To be received and placed on file:

1. The Committee has met frequently during the academic year 2001-2002. It approved (by unanimous consent) three courses (Classics 40: Classical Mythology, English 12R: Introduction to Chicana/o Literature, and English 12B: Introduction to Fiction) as qualifier courses for 2002-2003. It also passed a change in the course description of Basic Writing 1 so that the basis of grading in that offering matched those of other courses for Subject A students.

2. The number of incoming freshmen held for Subject A increased this year, paralleling overall freshman enrollment. Slightly over 50% of enrolled freshmen were held for the requirement. A significant percentage of these were ESL (English as a Second Language) students, though the ESL percentage of Subject A enrollment declined this year for the first time on record. There were 294 students in Basic Writing 3, down from 450 last year and 306 the year before, even though overall freshman enrollment was up significantly. The pass rate of students in Subject A courses in the current year has been comparable to last year’s figure. The pass rate for Basic Writing 3 students in Fall 2001 was 17%, as against 18% in Fall 2000. The pass rates for English 4A, 4B, and 5 for Winter 2002 were 40%, 60%, and 74% respectively, (as compared with 44%, 63%, and 77% in Winter 2001). Approximately 450 students are enrolled in the spring for their third quarter of Subject A instruction (as compared with 415 last spring, when overall freshman enrollment was 7% lower). Of the 1579 freshmen originally held for Subject A in Fall 2000, all but 24 (under 1% of the entire freshman class) eventually passed the requirement. A portion of the students who failed to clear Subject A were already on academic probation and subject to dismissal.

3. The Committee extensively discussed current methods of Subject A instruction on this campus, placement and passing statistics over the last five years, and the need for expanded English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction at UCR. These discussions were largely a response to the Spring 2001 proposal from ASUCR to (i) abolish the required “exit exam” utilized in our Subject A courses, (ii) expand the quality and quantity of ESL instruction on this campus, (iii) mitigate the apparent increase in number of students being lapsed for failure to meet the Subject A requirement, and (iv) restore the funding required to operate the Writing Center. The Committee carefully considered these intertwined issues and reached consensus on these points:

- Given the current curricular structure of BSWT 3 and ENGL 4A, 4B, and 5, the Committee does not see any attractive alternatives to the current exit exam. Although it may be a source of frustration to students, the existing exam provides the greatest fairness and uniformity in evaluating English proficiency as defined by the Subject A requirement. As new models of instruction are explored, however, the Committee recommends that alternatives to the exam should be simultaneously considered.

- The Committee reviewed the “moratorium” on fourth-quarter lapses that was authorized by CPE last spring, under which 47 students in good academic standing were given a fourth quarter (and fifth if needed) to meet the Subject A requirement. The Committee recommends that this temporary exemption to UCR’s academic regulations be extended to the 2002-03 academic year, and that it be evaluated further as new methods of delivering Subject A instruction are considered and adopted.

- When operational, the Writing Resource Center was probably not a central or major component of Subject A instruction because of the extensive tutorial assistance
already provided in basic writing classes. Thus, it seems unlikely that the loss of the Writing Center has contributed significantly to increases in Subject A-related lapses or other difficulties in meeting the requirement. However, a reconstituted Writing Center could play a much more vital role within a different instructional model for Subject A, and could provide valuable assistance with writing to a larger cohort of students. Thus, the Committee continues to recommend restoration of the Writing Resource Center for professional tutoring in writing and reading skills. Riverside is the only UC campus that does not offer such a service.

4. The Committee also discussed at length some possible models for a more formalized program of ESL instruction, but without resolution. A proposal from the English department to replace BSWT 3 with a three-quarter ESL sequence was considered, but serious reservations were expressed about the possibility of awarding up to 30 units of baccalaureate credit for pre-English 1A writing instruction. The Committee felt that the evaluation, development, and institution of an ESL instruction program is a complex issue that is not consistent with CPE’s charge or historic function. Moreover, the breadth of models that need to be considered, especially those involving summer instruction, require consultation beyond the confines of the Senate. The Committee thus recommended to the Chair and to EVC Warren that a jointly appointed committee, analogous to the Subject A Task Force of 1998-1999, be constituted with the specific goal of addressing ESL needs within the larger context of Subject A instruction at UCR. This committee is being assembled and, to help us better understand current pedagogy in ESL instruction, it will include several ESL and basic writing specialists from UC and Cal State campuses to serve as consultants.

5. The Committee further recommends that the campus do everything possible to foreshorten the time students spend in Subject A course work, so that they may proceed into freshman composition courses in a timely manner, and thus develop the proficiency in written English needed for academic success in their other classes (this is an underlying premise of the Subject A requirement). This could include steps to better utilize the summer preceding matriculation, especially for the students with the largest linguistic hurdles to overcome. To achieve this objective, all possible instruments and venues for such instruction should be considered, including but not limited to the Basic Writing Program, Foreign Languages and Linguistics, UCR Summer Sessions, UC Extension, the Learning Center, a revitalized Writing Resource Center, campus housing, and other units as appropriate.