

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PLANNING & RESOURCE ALLOCATION (CAPRA)**Wednesday, April 8, 2015****9:00 – 10:30 am****KL 362****[UCMCROPS/CAPRA1415/Resources](#)****I. Chair's Report – Anne Kelley**

- A. Updates from the April 7 UCPB meeting.
- B. Updates from the March 19 Division Council meeting

II. Consent Calendar**Pg. 1-4****Action requested:** approval of minutes from March 11 meeting.**III. Campus Review Items****A. Public Health CCGA Proposal****Pg. 5-7**

Public Health submitted its PhD program proposal and Senate standing committees were asked to opine. CAPRA was named as a co-lead reviewer with the Graduate Council.

Proposal available at UCMCROPS/CAPRA1415/Resources/Review Items – Campus.

CAPRA lead reviewers have completed their reviews.

Action requested: CAPRA to vote on approving the proposal. Comments will be sent to the Senate chair by April 9.

B. Management of Innovation, Sustainability, and Technology (MIST) CCGA Proposal**Pg. 8-10**

MIST submitted its PhD program proposal and Senate standing committees were asked to opine. CAPRA was named as co-lead reviewer with the Graduate Council.

Proposal available at UCMCROPS/CAPRA1415/Resources/Review Items – Campus.

CAPRA lead reviewers have completed their reviews.

Action requested: CAPRA to vote on approving the proposal. Comments will be sent to the Senate chair by April 10.

C. Revised Economics CCGA Proposal

Pg. 11-44

Economics has submitted a list of revisions in response to Senate standing committees' comments on the original proposal in fall 2014.

Proposal available at UCMCROPS/CAPRA1415/Resources/Review Items – Campus.

CAPRA and COR are asked to review the revisions.

Action requested: CAPRA to review the revisions and vote on approving the proposal. Comments will be sent to the Senate chair by April 22.

IV. Other Business

**Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation
(CAPRA)**

Minutes of Meeting

March 11, 2015

Pursuant to call, the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation met at 9:00 am on March 11, 2015 in Room 362 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Anne Kelley presiding.

Attendees: Anne Kelley, Josh Viers, Cristián Ricci, Marilyn Fogel, Mukesh Singhal, and Daisy Figueroa. Absent: Jan Wallander and Danielle Bermudez.

I. Chair's Report

Chair Kelley updated CAPRA members on the March 3 UCPB meeting:

- There were continued discussions about the distribution of the 3% increase in faculty salaries.
- Three campuses are currently piloting a project in which faculty members are receiving additional salary from their grants through negotiations with their school deans. Those in favor of this mechanism argue that faculty should be given this flexibility with salary; those who oppose point out that such a mechanism means less money in the faculty members' grants to pay for post docs and graduate students and furthermore, faculty should not be allowed disparate salary levels.
- UC Path, the project that was intended to centralize payroll functions, continues to experience challenges in implementation and budget. The roll out date has now been changed to September 1, 2015, at UCOP and implementation at UC Merced will follow.
- Negotiations between the "Committee of Two", Governor Brown and UC President Napolitano, continue and UCOP staff expressed confidence in President Napolitano advocating for the UC. Members of the Governor's staff are visiting the campuses; they visited Merced last week but faculty were not notified and therefore did not have the opportunity to meet with them.

II. Vice Chair's Report

Vice Chair Viers updated the CAPRA members on the March 5 meeting of the Period Review Oversight Committee (PROC) on which he serves as the CAPRA representative:

- Much of the meeting focused on periodic reviews with discussion on draft principles for reviews.
- The committee proposed formulating a campus working group on assessment surveys in an attempt to improve response rates.
- The periodic review schedule for administrative units is to be reevaluated in the interest of work load balancing.
- Annual PLO reports from the schools are often submitted past the deadline and the committee focused on ways to improve the situation.
- Some PLO reports include mention by the school deans of additional faculty FTE lines needed to overcome deficiencies. Vice Chair Viers suggested to PROC that CAPRA should review such mentions for AY 15-16.
- PROC formally requested a member of CAPRA to serve on a proposed ad hoc committee that will evaluate internal assessments for five previously-reviewed administrative units.

ACTION: CAPRA member Singhal will serve as the committee's representative to the PROC ad hoc committee and requests to serve as the reviewer for the IT and Business & Administrative Services assessments. Committee analyst will inform the PROC staff and will confirm which units' assessments the ad hoc committee will review.

III. Consent Calendar

ACTION: The February 11, 2015 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

IV. Project 2020 Pre-RFP Team Meetings

Division Council and CAPRA members continue to meet with the pre-RFP developer teams who are competing for the Project 2020 bid. A set of talking points developed by the faculty are being used as a guideline in each team meeting. While faculty members are allowed to provide input on their academic space needs, the final decision is made by the administration. Following the meeting with the third and final team, the Division Council and CAPRA members will be invited to debriefing sessions.

V. Foundational FTE Allocation Request

The Provost/EVC has not yet responded to CAPRA's memo of February 18 which included a proposed statement of process and criteria for the evaluation of foundational FTE requests. The request suggested a deadline of April 15 for schools to submit their FTE requests which is no longer feasible. CAPRA has also not heard updates on the strategic academic focusing process.

CAPRA members discussed sending another communication to the Provost/EVC that requests the following information: since CAPRA now assumes there will be no new hires for next year, the committee requests an update on the status of the carry over FTE lines from the previous year and the anticipated student-to-faculty ratio for AY 15-16.

ACTION: CAPRA to submit the request to the Provost/EVC.

VI. Campus Review Items

Prior to this meeting, CAPRA members received the Public Health CCGA proposal and the Global Arts Studies major proposal. CAPRA was identified as a co-lead reviewer on both items.

Two CAPRA members were assigned to review each proposal. As CAPRA's next meeting is not until April 8 due to spring break, committee members will review and discuss the proposals via email.

ACTION: The lead reviewers of both proposals will submit their reviews to the committee as a whole by March 30. The committee will discuss and vote on the proposals via email and inform the Senate chair by the April deadlines.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 am.

Attest:

Anne Kelley, CAPRA Chair

Minutes taken by: Simrin Takhar, Senate Analyst

DRAFT

REVIEWER 1

Review of Public Health Ph.D. program at UC Merced: 1 April 2015

The recent (January 2015) proposal to create a graduate program in Public Health is outlined extensively in a 118-page document prepared by interested faculty. It is well-written and well reasoned. I was impressed by how the faculty assembled all of the parts of a graduate program and fit it so well with existing faculty. With the creation of an undergraduate major (B.A.) in public health, the proposed Ph.D. program dovetails nicely.

Costs to have a public health program are real, but somewhat minimal for a campus of our size. Library access to important journal subscriptions will need to increase by \$45,000-50,000 for the next several years. Support for graduate students will come primarily through grants and TA positions. Given the track records of the faculty involved in the graduate program, this appears to be completely reasonable. As for space on campus, apparently faculty and students in public health do not need extensive (or much) wet laboratory space and that space for the program exists with rooms available in SSM and soon to be completed COB2.

The program expects to admit about 7 grad students per year. I think that the faculty will have a fairly easy time finding 7 excellent graduate students given the interest in the Central Valley on public health. Currently, UCM has a very large population of Biology majors with Human Biology as an emphasis track. Most of these Human Biology majors will need to broaden their horizons about the future of their health careers, and the Public Health graduate program is an excellent way to bring that about.

One concern I had was the space for graduate students. The proposal mentioned four cubicles were available for the current eight graduate students. Does one cubicle hold more than one student? Where would the additional 7 students per year be given office space? Also, the proposal mentioned housing faculty and students at Castle research facility. This is a untenable idea, because the Castle building is too isolated physically and intellectually from students and the main campus. Castle is a temporary solution to a serious campus problem, but should not be considered for solving either short or long term academic space problems. Another space concern deals with having sensitive data in unlocked rooms. The document refers to a secure room for data (SSM 344). If graduate students are in cubicles and they are working on research projects, will these cubicles be appropriate for working with public health information? Can they be locked?

In summary, this proposal is well done and I fully support its implementation at UC Merced.

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CAPRA Public Health Review #2:

The proponents describe the rationale and workplan to develop a Ph.D. in Public Health at UC Merced. The proposed initial focus area would be in Prevention Sciences, which has come competitive advantage given the regional setting of UC Merced. Specifically, the proposal would train doctoral students to conduct research aimed at preventing chronic and infectious diseases but with an explicit focus on rural, underserved, disadvantaged, ethnically diverse populations and communities. A strength of the proposal is its focus on positioning UC Merced to conduct transdisciplinary research and teaching and approaching public health instruction as an explicit charge to train students to conduct and disseminate their research to diverse groups, including community members and organizations, healthcare providers, and policy makers.

Fundamentally, there is no doubting the need for such a program. Indeed, the proponents opening statements are quite profound:

“Merced was chosen as the site of the latest University of California campus in part due to the recognition of the high levels of poverty and health disparities that exist in the SJV, a region comparable to the poorest parts of Appalachia. The region includes the urban center of Fresno, with more pockets of intense poverty than any other U.S. city, and also low-wage farm and service-related regions with significant ethnically diverse communities. The eight counties in the SJV rank among the lowest in the state in both health outcomes (mortality and morbidity) and the factors that contribute to health (social and economic factors, and physical environment).”

The program aims to admit cohorts of seven students annually, drawing largely from existing MPH programs administered by CSU campuses in the region. It is mentioned that in time and internal MSPH program may be proposed for UC Merced.

Strengths:

There are a number of strengths identified in the proposal leading to long term success, but the following were found to be compelling and indicative of short term success:

- Coordination with the CSU Fresno MPH program should provide a reliable pipeline for students.
- The addition of Prof. Burke (UCSF) starting July 2015 as a strategic hire.
- Well articulate course of study.

General Review Concerns:

The transdisciplinary and translational aspects on the program are well conceived; however, it currently relies on HSRI, the Blum Center, and ReCESS to achieve these aims. While it is hopeful that these entities remain intact (and well-funded) going forward, there is no guarantee. The concern: how sustainable is the transdisciplinary and translational research if based on ORUs/CRUs/labs/projects? Further, in the proposal it states: “In addition, two other research institutes - the Blum Center and the Resource Center for Community Engaged Scholarship (ReCESS) - actively support community members and train faculty to work with community partners to

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develop research questions, implement studies, and disseminate research results to change practice and behavior.” In fact, the Blum Center is not yet a recognized CRU, rather it is a funded project. It is not clear if ReCESS has CRU standing, or rather is formally a research lab.

The “Prevention Sciences” platform as proposed includes four of five core areas of public health (i.e., health services research and policy; social and behavioral health, epidemiology, and environmental health), excluding biostatistics. (Note, with some coordination, the Applied Mathematics faculty could add to the biostatistics area.) The concern: does UC Merced really have the depth in each of these areas?

Some cross-over to other UC Merced programs is listed; however, there is little mention of the cross-over to data analytics (see note about Applied Mathematics) as part of SAFI. Further, CITRIS – a multi-campus research unit – has an explicit focal area of health and health analytics. While its focus on information technology solutions to societal problems, certainly the explosion of telehealth and “big data” and analytics in health and epidemiology would have some direct points of engagement. The concern: are there other areas identified in SAFI with cross-over contribution to Public Health?

It appears that some 26 courses were listed as PH graduate courses. It is not clear if those are cross-listed with other groups, but with only ~8 FTEs forming the core faculty it appears unbalanced. The schematic showing annual and occasional courses is fully parsed with teaching assignments, but it is not clear how sustainable this load will be in the future. Presumably more faculty will join, but initial instruction will fall to the core. The concern: can PH faculty maintain this teaching load?

Financial Concerns for CAPRA:

Startup packages for new PH faculty -- unknown

New hire to teach 3 course load – presumably coverable

(Lecturer) Staff to teach PH undergraduate courses – presumably covered/coverable

Library Acquisitions – potentially substantial

Computing Costs – negligible

Graduate Student funding – non-negligible, but highly fundable

Space requirements and fulfillment – does not appear to be adequate resolution in proposal

Recommendation: Approve with request for better articulation of space needs and resolution.

REVIEWER 1

CAPRA review of proposed Ph.D. program in Management of Innovation, Sustainability, and Technology (MIST)

UC Merced currently has an undergraduate major in Management, but no graduate program. This is a proposal to establish a stand-alone, CCGA-approved Ph.D. program in Management of Innovation, Sustainability, and Technology. If approved, this would be (I believe) the first graduate program at UCM to be established from the start as a fully approved degree program without first being, or being part of, an emphasis area within the original umbrella IGP graduate program. The proposal consistently describes the program as “cross-functional” without ever defining what that means. The stated goal is to develop “managers and leaders with deep knowledge in their areas of expertise, combined with a sound foundation of management skills”. The program is expected to draw on faculty from other disciplines in engineering, science, and social sciences as well as dedicated management faculty, and will be administered through the School of Engineering.

The academic program as envisioned seems extremely broad and not very well defined. Four broad strategic areas are listed: Analytics, Networks for Value Creation, Technology Management, and Resource Management. The initial group of faculty span a very wide range of disciplines in SSHA, SoE, and SNS, and the stated research priorities focus on issues local to the Central Valley.

It is expected that most of the teaching in the MIST program will be provided by Management faculty. Affiliated faculty from other disciplines will presumably contribute to the research mission of the program but the proposal indicates that relatively little teaching will be expected from them. This is only reasonable, as these faculty already belong to other graduate and undergraduate programs where their teaching is needed. Table 1 of the proposal lists the number of ladder-rank faculty as 6 in the opening year of the program (2016-2017) and 16 by 2022-2023, although the five-year teaching plan in Table 11 indicates that the required core courses could be delivered by the faculty currently in the program and currently being searched (six total). Management faculty are extremely expensive in terms of salary and benefits, although they have minimal requirements for space and startup. Systemwide, the average off-scale amount for faculty in business and management is a whopping \$105,561 compared to \$23,738 for all disciplines combined. These are recurring annual costs, unlike startup, and suggest that this would be quite an expensive graduate program to support if significant expansion of the faculty were required. Of course, this does not consider the grant funds and gifts that these faculty may bring, an important consideration.

The proposal is not very explicit about how students will be supported. Section 7 states that “Ph.D. students will be supported through a combination of teaching assistantships (TAs), merit- or need-based scholarships and fellowships, and graduate student research assistantships (GSRs) on faculty grants.” There is also reference to “the fee structure of the program”, but as far as I can tell this program is not being proposed as a self-supporting program or one that will charge supplemental tuition. I do not know how common it is for faculty in this field to have research grants that support GSRs. We are also told nothing about the courses for which the students in this program would serve as TAs, how many TA positions will be available, and where the TAs for these courses are currently coming from (would the new MIST graduate students be competing with qualified graduate students from existing

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programs for available TA slots?). The plan is admit four students in 2016-2017 and to have the program grow to a total of 19 students by 2022-2023, with a student to faculty ratio only slightly greater than one. While this means that the number of students who will have to be supported, through TAs or otherwise, will be fairly small, the low student to faculty ratio also makes this an expensive program.

The program will require some additional library resources, estimated at about \$25,000/year. This is small compared with the cost of a new faculty line, but it does constitute an additional expense of offering the program.

As the proposal states, programs in management have been part of the campus's strategic plans since its inception. CAPRA has no way of knowing whether this is a priority of the current administration and how many, if any, new faculty lines in management will be released in the near future. Without additional faculty, it appears that offering the program will be possible but having it thrive seems unlikely. It would seem unwise to initiate a completely new graduate program without a clear indication of support from the administration in the form of commitments to additional faculty positions in this field. I recommend that this proposal be held until the current faculty hiring freeze is lifted and the outcome of Strategic Academic Focusing is known.

CAPRA review of the proposed

“Graduate program in Management of Innovation, Sustainability, and Technology (MIST)”

This is a proposal to establish a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree program in Management of Innovation, Sustainability, and Technology (MIST) at the UC, Merced. The UC Merced currently has an undergraduate major in Management, but it has no graduate program in Management. The goal of the new program is to “develop an exemplary cross-functional program of research and education, addressing the need for developing managers and leaders with deep knowledge in their areas of expertise, combined with a sound foundation of management skills”. “Cross-functional” is not defined, but I assume it to largely mean interdisciplinary. Missions and goals of the program should help solve the problems of the Central Valley.

The program is cross-functional and besides the management faculty, it will draw on faculty from a wide range of disciplines on the campus. Most of the teaching in the MIST program will be done by Management faculty and Core/Affiliated faculty from other disciplines will do relatively little teaching. Interestingly, it will be administered through the School of Engineering. MIST will build on the existing faculty and campus strengths, like services, logistics, analytics, cognition, health, the environment, and technology, and will target growth in four strategic areas, namely, Analytics, Networks for Value Creation, Technology Management, and Resource Management.

Table 1 states that the number of ladder-rank faculty in the opening year of the program (2016-2017) will be 6 and it will rise to 16 by 2022-2023. The proposal states “Through 2022, we expect the campus to add approximately two ladder rank faculty in areas broadly related to management each year.” Management faculty are the most expensive (after faculty in a medical school) in terms of salary. Clearly, this will be an extremely expensive graduate program to start and support. However, in terms of space, it should not pose a big burden. However, the program will require additional library resources of about \$25,000/year.

The program plans to admit four Ph.D. students in 2016-2017 and will grow to a total of 19 students by 2022-2023. The proposal is not very clear about how these students will be supported. The proposal states that Ph.D. students will be supported through a combination of teaching assistantships (TAs), merit- or need-based scholarships and fellowships, and graduate student research assistantships (GSRs) on faculty grants. It is not very common for faculty in this field to have research grants to support GSRs. From the proposal, it is not clear how many TA positions will be available, and where these TA lines will come from. To support a large number of TAs, there should be a large number of undergraduate majors and offered courses.

Although a program in management has been a part of the campus’s strategic plans, very high faculty salaries and low student to faculty ratio will make this an extremely expensive program to sustain. Current programs on the campus are struggling to grow in the midst of the current faculty hiring freeze and it may not be wise to start this new expensive graduate program unless there is a clear indication that the administration will commit additional faculty lines to it. I think it will be prudent to put it off until the dust settles rather than starting a starving program.



ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION
COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PLANNING AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION
ANNE KELLEY, CHAIR
amkelley@ucmerced.edu

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED
5200 NORTH LAKE ROAD
MERCED, CA 95344
(209) 228-4369; fax (209) 228-7955

October 1, 2014

To: Jian-Qiao Sun, Chair, Division Council

From: Anne Kelley, Chair, Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation *Anne Kelley*
(CAPRA)

Re: Economics PhD Proposal

CAPRA reviewed the Economics PhD proposal and deemed the resources requirements to be minimal. As such, CAPRA voted to recommend the proposal's approval, but offers the following comments with two detailed reviews appended that identify issues that are likely to come up upon further review. The group is strongly encouraged to improve upon these issues:

- regarding Table 1, perhaps a better estimate of TA needs can be obtained by looking at how many TAs are currently required to serve the existing student population in these majors and then simply scaling the numbers.
- page 4 lists current graduate programs but omits several including Physics and Chemistry & Chemical Biology. The proposal should either list all of the existing programs or else name only those with which it expects to have particular synergy.
- the projections for growth to 16 by 2020 appear vastly optimistic given known faculty allocation plans. There is no recruitment during the current AY for new Economics faculty to start AY 2015/16. It appears that a viable program can be achieved with fewer additional faculty, and the proposal might be strengthened by pointing this out.
- basing faculty line allocations on past processes does not seem feasible given the Strategic Academic Focusing process to be implemented for the rest of the decade.
- Will the size and quality of the applicant pool be adequate to admit ten new Ph.D. students per year in the first and third years of the program? What is the minimum practical cohort size if the program cannot achieve 10 PhD students?
- given that the proposal projects a growth in international students, the reliance on non-resident tuition (NRT) support needs further elaboration. Although currently NRT is paid for all Ph.D.

students supported by internal funds, it is not clear that this will continue to be the case if there is rapid growth of the international graduate student population.

cc: CAPRA Members
DivCo Members
Senate office

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CAPRA review of Economics graduate group proposal

This is a proposal to initiate a graduate program in Economics. It is a new program not originating as an IGP emphasis. The program identifies eight ladder rank faculty (including one arriving in January 2015) as core economics faculty and ten additional faculty who qualify as affiliate members. The proposal is to admit about ten students in 2016, skip a year, admit another ten in 2018, skip another year, and then begin admitting about ten per year on an annual basis. This seems a bit odd from the standpoint of program continuity but it probably does facilitate offering the required graduate courses with a small faculty at the outset.

Relative to most graduate programs, Economics requires relatively few resources in terms of space and infrastructure. The main resource requirement is graduate student support. Table 1 lists projected economics TA needs based on projected numbers of students in the Economics and Management and Business Economics majors and shows that it should be possible to support essentially all of the students in the program with TAs. However, these numbers are “based on UC guidelines of one 50% TAship for each 22 undergraduate students”. The number of TAs required depends on the types of courses offered in the major and the campus policy for TA workload. Since both of these majors currently exist, wouldn't a better estimate of TA needs be obtained by looking at how many TAs are currently required to serve the existing student population in these majors and then simply scaling the numbers? I would certainly hope that some of the Economics graduate students would be supported by faculty research grants, although the proposal, perhaps wisely, does not rely on that. The proposal also notes that two additional labs and additional graduate student workspace will be required to administer this program. It is not clear where this space will be found. However, any new or growing graduate program will require some additional space and the needs of this program are relatively modest.

The other main resource requirement is faculty time to offer the graduate courses. Page 39 of the proposal refers to “the normal Economics teaching load of one undergraduate courses (*sic*) per year and one graduate course per year”. Since UC Merced does not yet have a graduate program in Economics, “normal” in this context presumably refers to the norm at other research universities. It is not clear to me whether having the Economics faculty doing half their teaching in the graduate program will excessively impact the existing undergraduate programs in Economics and Management. Apparently this is not viewed as a major problem since the SSHA Dean has approved the proposal.

I also note that the creation of the graduate program in Economics is expected to be accompanied by the creation of a new Economics bylaw unit. While it is certainly possible to run a graduate program that draws its core faculty either from multiple bylaw units or from a subset of the faculty of a large bylaw unit, in a well defined discipline such as economics it makes sense for the two to overlap such that they emulate a normal department as much as possible.

There is one error that should be corrected before the proposal moves on. Page 4 lists current graduate programs but omits several including Physics and Chemistry & Chemical Biology. The proposal should either list all of the existing programs or else name only those with which it expects to have particular synergy.

Economics PhD Program Proposal Review

Overall this is a proposal for a well-needed graduate program that will benefit UC Merced. It is imperative that UC Merced build out PhD programs to achieve the status as a true research university. It is eminently reasonable that this include a PhD program in Economics given the faculty already on board and expected demands and opportunities. The four areas selected as the foci of the program appear good, matching faculty expertise, growth potential, synergies on campus, and regional needs. On the whole, I am supportive of the development of this PhD program.

However, there are some concerns with the proposal as it currently stands relevant to academic planning and resource allocation.

Whereas this program can start with current faculty of 8 (expected January 2015), much like was achieved for example with Psychological Sciences and being proposed for Sociology and Political Sciences, the projections for growth to 16 by 2020 appear vastly optimistic given known faculty allocation plans. First, to my knowledge there is no recruitment during the current AY for new Economics faculty to start AY 2015/16. Therefore, acquiring 3 new lines to recruit to start AY 2016/17, as projected in this proposal, appears quite unreasonable.

Further, basing faculty line allocations on past processes seems not at all useful given the Strategic Academic Focusing process to be implemented for the rest of the decade. Whether Economics will be the beneficiary of additional resources from SAF is unknown at present. If not, it appears unlikely Economics, or any non-selected disciplines, will have a growth of 1 faculty per year. Economics would do well to project a future based on the possibility that the allocation may be less, quite possibly markedly less, than the projected more than 1 per year. Indeed the Dean's letter states this caveat to the projections inherent in this proposal. At the same time, the program can be quite viable without the overly optimistic projected faculty growth. It would do well to reflect this ability to leave no doubt about that.

Further to the projected growth of faculty, the desired size of the faculty is in part defended as the smallest in the UC system. The proposal makes the point that the projected size in 2020 will still be 2 less than the next largest program in the UC, that being UCR. However, UCR has an UG enrollment currently over 18,000, which is about 2 times larger than UCM projected UG enrollment in 2020. It can therefore generate a much larger credit production that supports its faculty size in Economics. This comparison to UCR (or any other UC campus) appears not to be reasonable.

Another concern is the quite low projected number of graduate students that will be enrolled in the Economics PhD program given the projected faculty. The proposal states as the aim about 2 graduate students per faculty. This is despite assertions that PhD training in Economics remains popular throughout the UC System as well as nationwide. Given the need at UC Merced to grow graduate student enrollment to 10% by 2020, and to increase the awarding of PhDs, all approved programs will need to contribute substantially more than this program projects, on the order of 3-4 per faculty. Or is there some unique argument that research training in Economics is so demanding on faculty that they can only supervise two graduate students at any one time?

The frequency of course offerings lists most courses as "annual." But given the enrollment of students every two years for most of this decade, this seems not to represent reality. Furthermore some courses are listed as every 2-3 years. Yet it seems impossible for students to meet their major and minor requirements in a timely manner, as suggested in the sample curriculum plan, if courses are offered any less than every 2 years. The table of Sample Teaching Grid moreover is based on assumptions that do

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not correspond well to previous descriptions of planned roll out of program over the next 5 years. The various resource-related plans in this proposal need to be internally consistent and based on the same assumptions.

It is unclear how ECON 209 (Math for Economists) will be offered exactly. It states that students will enroll prior to the Fall semester, which seems unusual. What resource implications will this unusual arrangement have? For example, will this require payment to faculty to teach outside of regular semester?

The new CAO building is described to be open in fall 2015, but it is not scheduled to open until fall 2016.

The reliance on NRT support needs further elaboration given the expected enrollment of 50% international students.

Graduate Council Comments

Comment 1: The executive summary is missing and should be written for a general academic audience, i.e. a faculty reviewer who does not necessarily have expertise in the specific field.

Response: We have added an Executive Summary.

Comment 2: Reviewers are unanimous in their assessment that projections for faculty growth in the short-term are unreasonable, since these projections are based on unusual recent faculty growth in ECON to stabilize the program and fail to acknowledge the current embargo on faculty hiring for AY 2014-15. In addition, the proposal narrative overstates the level of FTE support indicated by the SSHA Dean, and also contradicts the Dean's contention that the graduate program can be initiated with only the eight current faculty lines. Thus, the discussion of both the projections and the minimum number of faculty for launch must be revised.

Response: Our target of having 11 faculty by 2016-17 stems directly from the letter provided by Dean Aldenderfer. In this document he stated that it was reasonable to expect that we would be at 11 faculty by the Fall of 2016 and 16 faculty by 2020. If we consider the projected growth for the institution and assume a uniform distribution in growth across disciplines we would be at 14 by 2020. We completely understand GC's concern regarding our projections but it is not possible for the Dean to commit lines to our program. Therefore, we are left to determine what is an acceptable level of growth given that we currently have a freeze on hiring. For the purposes of the proposal, and to be conservative regarding our projected growth, we have elected to reduce the projected growth to only one new faculty line a year. This seems exceptionally reasonable given the projected growth in the campus at large and still places us one faculty member less than what would be expected if the growth is uniformly distributed across all disciplines at UCM. Furthermore, this delays our projected growth to 16 faculty to the 2023-24 academic year (see revised Table 1). We have also pointed out in the proposal that we are adding two additional LPSOE lines this year (approved by the Provost) to facilitate the execution of our undergraduate program. This further strengthens our ability to execute the graduate program with existing faculty.

Comment 3: The proposal makes no reference to the Social Science IIGP and how ECON fit within this group. While we understand that this is likely because there are no current students and no new students will be accepted, this is important history on graduate ECON at UC Merced that bears both explanation (including, perhaps, why it was or was not a success, how the new program compares) and is necessary background/context for some allusions in the text. Inclusion of this information is also critical to expedited WASC approval of the proposed program (see, in particular, comments from ALO Martin).

Response: We have added this information to our graduate proposal (see section 1.3) and pointed out the weaknesses of the Social Science IIGP and the reasons why we were not able to effectively utilize this program for our graduate students.

Comment 4: The proposal is inconsistent with respect to programmatic and faculty support for non-academic careers (e.g., this is specifically called out as a goal early on in the proposal, but subsequent sections either ignore this altogether or are presented in

such a way that such commitment on the part of the program appears very weak). Since this may be considered an important distinction of the program within the system (given the focus on “new” economics and relevance to policy), such mixed messages must be resolved.

Response: The training for students who wish to pursue non-academic careers is not different from those who wish to pursue an academic appointment. Therefore, the programmatic and faculty support required to train students for either appointments does not need to be differentiated. Our focus on “new economics” is referencing our desire to train students who wish to do applied research in areas that will inform policy. This may seem to imply that we are focusing on training students for non-academic careers, but that is not true. The fields we have selected to focus on are all applied fields in high demand (see job market demand section of proposal). We have added some additional language to the proposal to point out the academic and non-academic expectations for our students and to better highlight our programmatic focus.

Comment 5: Related to #2, the obvious reliance on lecturers to staff core undergraduate courses in ECON—thereby freeing up ECON faculty to teach in the graduate program — is troubling. This suggests that the program is not self-sufficient and sacrifices the undergraduate program to initiate the graduate program. The teaching rotation should clearly distinguish ladder-rank faculty (core and affiliate), LPSOE/LSOE, and Unit 18 lecturers so reviewers can accurately assess the ability of the ECON faculty to deliver both programs and the potential impact on both graduate and undergraduate programs in ECON. As part of these revisions, it is recommended that the rotation be revised so that core courses are taught every year so students receive the necessary foundation for the first-year exam and that elective courses are offered at least every other year rather than every 2-3 years so students can progress through the program in a timely manner.

Response: Historically the ECON program has relied on lecturers to provide the undergraduate program. This is because we have had very few faculty in economics at UC Merced. The number was as low as 2 faculty in the Fall of 2013. We currently have 8 research faculty and 1 LPSOE and are adding two additional LPSOEs this academic year. This will bring us up to 8 research faculty and 3 LPSOEs by next year. This is a sufficient level of permanent staffing to meet the needs of our undergraduate program. Although we will still be using a few lecturers to provide a few of our courses, our reliance on these resources is substantially lower than before. Furthermore, in the near future additional hires will be made in MGMT (3 faculty in the near term) that will allow us to further reduce our reliance on lecturers as a majority of our lecturers moving forward are required to facilitate the MGMT undergraduate program. However, to date very few resources have been allocated to this program (3 research faculty who are not part of the Economics Graduate Group). The rotation has been altered so that we offer the core courses every year in the fourth year of the graduate program and so that field courses are offered every 1 to 2 years at this point in time. For the first four years the core will only be offered every other year and in the other years the field courses will be offered. The main reason we have elected to start the program this way is to ensure that we get the highest quality graduate students possible and to not overburden our existing faculty as our faculty grows over the coming years.

Comment 6: Many reviewers expressed concern about the numerous course and special requirements such as the 2nd and 3rd year papers since there is no clear indication regarding how and when some of this work will be accomplished. In discussion,

some GC members thought this might be addressed in part through comparison with (or letters of support from) other ECON graduate programs in the UC system to demonstrate that such requirements are the norm for the discipline (if that is indeed the case), although more detail is necessary about the 2nd and 3rd year papers in particular, including faculty advising or mentorship of students for such tasks. Clarification on what is meant by active engagement is needed as it implies internships or some other real-world experience.

Response: We decided to remove the 2nd year paper requirement in the proposal and focus on the 3rd year paper requirement. The 3rd year paper is a common requirement in many economics graduate programs and it was our intention to try and get them involved in research a bit earlier. However, by having the students complete their field course work in their second year this will actually accelerate the process as well. In addition, we have added some clarifying language in the document to better describe the nature of the student and faculty interaction expectations. We did not send the proposal out to other graduate programs in the UC at this time, but we will be doing so after it has gone through internal review.

Comment 7: Similarly, several reviewers expressed concern about the teaching requirement (see GC and Dean Zatz comments) for multiple reasons. First, the relevance of this requirement to students anticipating non-academic careers is unclear. Second, this requirement may preclude students from pursuing external sources of funding such as NSF graduate fellowships. Third, the notation that graduate students will be encouraged to teach their own upper division courses is contrary to UC systemwide policies for graduate Teaching Fellows, which allow such teaching only by special permission. Such teaching may also have implications for graduate student funding, since Teaching Fellows are covered under collective bargaining agreements. Finally, GC is concerned that the teaching requirement is being used to compensate for the shift in emphasis to graduate teaching by ladder-rank faculty, and this raises a further red flag with respect to necessary FTE to initiate and sustain the program.

Response: We have removed the requirement that our students have to teach, but we have retained the requirement that they serve as a TA for at least two semesters before graduating. This will be very easy for them to achieve because the dominant form of funding for Ph.D. programs in economics is TAs (we surveyed the other graduate programs in the UC System). As far as encouraging our graduate students to teach this is a direct response to economics market and not an effort to compensate for the shift in emphasis to graduate teaching by ladder-rank faculty. Currently, the market for economists rewards those who have done two things: (1) publish a paper before graduating, and (2) have teaching experience – sole instruction. The later is precisely why we want to be able to encourage students to teach. If they are discouraged from doing so this will only hinder their job prospects. This said, we were not aware of how difficult it is for our students to acquire this experience. Therefore, we have changed the language in the proposal to better reflect what we are able to have our students take on as graduate students. With regard to those students who are going to be seeking a non-academic position we still feel that is necessary for them to serve as TA before earning their Ph.D.. Being a TA develops a student's ability to articulate economic concepts to a broader audience, which will also serve them well in a non-academic position. As far as applying for graduate fellowships, this is not the norm in economics and very few students apply for funding. The standard model in economics within the United States is that students receive TAs or RAs that are funded by the department or the

university. In our survey of other graduate programs greater than 90% of the students are funded using internal (university-level) funds.

Comment 8: While reviewers were pleased to see acknowledgement of potential interdisciplinarity, many expressed concerns about the feasibility of students taking courses outside the ECON program to enhance an interdisciplinary perspective (e.g., see COR comments). ECON is encouraged to consider this issue in greater detail in the proposal (e.g., prerequisites for non-program courses, frequency of non-program course offerings, ability to take non-program courses given the high program course load) so that this option is realistically assessed and presented.

Response: Our discussion regarding the interdisciplinary nature of the program was supposed to reflect the fact that the creation of our program complements the existing and upcoming graduate programs at UC Merced. We have changed the language in the proposal to point this out. It was not our intention to require students to conduct interdisciplinary research, but to create some flexibility in the program so that if a student wanted to take a course in another discipline and they met the course requirements to enroll they could take the course. The suitability of the course is to be determined by the Graduate Director in consultation with the graduate student. Therefore, we do not see the need to more precisely outline the feasibility of our students enrolling in courses outside of economics because the completion of their degree does not rest on them being able to take courses outside of economics. We have highlighted that this is an option and by no means a requirement in the program within the document. All we wished to do was introduce some flexibility in the program to allow for interdisciplinary study if the graduate student wishes to do so. This said, many of the topics that economists research today are directly related to other disciplines (i.e., anthropology, biology, engineering, political science, public health, sociology, etc..) so we believe it is necessary for a graduate programming training economists today to have the flexibility for students to enroll in these courses when appropriate.

Comment 9: Reference to the undergraduate program in ECON and, especially, the undergraduate program in Management should be removed from the proposal. Undergraduate teaching (not number of majors in ECON or in programs that ECON supports through undergraduate courses) need only be referenced when (a) demonstrating that affiliated faculty can fulfill their teaching duties at both the graduate and undergraduate levels (i.e., Section 1.4), and (b) projecting how many TA will be needed and how this relates to graduate student funding, With respect to the latter, several reviewers expressed concerns about how TA needs were determined (see particularly Dean Zatz and CAPRA comments).

Response: We have removed the inappropriate references to our undergraduate programs in ECON and MGMT and retained them in the document where appropriate. With regard to the TAship needs and the issues raised, we have elected to use the same TAship calculations used in the other social science proposals (i.e.. Political Science) for the reasons that are highlighted in our response to Dean Zatz and CAPRA. It is not possible for us to look at our historical need for TAs because our program has been operating with very few resources (as low as 2 faculty in the Fall of 2013!) and it is only now that we are able to start to think about our needs for TA needs. In fact, we are currently conducting a wholesale evaluation of our undergraduate program and revisions to nearly all of our undergraduate CRFs because we now have sufficient resources (8 research faculty; 1 LPSOE and hiring 2 LPSOEs this year). We are hoping that the

changes to our undergraduate program will companion the launch of our graduate program.

Comment 10: The Student Demand section would benefit from a UC-specific analysis (e.g., applications vs. admitted, etc.) as well as evidence that the four concentrations are in demand (see Dean Zatz and COR comments). As per Point #6 above, mention of the undergraduate programs in ECON and Management also should be removed from this section.

Response: We conducted a survey of the other graduate programs to learn more about the demand for graduate studies in economics and also conducted some research on the importance of our selected fields. This information is contained in the revised proposal. We have also removed the inappropriate references to undergraduate programs.

Comment 11: Several reviewers (e.g., CAPRA, Dean Zatz, Provost/EVC) expressed concern about the proposed admissions strategy for the early years of the program (i.e., every other year admissions), the plan to recruit students, and the low faculty to student ratio). The ECON faculty are encouraged to reassess the admissions and student growth plan carefully in light of these comments and develop more realistic projections for faculty growth (see Point #2).

Response: We have altered our projections for faculty growth substantially and have chosen a more conservative path than that outlined in our letter of support from Dean Aldenderfer. Our faculty growth projections are lower than if all future hires were uniformly distributed across the university. Therefore, we believe that our estimates are highly conservative. We have also increased our anticipated enrollment by 20% and we now have a projected faculty to student ratio that is more in line with the ratios observed at the other UC campuses when our program approaches a steady-state.

Comment 12: GC and Dean Zatz both expressed significant concerns about the advising burden placed on the Graduate Group Chair during the first two years of residency by students under the current plan. Both recommend distribution of advising more fully among the faculty to ease this burden and also provide a structure that will allow the Graduate Group chair to more effectively deal with potential student grievances and conflicts with their advisor (i.e., having the Graduate Group Chair as advisor sets up a conflict of interest).

Response: We have changed the document so that the Graduate Group Chair serves as the faculty advisor for all students in only the first year of the program. After this time period regular faculty advisor assignments are implemented. Given that all graduate students will take the exact same courses in the first year and they have the same metric for performance (i.e., course grades, Comprehensive Exam) this should not be an exorbitant burden for the Graduate Group Chair. This should also preserve the Graduate Group Chairs ability to more effectively deal with potential student grievances and conflicts with their advisor.

Comment 13: Appendix F (Bylaw 55 unit proposal) should be removed from the document (e.g., see GC and CRE comments)

Response: We have removed Appendix F (Bylaw 55 unit proposal) from the document.

Specific Review Comments (Pre-Review – CCGA Proposal Format Requirements)

Comment: There is no executive summary in the proposal.

Response: We have added an Executive Summary to the proposal.

Comment: Active engagement comment (pg. 1): This implies internships or some other real-world experience. Is this an accurate interpretation? Please clarify what is meant by "active engagement."

Response: This statement was not used to invoke an internship. It was used to point out that the students will be conducting applied and policy relevant research. This has been clarified in the document.

Comment: Recruitment of three faculty members in the coming academic year is a little bit over optimistic with the current embargo on faculty hiring. Should probably include mention of IIGP SS ECON track here. The dean's letter says nothing about "priority" hiring in ECON (i.e., over other disciplines), only his "continued support" for hiring in ECON.

Table 1: Eleven faculty for 2016-17 is not reasonable given no hiring in AY 14-15 (unless there is a holdover FTE from last year, which should then be identified).

p.3 Concerns about: Graduate recruitment every other year; the program cannot develop appropriate momentum. Faculty:grad ratio is and is intended to be substantially below mean target for university. In contrast, the program at UCR achieves 1:3 (UCM's target). This shortfall may be offset if students in the program graduate on average faster.

p.5 (Section 1.5) Relationship to (distinction from) other UC Economics programs is perhaps weak. Emphasize novel role within strategic vision? Info on undergraduate programs in ECON and (especially) Management needs to be removed – should highlight relationship to other grad programs

Response: The IGP discussion has been added to section 1.3. Our target of having 11 research faculty by 2016-17 stems directly from the letter provided by Dean Aldenderfer. In this document he stated that it was reasonable to expect that we would be at 11 research faculty by the Fall of 2016 and 16 research faculty by 2020. If we consider the projected growth for the institution and assume a uniform distribution in growth across disciplines we would be at 14 by 2020. We completely understand GC's concern regarding our projections but it is not possible for the Dean to commit lines to our program. Therefore, we are left to determine what is an acceptable level of growth given that we currently have a freeze on hiring. For the purposes of the proposal, and to be conservative regarding our projected growth, we have elected to reduce the projected growth to only one new faculty line a year. This seems exceptionally reasonable given the projected growth in the campus at large and still places us one faculty member less than what would be expected if the growth is uniformly distributed across all disciplines at UCM. Furthermore, this delays our projected growth to 16 research faculty to the 2023-24 academic year (see revised Table 1). As far as the targeted faculty/grad ratio, we have increased the projected number of graduate students upward by 20%. This combined with the adjustments made to the faculty growth generate a ratio of 1:3.1, which is on par with the University of California, Riverside and the University of California, Irvine. There may be more room for larger growth in the program later down the road but we weigh quality over quantity in the short-term. Lastly, we have removed the discussion of the undergraduate majors in section 1.4 and have added some

additional details regarding the programs role in the recent strategic focusing efforts as our program clearly falls under the “Entrepreneurship and Management” pillar (authors of the current graduate proposal were also authors on the School of Innovation, Management and Economics proposal).

Comment: No indication that feedback sought from other UC ECON programs yet. authors should be preparing to send proposal out to other UC Econ Programs.

Response: We were not aware that this is a requirement. We have contacted the Graduate Council and determined that the best time to circulate the proposal for comments from the other graduate programs (or letters of support) is after it has gone through internal review here at UC Merced. Therefore, we will send the proposal out to other UCs for comment at that time.

Comment: p.6 Replace Kello with Zatz.

Response: Oops...fixed.

Comment: p.7 Rather than "by Angela Krueger, the UC Merced ..." use "by the UC Merced ... (currently Angela Krueger)" or drop name completely to remove possibility of document going out of date during consideration. If names are important, add an appendix matching current positions with people?

Response: This has been changed in the proposal.

Comment: p.9 (table) Is 100% pass-rate (at whatever level) over simplistic? Aim also for %age with A (or similar higher level of achievement)? Consult with ALO on use of direct and indirect (especially surveys of current students, as such surveys may be intimidating) evidence, annual assessment. Need to review for clear support of non-academic careers. The “lines of evidence” tables are odd in that none of the assessments are tied to courses – they are all exams, papers, etc. not linked to a course (if I’m understanding the curricular map correctly). How is the success of the curriculum actually assessed? Finally, there seems to be some confusion (at a few points) between assessing the STUDENT and assessing the PROGRAM – this needs to be addressed, as it is the PROGRAM that is of interest here. This latter confusion may also be reflected in the range of mastery based on expected “higher levels of achievement...for more advanced students” listed in the curricular map (i.e., the COURSE content is either as the I, D, or M level, not the STUDENT mastery of that content). The curricular map should not include non-curricular (i.e., non-course) items.

Response: We have consulted with ALO about the suggested changes and made a number of changes to the PLOs and assessment plans.

Comment: What does "expected to generate additional research" mean? Help faculty with their research? In what context will this "expectation be either supported or made clear? What will happen if this expectation is not met?

Response: We have removed this statement from the document and have also changed the language so that it states “anticipate” versus “expect.”

Comment: p.16 Six core courses to be offered in first year, i.e. 1/4 of current faculty

teaching load. Plus another six courses recommended or elective, i.e. another 1/4 of current faculty teaching load. Is there sufficient capacity remaining for the undergraduate program? The teaching requirement – especially designing and delivering one’s own course – seems unreasonable and may discourage or disqualify students who have NSF or other fellowship funding. This also is clearly a bias toward students who intend to pursue an academic career, which contradicts the Intro section. Flexibility to define alternatives" is problematic and could be taken as evidence that the faculty are not committed to the four fields or could be spread too thin. How would such alternatives be supported by curriculum? In addition, such "flexibility" might result in problems re: transcript tracking of non-standard majors/minor fields. Courses taken toward a graduate degree at another institution cannot be transferred for credit toward a Ph.D. at UCM. However, a course requirement may be waived if a similar course was taken at another institution. ECON 209- This class is not included in the teaching rotation table. Who is going to teach it? At what stage in their program do students select their major/minor fields?

Response: We are currently hiring two additional LPSOEs this year, which will bring our total LPSOE count to three. The combined efforts of the LPSOEs and our existing research faculty are sufficient to meet our undergraduate demands. We have retained the TA requirement in the program as very few students enrolled in Economics Ph.D. programs are funded under grants. We surveyed the other Economics programs in the UC System and external funding for graduate students is very rare (<10%). The dominant model for funding students is TA positions. Furthermore, this requirement does not in any way discourage students from seeking NSF funding as nearly all graduate students in Economics serve as TAs for at least the first year or two of the program. This is because it takes students a couple of years to develop their research interests. This is sufficient time for them to meet the TAship requirements and still seek graduate funding at a later date if they wish. We have also removed ECON 209 from the requirements. We will revisit whether or not this course should be added to program at a later date.

Comment: It is not clear what kind of format the comprehensive exam will have.

Response: We have added the word "written" to clarify that it is a written exam.

Comment: p.18 "fourth" not "forth" & "each student's" not "each students" Comprehensive Exam- This time commitment (i.e., two exam committees) may ultimately prove burdensome to faculty, so the proposers may want to rethink this.

Response: Fixed in the text.

Comment: Not sure about the policy "The graduate group chair will serve as the student’s faculty advisor until the beginning of the third year. At the beginning of the third year, in consultant with the faculty, the graduate group chair will assign each student a faculty advisor". Seems overwhelming, unless this is the minimal level of advising re. course load etc. Doesn't speak to mentorship. Does the student get any say on who is their advisor? Such choice is likely critical to the success of the student. Additional 2nd year paper requirement: In what context is this paper prepared (e.g., Directed Research, Directed Reading, on their own)? If on one's own (i.e., outside of class), how do faculty expect a student to prepare such a paper while carrying a full three-course load?

Response: We have changed the time period when the shift occurs from the Graduate Group Chair to the faculty advisor to occur at the beginning of the second year. This is a sensible time to transition as the course work is constant for everyone in the first year and there is no real research advising occurring until the second year. We have also added language to point out that the Faculty Advisors will be appointed following consultation with the faculty and the graduate students. As far as the 2nd year paper requirement we have removed this requirement from the program. We have retained the 3rd year paper (moved the timing up slightly) and acknowledged that the development of the paper will be executed under the guidance of the student's Faculty Advisor.

Comment: p. 27 And any special preparation for students outside of teaching? Please be advised advanced graduate students may only teach lower division courses by UCOP rules for Teaching Fellows. Such students can only teach upper division courses with special approval from the Dean. Teaching requirement maybe be difficult/impossible with some external fellowships; unnecessary for students not seeking academic career?

Response: The fundamental requirement is that a student serves as a TA for at least two semesters. Given that the standard funding model in economics is that students receive TAs (see earlier comment) we do not feel that this requirement is overly burdensome. In fact, we anticipate that most of our students will meet this requirement within their first year. Therefore, this is not going to impact their progress or ability to seek external fellowships – which are also very rare in economics as well. Furthermore, we have surveyed the other graduate directors in the UC system and found that this level of TAs requirement is very minimal and is in line with the other graduate programs.

Comment: In-state, out-of state, etc. not provided; reference to undergraduate programs in Econ and Management should be removed; should note IIGP Econ program. Are there sufficient jobs, especially if focused on the academic track? Is there UCM-specific demand?

Response: Our pool of graduate students will predominately come from out-of-state, which is consistent with the other Economics Ph.D. programs. The primary factor attracting students to a Ph.D. program is the quality of the program not whether or not it is offered in their state of residence. We have added this to the discussion. We have also removed the discussion of the undergraduate program for motivation. We surveyed the other graduate programs in the UC system to get a picture of their applicant pool and have added that information to the text. This includes the placement at academic and non-academic institutions. It is impossible to estimate UCM demand as the graduate program does not exist and we have not had sufficient faculty to effectively utilize the IGP program. This said, despite our lack of advertising for our program we do receive a number of applications to the IGP program each year, which we have not been able to admit due to a lack of faculty.

Comment: Provide examples of non-academic careers. What are the placement records in the recent years in other UCs? There no mention of international graduate students and their employment. Pg. 29: Need to explain how Health Econ, etc., relate to "Labor & Demographic Economics" since this is the first time this terminology has been used

Response: We have added some information regarding placements at other UCs to our

proposal and the most common types of placements for students who have received a Ph.D. in Economics. We have also added some additional language that points out that “Labor and Demographic Economics” broadly encompasses a number of our fields of specialization.

Comment: Elective courses are offered every 2-3 years. 3 years is long gap. If a student missed one elective course in 2nd year, he or she can only take it in 5th year, if the elective is the student’s field course.

Response: We anticipate our field courses being offered only every other year for the first four years of the program. After this we expect the field courses to be offered every 1-2 years depending on student demand. We have altered the document to reflect the appropriate timing of the courses.

Comment: Pg. 41 The table does not demonstrate that ECON faculty can/will be able to "maintain undergraduate course offerings" since approximately half of the undergrad courses are identified as taught by lecturers. This issue needs to be directly addressed, since funds for lecturers are generally year-to-year (unless LPSOE or LSOE positions are sought, and if so, this will bear significant discussion). It would be more convenient to see this by semester or faculty member rather than by course.

Response: Our use of lecturers has been a requirement of our program for many years due to a lack of faculty (as low as 2 in the Fall of 2013). However, we have recently grown to 8 research faculty and one LPSOE. Furthermore, we are currently hiring two additional LPSOEs this year (2014-15). These resources will ensure that we are able to maintain our undergraduate course offerings when the graduate program is launched. Furthermore, two of the ECON courses are cross listed as MGMT courses (ECON 005, ECON 028) and are currently being taught using lectures to ensure that the MGMT demands are met with the limited number of MGMT faculty we have at UC Merced (3 at the current point in time – 1 in the SSM Bylaw until and 2 in the ENG Bylaw unit). There are still a few undergraduate courses that will be taught by lecturers but our program’s demands are not exorbitant and many of these duties can be absorbed by the incoming faculty and LPSOEs if needed.

Comment: Where is ECON 209?

Response: We have elected to drop ECON 209 from the course requirements.

Comment: Pg. 42 The lecturers (and faculty affiliated with other programs such as MGMT) should be identified as such for all relevant courses in this table (i.e., since lecturers are year-to-year, it may be more appropriate to have title rather than name). The proposers need to be up-front about how the undergrad program will be delivered if/when the grad program begins.

Response: We have revised the faculty rotation to differentiate the demands generated by the MGMT and ECON program separately. We have also added the new LPSOE hire that started this year and the two that we are hiring right now to the rotation. As far as lecturers, there are 2 lectures that we require to facilitate the MGMT program and 2 for the ECON program. Although this may seem like a fair number of lecturers it is important to note that these are two different undergraduate programs.

Comment: Overly optimistic for the faculty FTE in the coming academic year. Suggest avoiding the “need” to have three new faculty to “establish” the program (especially in light of the Dean’s letter), as it is extremely unlikely that those positions will be forthcoming on the schedule outlined in the proposal. AY 14-15 hiring is already out of date, since no new hires this year (unless FTE already allocated from previous search?)

Response: Our projected faculty growth was based on the predicted growth in faculty indicated in the Dean’s support letter. In that letter Dean Aldenderfer has indicated that he expects our research faculty to grow to 11 by 2016 and 16 by 2020. Given that there is a hiring freeze and the lines being allocated under the university’s strategic focusing initiated has yet to be determined we have elected to use a much more conservative projection in the proposal. In fact our projected growth is below the level that would be expected if the future hires within the university are uniformly distributed. Therefore, we believe our revised projections are highly conservation.

Comment: Pg. 45 The Dean’s letter implies this will be handled through startup, not flexible funding.

Response: The Dean’s letter does not imply that graduate computing costs will be covered through startup. Startup funds will be used to cover faculty computing costs not graduate computing costs. Faculty startup packages in economics are exceptionally modest relative to the sciences and they do not cover graduate computing costs. The Dean’s letter indicates that the laboratory space may be shared with other social sciences.

Comment: Pg. 43 What is the “additional graduate workspace”?

Response: This is graduate office space.

Comment: If the latter, how will reallocation affect support in existing programs? Describe any campus fund-raising initiatives that will contribute to support of graduate students in the proposed program.

Response: We surveyed the other Economics Ph.D. programs to determine what percentage of the graduate students are supported on Teaching Assistantships. Very few, if any, graduate students are funding on external grants. The dominate form of funding is TAships. We are currently not aware of any campus funding-raising initiatives that will contribute to the support of graduate students and we have been told that we are not supposed to independently pursue these resources.

Comment: Provide an estimate of the average per student support (from all sources) and compare the estimate to systemwide norms or other comparators.

Response: We anticipate providing the same level of TAship funding as all other graduate programs at UC Merced.

Comment: Please remove Appendix F. The Bylaw 55 unit does not exist; please revise mention of such Bylaw 55 Unit in the CCGA Proposal.

Response: We have removed Appendix F as well as the references to it within the proposal.

Comment: Please remove CPEC information as it is no longer required.

Response: The CPEC information has been removed from the document.

CAPRA Review Comments

Comment: regarding Table 1, perhaps a better estimate of TA needs can be obtained by looking at how many TAs are currently required to serve the existing student population in these majors and then simply scaling the numbers.

Response: Although we agree in principle that this would be a great way to determine TA needs, it is really not possible for us to do that because our program has been understaffed for many years (we had only 2 faculty in the Fall of 2013!). We now have enough faculty to teach the courses we need and are able to begin to evaluate our TA needs for the program. We are currently undergoing a number of revisions to our undergraduate program and are re-evaluating our TAship needs to better execute our undergraduate program. This will necessitate increasing our offerings of courses that currently have TAs as some of these courses are bottlenecks in our undergraduate major and the creation of new courses to expand our GE course offerings as we currently have few GE offerings.

Comment: page 4 lists current graduate programs but omits several including Physics and Chemistry & Chemical Biology. The proposal should either list all of the existing programs or else name only those with which it expects to have particular synergy.

Response: Thank you for pointing out that we have did not include either Physics or Chemistry and Chemical Biology. We have added this to the document.

Comment: The projections for growth to 16 by 2020 appear vastly optimistic given known faculty allocation plans. There is no recruitment during the current AY for new Economics faculty to start AY 2015/16. It appears that a viable program can be achieved with fewer additional faculty, and the proposal might be strengthened by pointing this out.

Response: The projections outlined in the proposal were based on the SSHA Dean's letter, which indicated we would be at 11 research faculty by 2016 and 16 by 2020. Given the lack of hiring this year and to be conservative regarding our estimated growth in the future we have altered our projections to be one line a year with no hiring in the 2014-15 academic year. Furthermore, we have added in to the document the one LPSOE we hired last year as well as the two LPSOEs that we are hiring this year.

Comment: basing faculty line allocations on past processes does not seem feasible given the Strategic Academic Focusing process to be implemented for the rest of the decade.

Response: Our response above indicates that we are not basing our expected allocations on past processes and have elected to use a more conservative estimate of growth. However, we should point out that the authors of the graduate program were also authors on the School of Innovation, Management and Economics proposal that has recently been highlighted as part of the Entrepreneurship and Management pillar by the Provost. We expect this decision to favorably affect our projected growth.

Comment: Will the size and quality of the applicant pool be adequate to admit ten new Ph.D. students per year in the first and third years of the program? What is the minimum practical cohort size if the program cannot achieve 10 PhD students?

Response: There is absolutely no way for us to know with certainty whether or not we will have an adequate pool of applicants until we actually begin recruiting. However, we surveyed other Economics Ph.D. program in the UC System and they all have sizeable applicant pools varying from around 150 to nearly 800 applicants. From these applications class sizes between 12 and 25 are being generated. Based on the demand within the UC System we anticipate having a sufficient applicant pool. We have added this information to proposal. As far as minimal practical cohort size, this would depend on the minimum number of students required to offer a course at UC Merced. That is the minimum size needed. Even though a stand alone Economics Ph.D. program does not exist we continue to receive strong applications every year from the Social Sciences program.

Comment: given that the proposal projects a growth in international students, the reliance on non-resident tuition (NRT) support needs further elaboration. Although currently NRT is paid for all Ph.D. students supported by internal funds, it is not clear that this will continue to be the case if there is rapid growth of the international graduate student population.

Response: We have not received any indication that our program would not be able to benefit from the current use of internal funds to cover NRT. This is the predominate funding mechanism used to fund non-resident tuition at UC Merced and we see no reason why we should not be able to equally benefit from the use of NRTs.

COR Review Response

Comment: Resources - Currently, 7 faculty members are fully engaged in Economics, plus an eighth member joining in January, 2015. The distribution of research emphasis areas across the faculty is as follows: 4 in Economic Geography and Trade, 2 in Environmental and Resource Economics, 3 in Health Economics, and 3 in International Development. (Some faculty members conduct research in several of these emphasis areas.) By the time of the anticipated start date in Fall 2016, the program is expected to have 11 fully dedicated faculty members. The program is anticipated to recruit 10 graduate students during its first year (faculty/student ratio 1:0.9). The number of faculty and graduate students are expected to increase to 16 and 26, respectively, by 2020 (ratio 1:1.6). The members of COR are concerned that this growth rate is not realistic, given current hiring trends, and they would like to see further evidence that the SSHA Dean would support this growth rate given limited resources.

Response: Given that it is not possible to concretely obtain commitments regarding faculty growth beyond those articulated in the Dean's letter, we have altered our projected growth within the proposal to be substantially lower than earlier projected. We now have no new lines for 2014-15 and one additional line each year. This level of projected growth is lower than if future lines are allocated uniformly. Furthermore, one of the pillars identified by the Provost, Entrepreneurship and Management (builds on the School of Innovation, Management and Economics proposal our faculty submitted as part of the strategic focusing efforts), clearly will rely on growth in the Economics group for its successful execution.

Comment: Along with the concern above, the members of COR would like to see greater alignment between the letter of support from the SSHA Dean and the program proposal document with regard to the number of faculty needed to successfully deliver the program. The letter from the Dean states that 8 FTE are sufficient to run the program, but the proposal indicates that the minimum number of faculty needed to deliver the program is 11 FTE. If 8 faculty members are sufficient, please revise the curriculum and course delivery plan accordingly.

Response: We have changed the document to indicate that we can start our program with the existing 8 research faculty (as indicated in the Dean's letter) as well as altered our projected faculty growth. We have also altered the document to include the one LPSOE we hired last year and the two we are hiring this year.

Comment: Support letters from other graduate programs or units may be necessary to demonstrate that the proposed interdisciplinary research and coursework for graduate students can be provided.

Response: We have added language to point out that interdisciplinary course work is not required in the program. This is because we do not in any way want the ability of other programs to offer courses to impact students making due process in our graduate program. Given that this is true we do not think it is necessary to obtain letters from the other disciplines to illustrate their ability to meet our course demands. This is an optional component of our graduate program and we have added language to reflect this in the document.

Comment: Library resources – The members of COR would like to see a justification for why the proposal does not include a consideration of the kind of large databases that are needed in the library by many economics programs.

Response: Many of the large datasets used by economists are publicly available (i.e., Census) or are confidential data sets that require the researcher to enter into a data use agreement with the data provider. Publicly available datasets are traditionally downloaded from agency websites so they do not require additional infrastructure. Private data sets are retained solely on the researchers office computer. Additional datasets frequently used by economists such as Compustat are already subscribed to by the Library to support the management program.

Comment: The members of COR suggest eliding Appendix F (Bylaw55 in Economics) as being potentially distracting and confusing to CCGA, which is solely interested in graduate program design.

Response: This has been removed from the document.

Comment: Four major research emphasis fields in economics are proposed, and interdisciplinary research involving the combination of these fields makes the proposed program distinct from other existing programs on UC campuses. The members of COR would like to see evidence that these specific emphasis fields have increasing demand and might successfully sustain the program by recruiting graduate students and attracting extramural funding. Evidence can involve job opportunities in related areas or increasing funding opportunities in these areas. In particular, the members of COR would like to confirm that there is enough demand for Health Economics, which is not offered on any other UC campus.

Response: We currently reference the importance of these fields in the economics job market. We also surveyed the other UC Campuses to get a picture of the anticipated demand for our PhD program and the results from this are contained in the proposal. Given that health economics is a growing field in economics it is very difficult to obtain tangible evidence that there is enough demand for health economics. However, if we let the job market indicate the current demand we can see that the demand is large. The American Economic Association maintains the Jobs for Economists website where many institutions post their jobs. Of all the jobs listed approximately 10% of them are individuals trained in health economics or related fields of economics (defined as Health, Education and Welfare on the AEAs job website: <https://www.aeaweb.org/joe/>).

Comment: Close interaction with faculty and the development of critical thinking skills are described as unique features of this proposed program. However, details concerning how these features will be successfully delivered to students are not provided in the proposal. A larger faculty-student ratio is just one of the components of a successful program, and it does not necessarily mean that there will be a close interaction between students and faculty.

Response: We have added some additional language to clarify this objective in the proposal.

Comment: The proposed program encourages students to take courses in other existing programs, such as Biology, Engineering, Cognitive Science, and Public Health.

(Considering the fact that the proposed program includes a Health Economics emphasis, the members of COR suggest highlighting potential collaborations with the Health Psychology program on campus, as well.) Such diverse coursework can certainly lead to unique interdisciplinary research in economics, but any details or realistic plans (clear explanations) concerning how the program will facilitate/encourage students to take these courses are missing from the proposal. Also, graduate courses in the natural sciences and engineering may be tough for students who have a limited background in these fields. Finally, the sample program (section 2.11) does not seem to reflect this proposed plan.

Response: The way the proposal was previously written was a bit misleading regarding this topic. It was our objective to point out that our program will complement the existing programs at UC Merced and that our graduate program is flexible enough to allow students to take courses in other disciplines if it will contribute to their research. We are not going to encourage all students to do this and they do not need to take any courses outside of economics to meet our programmatic requirements. We merely wanted to offer the students the flexibility to take these courses. We have added some additional language that we believe better clarifies this fact and that points out they do not need to take courses in other disciplines in order to graduate and they have to meet the course requirements for these courses before enrolling. This is why we have elected to not include this in the sample program.

Comment: The members of COR noted that the early years of the proposed graduate program involve both extensive coursework and substantial research expectations. The proposal would be strengthened by providing some evidence on the ability of students to meet these demands. Such evidence might be found through a comparison to economics graduate programs at other institutions.

Response: We have made some changes to the program so that the first year is focused on the core curriculum, the second on taking the field courses and the remaining years on the development of their research. This is a nearly uniform standard for how Economics Ph.D. programs are delivered within the UC and at other peer institutions. We have removed the 2nd year paper as it may have been a difficult task to conduct your course work and write the paper at the same time. Assigning research papers later in the program is consistent with other economics graduate programs.

CRE Review Response

Comment: CRE's primary comment was our inclusion of the revised Bylaw 55 unit in the proposal.

Response: Appendix F has been removed from the document.

Institutional Assessment Review Response

Comment: As noted above, the Economics Ph.D. and M.A. degrees are eligible for expedited review (i.e., Fast Track) by WASC. In order to comply with the stipulations of that approval, it will be necessary to include language stating that the Economics emphasis has been incubated as part of the IGP, with a very brief synopsis of its history up until this point. This information could be included at the beginning of Section 1.3.

Response: We have added this information to Section 1.3.

Comment: WASC requires separate proposals for the M.A. and Ph.D. degree. With this in mind, Table 1 (p.7) will need to project enrollments for both M.A. and Ph.D. students. Alternately, a separate table dedicated to M.A. students may be included. Example spreadsheets, including the specific projections WASC requires, are attached as Appendix A. We are happy to help the program complete this table, if that would be helpful.

To determine the fraction of Ph.D. students who will choose to receive the M.A. en route to the Ph.D., previous programs have found it helpful to contact other UC programs. Political Science estimated that approximately 80% of their Ph.D. students would earn an M.A. This percentage might be a similar for Economics, but it would be important to confirm. Political Science's projections are provided in the attached sample spreadsheet.

Response: We conducted a survey of the other graduate programs in Economics within the UC and found that an estimate of 80% is appropriate for the percentage of students who are enrolled in the Ph.D. program that receive a M.A. in route to the Ph.D. or that leave the program with a M.A. instead of a Ph.D.. We have added an appendix to the proposal that captures this information and the data is referenced in the proposal.

Comment: The program has clearly crafted its PLOs to distinguish the learning expected of M.A. and Ph.D. degree recipients. To more precisely express these differences, the program might remove the terms "Ph.D. level" and "Master's level" understanding from the PLOs and, instead, add some prefatory language that describes the expectations for each degree more generally. For example, drawing on statements in the proposal, introductory language for the Ph.D. PLOs might read, "Recipients of the Ph.D. degree will demonstrate a thorough knowledge of a broad field of learning, and provide evidence of distinguished accomplishment and critical ability through an original contribution to the knowledge of their chosen field. Consistent with this goal, Ph.D. recipients will...[list Ph.D. outcomes]". An example of introductory language for the master's degree might be, "Recipients of the M.A. degree will demonstrate a thorough understanding of a broad field of knowledge and provide evidence of accomplishment in that field. In keeping with this goal, M.S. recipients will..."

Response: Thank you for this suggestion. We have changed the language in the document to your suggested language.

In order to make the PLOs more measurable, and to help clearly define program expectations for student learning, we encourage in the following:

a) Making the PLOs more specific. For instance, PLO 1 might be revised to emphasize the context in which students will apply their knowledge and level of performance: "Ph.D.

recipients demonstrate knowledge and proficiency in economic theory and econometrics at the level required to make a novel contribution to the discipline.” Similarly, PLO 2 could be reworded to emphasize how students will use the theories and methodologies: “Ph.D. recipients apply their knowledge of the relevant theories and methodologies used in the student’s major field of study to critically evaluate the literature and identify productive research questions.” The Graduate Guidelines for Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) may be of help crafting this language. The guidelines are available here:http://senate.ucmerced.edu/files/public/Graduate%20CLO%20_%20PLO%20Guidelines%20Final%20May%202012.pdf

Response: Thank you for your suggestion we have elected to use your suggested language and rewritten the PLOs of the Ph.D. program.

b) Along similar lines, Ph.D. PLO 4 and M.A. PLO 2 describe communication learning outcomes in rather broad and general terms. It may be helpful to include additional language that explains how students will demonstrate their communication abilities and to which types of audiences (as developed through program curriculum). For instance, “Graduates are able to communicate verbally and orally in a clear and concise manner to expert and non-expert audiences.” Or, “Graduates will communicate clearly and concisely using oral, visual, and/or written means while addressing a broad range of audiences.”

Response: Thank you for your suggestion we have elected to use your suggested language and rewritten the PLOs of the Ph.D. and M.A. programs.

c) Finally, given that M.A. students will take the same courses as Ph.D. students, the M.A. PLOs might also include knowledge of relevant theories and methodologies (similar to Ph.D. PLO 2), which could be assessed via the rubric for the Second Year Paper.

Response: Thank you for the suggestion we have made some changes to the M.A. PLOs.

Comment: Historically, WASC has paid particular attention to our assessment plans. In anticipation of this, we recommend the following:

a) Revise the program’s assessment timeline by assigning each PLO to a separate year for review, for instance, PLO 1 in 2015-2016, PLO 2 in 2016-2017, PLO 3 in 2017-2018, PLO 4 in 2018-2019, etc. This is consistent with campus expectations that programs engage in assessment annually, assessing at least one PLO per year. If, however, the proposed structure of enrolling students in alternating years makes assessing more than one PLO at a time more useful to the program, it would be helpful to state that reasoning in the assessment plan.

Response: We have altered the timing for evaluating the PLOs so that at least one PLO is being evaluated each year of the graduate program. A number of the PLOs are evaluated in more than just one year as well to correspond with anticipated timing of the performance metric.

b) With respect to Ph.D. PLOs 2 and 3, grade-based assessment of “field course performance” should be included under indirect evidence rather than direct evidence as currently designated. The same applies to participation in Economics conferences (PLO

6). Useful sources of direct evidence for these outcomes include forms of student work like dissertation proposals, dissertation manuscripts, and defenses.

Response: We have altered the assessment of the PLOs are required.

c) It will be important to provide performance targets for TA evaluations as this will help make program expectations of student achievement of PLOs 4, 5, and 6 more transparent to faculty and to students.

Response: We have added a performance criteria for our TA evaluations for the PLOs 4, 5 and 6.

d) Section 1.7 mentions that the program intends to use institutional surveys of graduate students in its program assessment. These lines of evidence will need to be included in the assessment plan, under indirect evidence, even though information will not be available until the first students graduate.

Response: We have added the responses to the Graduate Alumni Survey to the program assessment goals.

Comment: WASC reviewers have also tended to scrutinize curriculum maps. Towards this end, it will be important to make the following revisions:

a) WASC expects that curriculum maps include all courses and activities required to earn the degree. Toward this end, ECON 200 will need to be integrated into the Ph.D. and M.A. curriculum maps, and the qualifying exam and dissertation defense to the Ph.D. map. If any other activities are required to earn either degree (e.g. annual committee meetings), these too should be added to the relevant map.

Response: ECON 200 has been removed from the required courses. However, we have added the Qualifying Exam, Dissertation Proposal Defense, 3rd Year Paper and Dissertation Defense to the Ph.D. map as they are required elements of the Ph.D. program.

b) In both the Ph.D. and the M.A. curriculum maps, indicate which courses and degree activities are required for the respective degree. Past programs have done this by putting an asterisk next to the required elements, or by putting the required elements in bold face.

Response: We have added asterisks to the curriculum maps to indicate required courses and activities in both the Ph.D. and M.A. program.

c) Section 2.4a states that there will be four fields of specialization. If specific courses are required for each specialization, these will need to be distinguished in the curriculum map. This might be accomplished by adding to the curriculum map headings for each specialization with the required courses listed beneath, or by including a footnote that indicates to which specialization the required course relates.

Response: We have added letters to the curriculum map to indicate the courses that are required for each of our four fields.

d) Both curriculum maps list a first year “preliminary exam” as a requirement, but the term does not seem to appear elsewhere in the proposal. It will be important to reconcile the map with the proposal narrative. Toward this end, we wonder if the preliminary exam is the same as the comprehensive exam?

Response: Sorry about this, we meant “Comprehensive Exam” and have made the required changes.

e) Ratings of Introductory, Developed, and Mastery are usually assigned with reference to the level of performance expected of students at the time of graduation. Consistent with this, the dissertation and dissertation defense are usually identified as expecting a mastery level of performance. In light of this, we wondered about the expectation that students achieve of a mastery level of knowledge on the preliminary exam. If students are expected to demonstrate mastery of core Economics concepts through the preliminary exam before they specialize and master the application of those concepts in their major field (as the [American Economics Association](#) indicates is the typical path of Economics graduate education), then it would be helpful to include a footnote explaining this distinction.

Response: We have added this information to the curriculum map.

f) On p. 16 of the proposal, Math for Economists is listed as ECON 209 while elsewhere in the proposal it is listed as ECON 200 (see Sample Program in Section 2 and course listings in Section 5). It will be important to ensure consistency in course listings in the body of the proposal, as well as in the curriculum maps, and in Section 5.

Response: This course has been removed from the graduate proposal.

g) Section 2.5.4, Advancement to Candidacy, lists the completion of ECON 205 as a requirement. It will be important to add this course to the required core course sequence referenced on pp. 15 and 16, and to indicate it in the curriculum map.

Response: This course has been removed from the graduate proposal.

Comment: WASC has specific expectations for syllabi, which they carefully review. Toward this end, a few adjustments are needed to the proposal’s example syllabi, particularly for ECON 201A and ECON 230. These include,

a) Ensuring that the syllabus communicates the number of units earned for the course, together with descriptions of how those units are earned in and out of the classroom. The latter can be met through a description of the class format, e.g. lecture, discussion sections, labs, and expectations for work outside of class.

Response: We have indicated on the syllabus that each course is 4 units and added a section that describes the course format.

b) Descriptions of the relationship between the course and program learning outcomes (PLOs). It will be important to include the ECON PLOs specifically.

Response: We have added a section to the sample syllabi that indicate their relationship with the PLOs for our Economics Ph.D. and M.A. programs.

c) Mention of library use, with a description of the library research expectations for the course.

This is only needed for Econ 230A.

Response: We have added the library use expectations to both ECON 230A and ECON 230B.

d) Grading policies, including how assignments are weighted.

Response: Grading policies are now indicated on all of the syllabi.

e) Faculty office location and office hours.

Response: We did not include this information in the syllabi before because office hours are selected by each faculty and change from semester to semester. Furthermore, we are most likely not going to still be in COB when the graduate program is launched. However, we put place holders on the syllabi for this information with the information indicated.

f) Policy statements on academic integrity and the services available to students with disabilities.

Response: All of the syllabi contain the same “Academic Integrity” and “Disabilities Statement” to reflect the need to incorporate this information.

Comment: WASC requires a rubric for the Qualifying Exam that addresses both the written and oral elements of the exam. This will need to be included in Appendix E. We are happy to help draft this rubric.

Response: The Qualifying Exam does not possess an oral component. We have added some language to our description of the Qualifying Exam rubric.

Along similar lines, the Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation rubrics might be revised to more clearly identify expectations for the oral elements of each defense. For instance, the program might include criteria describing how concisely students summarize their dissertation proposal/dissertation, or how clearly and convincingly they respond to questions during the defense. A sample rubric is attached as Appendix C.

Response: We have expanded the rubric for both the Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation to include a section where the committee can make comments on the student’s written and oral performance.

Comment: The Dissertation Defense Rubric seems to replicate expectations described in the Dissertation Proposal Rubric, both in the text preceding the rubric as well as in the rubric itself. (For instance, both rubrics are titled Dissertation Proposal Rubric.) It is important that the Dissertation Defense Rubric reflect expectations for a student completing this final stage of the degree.

Response: We have altered the Dissertation Defense Rubric and the Dissertation Proposal Defense rubric to more accurately reflect the expectations at that point in the student’s studies.

Comment: WASC reviewers have recommended that programs define the meaning of rubric scores for the purposes of helping students and faculty understand program expectations. For example, other UC Merced graduate programs have equated a score of Introductory or Poor with the proficiency expected of a B.A. recipient, or a Ph.D./M.A. student who has not acquired skills beyond the B.A. level. Expert or Excellent has been equated with the proficiency expected of an Assistant Professor (for a Ph.D. student) or a Ph.D. recipient (for a M.A. student). Along similar lines, it would be helpful to determine what a “Good” exam looks like. We recommend Barbara Lovitts and Ellen Wert’s *Developing Quality Dissertations in the Social Sciences* as a helpful resource for this purpose.

Response: We have added a section in the Appendix that defines the four levels of the rubric used for evaluation.

Comment: The program has thoughtfully designed its rubrics to reflect its PLOs. To improve the value of the rubrics to the program, we encourage a shift from three to four levels of performance. Adding a fourth level will help clarify differences in performance/achievement within the middle group (e.g. “Good”), thereby providing more useful information on which a program can act.

Response: We have changed all of the rubrics so that they use 4 levels versus the 3 we had before. In addition, we have added an appendix item that describes our expectations for each of the levels as suggested in your previous comment.

Comment: The biannual review meeting is an important source of information regarding student development and achievement. Toward this end, the program might find it helpful to add some questions to the Student Progress Report that address student achievement of the PLOs, as well as some evaluation of the extent to which students are meeting expectations for degree progress. A sample Student Progress Report is attached as Appendix D.

Response: We have added a section for the faculty to assess the student according to the 6 PLOs.

Graduate Division Review Response

Comment: They have 7 full-time faculty, with an 8th joining in January. Five of the eight are assistant professors. They anticipate reaching 11 faculty by fall of 2016, and 16 faculty by 2020. I do not see a firm administrative commitment to these lines, leading to the question: If they do not achieve this level of growth, can they support the proposed program as well as their undergraduate responsibilities? As a related question, is the projected undergraduate growth more ambitious than is realistic? (This affects the number of students they can support with TA appointments).

Response: We completely understand the Graduate Division's concern regarding resource commitments. However, given that we do not definitively know what the future direction of hiring is going to be at this time we are left to our best estimate of projected growth based on the Dean's letter. This said, we have reduced our projected growth in the proposal to a more conservative and modest level that assumes our growth would actually be below the level we would achieve if future faculty growth were uniformly distributed across the campus. Furthermore, it is possible for us to launch our graduate program with the currently existing faculty so we have changed the language to reflect this fact. We would also like to note that we are currently hiring 2 LPSOEs to facilitate the execution of our ECON and MGMT majors that we are responsible for staffing. This will further increase our ability to meet both our undergraduate and graduate needs. This information has been added to the proposal as well. Finally, the Provost recently identified five pillars for the future of UC Merced. One of these pillars is "Management and Entrepreneurship." which includes a proposal submitted by the Economics group in collaboration with others on campus. The recent faculty discussion regarding this pillar clearly indicated that the creation of this pillar was extracted from the School of Innovation, Management and Economics proposal that our faculty wrote with faculty in Management as part of our recent strategic focusing initiative. Given this we expect that our projected growth will be greater than that outlined in the proposal.

Comment: How will graduate students be supported, beyond TA appointments? Do they anticipate supporting students on research grants? If not, why not?

Response: Our graduate students will use the same funding model as the other social science disciplines at UC Merced. We expect to use TAs to fund a majority of the graduate students. This is not only consistent with the other social sciences at UC Merced but with the other economics graduate groups with the UC System. We surveyed the other economics programs in the UC System and discovered that between 90% and 100% of the graduate students are funded using TAships. This said, we currently have faculty who are actively pursuing grants to fund graduate students so we do anticipate that from time to time we will have funds available for graduate students that are obtained from grants. We would also like to point out that the lack of Economics Ph.D. students at UCM have left Economics faculty unable to execute large funded research projects. With well-trained Economics graduate students available Faculty will now be able to seek external funding much more extensively. This will lead to significant additional revenue for the campus. Additional information has been added to the proposal to clarify this information.

Comment: The proposal indicates that they will focus in four key areas: (1) Economic Geography and Trade; (2) Environmental & Resource Economics; (3) Health Economics; and (4) International Development. Additional discussion of whether these

are distinctive foci in the national context (beyond simply our sister UC institutions) would be helpful.

Response: We have added additional discussion to the proposal to highlight the importance of these fields.

Comment: They anticipate interdisciplinary research and interaction with Biology, Cognitive Science, Ecology, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology and the proposed new graduate programs in the Management of Innovation, Sustainability and Technology and Public Health. I applaud this interdisciplinary engagement. However, it is not clear to what extent these programs, and particularly the Economics, MIST and Public Health proposals, all depend upon the same faculty. I suggest inclusion of letters indicating impact from the other affected existing and proposed programs.

Response: We do not completely understand your comment. Our program does not in any way rely on the existence of any of these programs for the execution of our program. Therefore, we have elected to not obtain letters from these respective groups. All we wished to point out in the proposal is that our program complements the existing programs and programs that are in development. The structure of our graduate program is such that a student will have the opportunity to take a course or two in other disciplines if they are interested in doing so, however this is not required. Therefore, we do not see the need to include letters indicating the impact from other affected existing and proposed programs.

Comment: A clearer discussion of their decision not to admit students in 2017 and 2019 would be helpful. My concern is that this may create confusion as to whether or not they are admitting students in a given year, resulting in reduced applications in years when they are admitting students.

Response: A discussion of our decision to not admit students in 2017 and 2019 is contained in Section 1.3. We have also added information that indicates we will post our admission cycle information on our department website to ensure that students are fully informed of the timing of our admissions.

Comment: Related to the above, the growth in faculty: student ratio is very slow, not reaching 1:2 until 2021, five years into the program. Thus it appears that they could support admitting a cohort of students each year.

Response: We have reduced our projected faculty growth and also increased our projected graduate student enrollment by 20%. As a result of this we will reach a 1:2 ratio in 2018-19 with a small reduction in the ratio in 2019-20. However, as the graduate program continues to grow we will reach a ratio of 1:3.1, which is on par with the ratios at the University of California, Riverside and the University of California, Irvine.

Comment: Page 8, please note that the current Graduate Dean is Marjorie Zatz.

Response: We apologize for this mistake and have fixed this in the document.

Comment: Please clean up typos (e.g, page 18, forth member instead of fourth; pg 44, Teach Assistantships instead of Teaching).

Response: Thank you for noting our typos, we believe we have addressed them in the revised draft.

Comment: Further discussion is needed for the decision to have the Grad Group Chair serve as faculty advisor for all students for their first two years, and then to appoint advisors. What is the rationale for these decisions? Advising all students in their first two years is a significant amount of work for the grad group chair, and the chair and students might be better served if other faculty assist in the temporary advisement of students. Also, this heavy mentoring responsibility is not listed in the chair's responsibilities.

Response: We have changed the faculty advisor assignments so that the Grad Group Chair is the advisor for only the first year. Given that all first year students take the same courses, the advisory role duties are minimal relative to the other years of the program. The only circumstance under which the Grad Group Chair will continue as advisor is if the pairing is the preferred faculty advisor assignment given the student's research interests.

Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Response

Comment: Overall, this is a reasonably well-written proposal that articulates specific areas of emphasis for the planned expansion of the economics graduate program. My primary concern is about the relative size of the program proposed, compared to other graduate programs at UC Merced that similarly seek to expand during the course of our campus's growth.

Response: Thank you for your comments regarding our proposal. The relative size of our proposed program is on par with the size of the other social science graduate programs at UC Merced. Although this growth is modest, it is at a level where we feel we can obtain a solid foundation for future growth in the graduate program while maintaining a high level of academic quality that contributes to the distinction of our campus. We anticipate that as our faculty and university continue to grow we will be able to increase the number of graduate students.

Comment: The authors point out that UC Merced is the only UC campus exclusive of San Francisco that does not offer a PhD in economics. Given our small but growing size, I expect that there are a number of programs, both at the undergraduate and graduate level, that are found at all other UC campuses but not here at UC Merced. This is an unsurprising characteristic of the campus, and is not in itself an argument for starting a program.

Response: We definitely agree that there are other graduate programs present at other UCs that are not here at UC Merced and this fact alone does not justify the creation of our graduate program. This said, we do wish to be competitive with the other UCs in terms of academic reputation and our graduate student population. We also seek to leverage areas of excellence that have been developed on this campus to contribute to building a world-class research university. Given the focus of our graduate program and the fact that our fields of specialization are underserved within the UC System, we believe that our graduate program is uniquely positioned to excel at UC-wide, national and international levels. We have added some additional information to the proposal to highlight the uniqueness of our graduate program and the importance it will serve.

Comment: The graduate economics program is probably appropriate for this campus. However, the proposed student-faculty ratios are simply too low to be reasonably sustainable over the long-term. Careful re-analysis of the growth of faculty, as well as the planned growth in graduate students, should be considered. Some attention needs to be paid in the proposal to the probability that a much higher graduate student-faculty ratio is warranted, as well as a more realistic estimation of the anticipated number of TAs assigned to the program. Planning to support all graduate students on institutional funds, primarily TAs, is not realistic.

Response: Thank you for agreeing that a graduate program in economics is probably appropriate for this campus. To address your comment, as well as others made of a similar nature, we conducted a survey of the other graduate programs in the UC System. We found that our initial faculty to student ratios were a little bit too low and have increased our enrollment projections by 20%. As a result of this, as well as a reduction in our faculty growth projections, we will reach a faculty to student ratio of approximately 1:3.1 when the program reaches a steady-state. This is on par with the ratios observed at the University of California, Riverside and the University of California, Irvine. Our ratios are lower in the initial years of the program, but we feel this is necessary to ensure

that we are able to focus on producing a high quality graduate program. With regard to our use of TAs, we anticipate using the same graduate funding model as the other social sciences at UC Merced. In our survey of the other graduate programs in the UC System we found that between 90% and 100% of the students are funded using internal resources such as TAs. This is consistent with the other social sciences here at UC Merced and we anticipate being able to equally benefit as they have from the use of TAs. This said, it is worth pointing out that the selection of our fields are highly fundable and represent disciplines that can successfully obtain external funding. Furthermore, many of our faculty actively pursue external funding (one faculty has applied for three grants totaling over \$1.5M this year – this is uncommon in economics) so we anticipate that we will be able to provide more support for our graduate students using more external funds than many of our peer institutions in economics. We are also revising our major to incorporate additional large general education courses that will attract a range of majors and provide additional resources to TA positions. However, funding projections do involve a high degree of uncertainty.