Name	Description	Hrs/ Wk	Wks/Yr
Outsiders Club	Helped clean local lake and became an ambassador of water conservation.	100	1
College Peer Counseling	Serviced students during and after school workshops.	15	40

Employment

Position Title	Responsibilities	Hrs/ Wk
Cook	Works 3-5 days per week, cook and assistant in food preparation.	25

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Applicant Two PIQ Review and Supplemental Factors

PIQ One – Leadership Experience

- Discusses College Link Outreach Program - residential program at UCSB
- Was co-leader of group which helped them overcome fear of public speaking
- Result of this experience is that the student became a peer counselor at their school

PIQ Two – Greatest Skill

- Running is greatest skill and through this activity the student has learned hard work pays off
- Discusses balancing working and participating in sports that has led them to develop good time-management skills

PIQ Three – Significant Challenge

- Discusses adapting to culture and learning English while in high school
- Student's parents are in Mexico and student returned to the US at 14 on their own and lives with family friends
- Joined school clubs to learn and practice English

PIQ Four – What Sets you Apart

- Discusses childhood in rural Mexico and responsibilities to help out with family's farm
- Mentions living in poverty after father lost his job and the land they lived on
- Experiences have inspired him to help those who live in poverty improve their circumstances

Additional Comments: Student states they live with family friends but receive no financial support from them. Student mentions they are first gen and have used resources like EAOP and the College Advising Corps to learn about higher education

Applicant Summary – Applicant Two

Supplemental Factors Present:

Strong GPA and exam score performance relative to educational opportunities available at high school.

Good performance within A-G and has attempted a few AP classes.

Quality of the senior year program increased significantly with AP and college level coursework.

Strong academic accomplishments in spite of very challenging experiences and special circumstances. Student addresses personal challenges throughout the application that have put them at a disadvantage compared to their peers.

Student has demonstrated perseverance and achievement despite these barriers.

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Applicant Three

Applicant Summary

- Major: Electrical Engineering
- Single Parent Home
- Only English spoken in home
- Applying for EOP
- ELC

High School

- California
- Rural public school
- 16 AP/HL courses offered
- ~84.6% eligible for free meal
- ~89% first generation college
- ~ 62 applications to UC each year

Applicant Three – Academic Factors

GPA	
UW GPA	3.81
UCW GPA	4.00

A-G Count	
44 semesters	

Honors	
Grade 10	0
Grade 11	4
Grade 12	8

SAT with Essay	
Reading/Writing	590
Math	530
Essay	16
Total	1120

AP Exams	
Art History	3
U.S. History	3
Human Geography	1
Macro Economics	PL
U.S. Gov & Politics	PL
Physics 1	PL
Psychology	PL

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UW GPA = Unweighted GPA
UCW GPA = UC Weighted GPA

Applicant Three – Coursework, Grade 9-10

9th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
AP Human Geography (AP)	AP	B, A
English-Language Arts 1A/1B Honors	NH	A, A
Geometry 1 A/B Common Core	NH	A, A
Biology 1A/1B (H)	NH	A, A
French 1A/1B	NH	A, A

10th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
World History 1A/1B Honors	NH	A, A
English-Language Arts 2A/2B Honors	NH	A, A
Algebra 2A/2B	NH	A, A
Chemistry 1A/1B	NH	A, B
French 2A/2B	NH	A, A

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Applicant Three – Coursework, Grade 11-12

11th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
AP United States History (AP)	AP	B, A
English-Language Arts 3A/3B	NH	A, A
Math Analysis 1A/1B	NH	A, B
French 3A/3B	NH	A, A
AP Art History (AP)	AP	B, A
Lab Assistant 1A/1B	NH	A, A

12th Grade

Course	Honors	Grades
AP Government & Politics U.S.	AP	NO, PL
ERWC 4A/4B	NH	IP, PL
AP Statistics (AP)	AP	IP, PL
AP Physics 1 (AP)	AP	IP, PL
AP Macroeconomics (AP)	AP	IP
AP Psychology (AP)	AP	IP, PL

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Applicant Three – Supplemental Factors

Honors and Awards

Course	Honors	Type
Student of the Month	Due to showcasing excellence in the mathematics department, I was awarded "Student of the Month" by my Algebra 2 teacher, in April 2017.	Academic

Extracurricular Activities

Name	Description	Hrs/ Wk	Wks/Yr
Junior Varsity Tennis	I played on the Junior Varsity team for the sport of Tennis.	8	9
Solar Cup	Building a boat powered by solar energy for a competition that is held at the end of the school year over the course of three days.	1	36
Comedy Club	A club that provided a place for students to laugh while learning and developing improvisational and stand-up comedy techniques.	1	36
Filipino Club	Focus on the history & the culture of the Philippines as to breakdown social barriers.	1	36
Gamer's Club	Come together to play board games, video games, and table-top games.	1.5	36

Applicant Three - PIQ Review

PIQ One – Creative Side

- Explores their creative side by always trying to find a solution to an issue when facing a standstill
- Talks about finding solution for class, Principles of Engineering through Project Lead the Way program
- Student realized gears location was not good, therefore came up with idea to use a balloon
- Reoriented and modified machine with balloon and the first trial was a success

PIQ Two – Significant Education Opportunity

- Taken advantage of AP courses
- Some of these required mandatory projects/assignments during summer
- Learned dedication and studying to pass courses

PIQ Three – Academic Subject

- Mathematics is their favorite subject because it is the universal language, only one answer
- Furthered interest by taking AP courses (AP Stats, Macroeconomics and Principles of Engineering)
- Participate in Filipino Club as treasurer and in tennis with score keeping

PIQ Four – School/Community Better Place

- Student volunteered collecting/separating trash during middle school alongside custodian 15 minutes during lunch
- Separated trash and put them in designated area (trash, recycling) and kept unopened food.
- System still in use today at the middle school

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Applicant Summary – Applicant three

Supplemental Factors Present:

High percentiles in regards to their GPA and SAT exams.

Good performance within A-G and has attempted to take most of the AP/Honors courses available at their school.

Increase in rigor throughout all four years and a high quality senior year.

Consistent performance with mostly A's and a few B's throughout.

Diverse and consistent listing of extracurricular activities.

The Personal Insight Questions provide more insight as to why the student has selected their major.

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Resources

UC Comprehensive Review & Campus Selection Processes

<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/how-applications-reviewed/>

Downloadable Resources

Quick Reference Guide to UC Admissions (For counselors and advisers)

Presenting Yourself on the UC Application - Freshman

Personal insight questions guides

<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/downloadable-guides/>

Freshman Application Data

<https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/files/freshman-application-data-2019.pdf>

UC Counselors & Advisers Bulletin Sign-up

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