

UCLA

March 4, 1999

Judy Curtis, AVID Regional Program
San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
601 North E Street
San Bernardino, CA 92410

Dear Judy,

I am sorry to have taken so long to get back to you about AP and Honors courses. This is our critical reading time period. I hope my comments will be helpful as you think about the impact of these courses on a student's academic record.

Given the competitive nature of admissions at UCLA, we have well beyond 35,500 applications for a class of 4,000; we must try to identify the students who are academically the strongest. We do this because Regental Policy mandates that a minimum of 50% up to a maximum of 75% of students admitted must come from this group.

Our review process looks at SAT or ACT, SAT II scores, number of college preparatory courses, preparation in specific critical disciplines such as math and English, and the number of honors, college and AP courses a student takes. The latter become very important in the review because a student who has complete college level work by the end of the junior year of high school is, in our minds, exceptionally well prepared. Thus, students who complete AP courses and pass the test with a 3-5 are not only outstanding but also the norm for UCLA. They are ranked among the highest in our review. In Fall 1998 we enrolled 380 students who were full sophomores because of their AP units.

By Winter quarter 1999, 18% of our freshmen had reached sophomore standing because of their AP units. Thus a very large number of our students come with a full quarter of AP credits. The next most critical piece of information about students taking AP is that they have taken the AP test, even if they receive a 1 or 2 score. We know a student is participating fully in the AP course when s/he takes the test. A student taking the class without testing offers the least valuable profile for us when we review records.

The next level we would turn to is the student with Honors. We hope students only list the approved Honors courses, but we know that they tend to inflate the number of Honors and include all the ones they have taken. (We try to catch these.) But we have evidence that students who complete AP and the AP test are more likely to succeed at the University. Thus our greatest weight is placed on the AP tests with 3-5 scores, then AP tests with 1-2 scores, then AP classes and Honors classes which are basically treated the same without corroboration of the test.

Please let me know if there is any further information that I can provide you with to clarify our position regarding AP.

Sincerely,
[signed]

Rae Lee Siporin
Director, Undergraduate Admissions and Relations with Schools