

**GRADUATE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
2010-2011**

TO THE MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

During the academic year 2010-2011, the Graduate and Research Council (GRC) met fifteen (15) times in person and conducted some business via email with respect to its duties as outlined in UCM Senate Bylaw II.4.C. The issues that GRC considered and acted on this year are described as follows:

**CAMPUS
BUSINESS**

Accreditation (WASC)

On March 9, 2011 WASC performed its final site visit for accreditation. Although graduate study was not a focus of much of their report, the WASC committee was interested in graduate studies and the future of graduate program assessment. Chair Kello informed the committee that CCGA approved the proposals for Cognitive Information Sciences and Qualitative Systems Biology with the Psychology program pending. He also discussed the establishment of graduate Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and the University's commitment to building the graduate program by committing \$500k annually from 2009-2012. The WASC committee was interested in resource/funding allocation and its tie to assessment. Funding is not currently attached to program assessment, however it will be a consideration once the campus begins the process of program review for graduate programs.

Strategic Faculty Hires for UC Merced

Five FTE's were allocated by UCM as strategic hires for the campus, linked to the five strategic areas of research. GRC was charged with the task to draft the process and criteria by which the positions are filled. GRC created a subcommittee to draft the policy and submitted it to DivCo in October 2010. It was determined that each disciplinary group and graduate group would be able to submit one primary proposal. Proposal submissions were due February 15, 2011 and were reviewed by CAPRA for recommendation to the Administration.

2011-2013 Catalog

All graduate groups submitted revisions for the 2011-2013 catalog. GRC agreed to include the program learning outcomes (PLOs) for all groups and add the general masters and Ph.D. learning outcomes to the Graduate Division information. GRC reviewed and approved the revisions and forwarded them to the Graduate Division and the Registrar's Office.

POLICY

Minimum Grade Unit Requirements in Graduate Groups/Emphasis Areas

The GRC adopted a policy to implement a minimum grade unit requirement whereby all graduate students must be enrolled in a minimum of four (4) units of either upper division or graduate-level, letter-graded coursework while enrolled in a graduate program at UC Merced. The policy was adopted to avoid the possibility of graduate students completing their degree without a grade point average.

Masters and Doctoral Project Learning Outcomes

The GRC amended its Project Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for both Masters and Ph.D programs to include over-arching outcomes for consistency. It was determined that individual schools could create their own PLOs so long as they are consistent with UC requirements. PLOs were updated for each graduate group and will be included on the campus website and in the 2011-2013 Course Catalog.

Graduate Program Review Policy and Procedures

In March the GRC streamlined its Graduate Program Review Policy to simplify the program for self study in coordination with the undergraduate program review policy. Additionally, the graduate programs will be reviewed every seven years per the WASC EER draft. It was noted that for graduate program review; it is imperative to track post-degree graduate student placement for future records.

Academic Honesty Policy

The GRC was asked to review the Academic Honesty Policy by Vice Chair of Student Affairs Lawrence. GRC briefly discussed the Academic Honesty Policy and determined in most cases, academic honesty applies equally for undergraduate and graduate students, although the issue tends to be more pertinent at the undergraduate level. GRC anticipates reviewing comments from UGC on this policy. However, research misconduct, such as falsification of data, falls within the purview of the Vice Chancellor of Research (VCR). Thus the draft policy should indicate that research misconduct allegations are handled by the Office of Research. UGC will constitute a subcommittee to fully research other campuses and rewrite the UC Merced policy in AY2011-12.

Policy on Assurance of Laboratory Safety Compliance

GRC heard two presentations from Kevin Creed, Director of Environmental Health and Safety on the draft of the campus *Policy on Assurance of Laboratory Safety Compliance*. Six major issues were identified and broken down by tasks to create a plan for a true lab safety campus culture. The policy document spells out the roles and responsibilities of all parties. It also addresses procedures for repeat offenders and how to recognize and reward the safe model behaviors. Both Mary Miller and Sam Traina have reviewed the policy. The GRC endorsed the policy in May. Director Creed will present the policy to the Chancellor's cabinet for final approval.

Policy on Animal Use in Biological Courses

GRC drafted a policy for animal use in biological graduate courses.

"As part of their right to academic freedom, graduate course instructors at UC Merced reserve the right to grade students on the basis of hands-on work with living organisms and biological materials, in accordance with all applicable ethical standards and laws. Students must be informed of course requirements and grading policies at the beginning of each graduate course, but graduate course instructors are not required to provide alternate assignments if students object to assignments that require hands-on work with living organisms and biological materials."

Policy for Auditing Graduate Courses

GRC and UGC approved course auditing policies in Fall 2010. The following is the approved policy for auditing graduate courses:

"With the consent of the instructor, registered students and interested individuals are permitted to audit classes. Arrangements are made directly with the faculty member under any rules the faculty member may establish, and those auditing ordinarily do not participate in exams, or written papers. Priority for course resources such as classroom space and laboratory supplies is given to students who are fully enrolled in the course. Audited classes are not recorded on the student's class schedule or on academic transcripts."

Graduate Advisor Handbook

The Graduate Division asked the GRC to review and comment on revisions made to the Advisor Handbook. The vast majority of revisions were minor or previously approved by GRC. After discussion, the GRC agreed to approve the revised handbook subject to a few minor edits.

**COMMITTEE
BUSINESS****Separation of Graduate Research Council**

Last year CRE requested that GRC opine on the feasibility of splitting into two committees – a Graduate Council and a Research Council – similar to other UC campuses. GRC sent a memo to CRE stating that the outcomes of splitting may be beneficial, but only if more faculty were added to the committees, i.e. summing to more than the current number of faculty serving on GRC. At its meeting on March 3, 2011, GRC discussed the heavy workload of the committee and workload increases once graduate programs undergo program review. The committee felt it prohibitive to form a program review subcommittee given the current workload. Although the idea of splitting GRC into separate graduate and research councils has been rejected in the past because of lack of staffing; GRC proposed the graduate council be comprised of all Graduate Group Chairs on campus. This solution would not only solve the problem of finding people to sit on the committee, but it would also vastly improve communication between the Senate and graduate groups.

In March 2011, the standing committees of DivCo opined on the GRC request to separate. DivCo reviewed the request in April and determined that there is not enough eligible faculty to serve on an additional standing committee. DivCo also had issue with populating the Graduate Council with Graduate Chairs as the Chairs are administrative appointees. Division Bylaws state standing committees are populated by the Committee on Committees. It was suggested CoC pull from Graduate Chairs as a subset of a new committee when constituted in the future. DivCo recommended that 2011-12 subcommittees include members outside of the GRC so long as there is GRC representation. Other suggestions included; splitting GRC into two subcommittees that meet separately with the GRC Chair attending both meetings, include at least one Graduate Group Chair on GRC to improve communication between GRC and Graduate Groups.

Library Committee

A proposal to create a Library Committee as part of the Division standing committees was presented to GRC on May 5, 2011. The GRC presented the proposal to DivCo to create a standing Senate Library and Information Committee (LIC), standard on most campuses, that represents the faculty on matters of library operation and policy. GRC members noted that UCM faculty currently have little or no formal lines of communication with the library, and that this has caused a misalignment between library holdings and policies, and faculty and student needs. GRC noted that the LIC committee could be small and meet only monthly, and that there is faculty in the Humanities ready and willing to serve. The idea of this being a subcommittee of GRC was considered, but not favored because faculty interested in LIC may not be inclined to serve on GRC.

DivCo recommended GRC create a subcommittee of GRC as the Bylaws state that GRC oversees library issues; constituting a standing committee is not currently possible due to lack of faculty. CoC would take the Library subcommittee into consideration when populating the GRC slate. GRC was also reminded that non-GRC members interested in improving library relations can be appointed to the subcommittee.

Graduate Student Representation

In September, GRC approved the addition of UC Merced graduate student seats on the Institutional review Board (IRB) and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

GRADUATE EDUCATION

Graduate Emphasis Areas/Groups

The proposals for Graduate Program leading to the Ph.D. in Cognitive Information Sciences, Quantitative and Systems Biology and Psychological Sciences were approved by CCGA. CCGA approved QSB with the contingency that the peer-reviewed publication as a requirement for awarding a degree is removed and replaced with an alternative measure. CCGA took a stand against this practice because, to some degree, it relinquishes the Universities degree-giving authority. CCGA also noted that allowing exceptions to such a requirement is also problematic, because it would be difficult to ensure uniformity and fairness across students. Acceptable alternatives include requiring one or more publication submissions, or publication as an optional requirement that can be substituted by one or more other requirements.

The systemwide Academic Senate made a formal recommendation to the President for the final approval of the graduate degrees. President Yudof endorsed CIS, QSB and Psychology in March. The programs went through the final WASC approval in March and April and were formally approved in July.

Organized Research Unit (ORU) and Centralized Research Unit (CRU) Proposals

A proposal for the Spatial Analysis and Research Center (SpARC) CRU was presented to the GRC. The subcommittee formed for review of the proposal agreed it was well written and recommended approval from GRC. GRC approved the proposal in October 2010.

The Health Sciences Research Institute (HSRI) submitted an ORU proposal in Spring 2010. GRC formed subcommittees for each, reviewed each proposal in conjunction with CAPRA, and sent a memo requesting revisions. HSRI responded to GRC and CAPRA requests and resubmitted a revised proposal in March 2011. The proposal included endorsements from all three School Deans and letters of support from HSRI members. Review of the revised proposal will continue in Fall 2011.

GRC was tasked with creating a framework for how the campus handles ORU and Indirect Costs. A committee was selected and comprised of the GRC Chair, GRC Vice Chair, VCR and EVC. A draft of a Review Process for Campus ORUs was presented to the GRC for comment. The GRC review process will continue in Fall 2011.

Graduate Student Funding

EVC/Provost Alley committed \$500,000 annually to GRC for managing graduate student support from AY2009-2010 through AY2012-2013 with the agreement that funding could be carried over to the next fiscal year. In AY2010-2011, a total of \$488,008 was allocated to nine graduate groups for graduate student support and as summer fellowships for graduate students. \$40,553 was rolled over to the current academic year. In AY2010-2011 the GRC agreed to allocate \$105,500.00 to eleven graduate groups for recruiting, non-NRT GSR, purposes. The funds were distributed based on a ratio of primary faculty to graduate students in each group. An additional \$150,000 was allocated to the graduate groups for supporting current graduate students. The distribution was determined by several factors; number of recruiting faculty, number of applications, current NRT distribution, total number of faculty, out of state versus in state applications, international students, average graduate group size per faculty. Other factors considered: time to candidacy, percentage of admitted graduate students in previous years, and average acceptance.

The remaining funding was allocated to a competition for graduate students in the form of Summer Fellowships of up to \$7500 each which could be used for research stipends and other research related expenses or travel. Eighty-nine (89) proposals were received. Each proposal was assigned to one GRC member and one member of an ad-hoc committee comprised of a representative from each graduate group. The proposals were ranked from one (1) to ten (10) based on the call criteria.

AY2010-2011 was an exceptional year. It was discovered that the Graduate Division had unused USAP funding that needed to be distributed by the end of June. GRC determined a way to combine GRC and USAP funds to award a maximum number of students. The top fifty (50) students above the original GRC cut off line with a mean rank of 5.5 was given the maximum award of \$7500. All domestic students below the cut off line were sent a decline letter from GRC but told they were eligible for funding from the Graduate Division. Funding for domestic students under the cut off line was in the amount of \$7500, for a total of twenty-three (23) students. International students below the cut off line were sent a decline letter with no additional funding as USAP funds are restricted to domestic students. In total the GRC allocated \$232,500 of its funds toward Summer Fellowships leaving a roll over total of \$51,792 for AY2011-12. In total, the campus has invested \$932,455 in graduate programs over the past two years.

Course Request Forms (CRF)

GRC reviewed and approved 28 courses. MEAM 260, MEAM 231, MEAM 251, MEAM 236, MEAM 254, MEAM 232, ES 237, ES 201, ES 201L, ES 236, ES 237, ES 227, MATH 223, QSB 298, POLI 200, POLI 210, POLI 211, POLI 220, POLI 230, POLI 250, EECS 284, EECS 285, EECS 207, BEST 219, BEST 224, BEST 211, , PHYS 151

Approval for conjoined courses: ES 234/ENVE 130.

Fifteen (15) new courses: Twelve (12) course modifications: One (1) conjoined course
BEST 220 was declined approval. The committee was not in favor of giving course credit for videotaped lectures as they do not provide a level of interaction on par with on-site courses. Full opportunities for interactions between the instructor and students, and possibly among students as well, were viewed as critical for graduate education.

Requests from Graduate Division

Fellowships-

For each of the following fellowships, a GRC subcommittee evaluated and ranked the nominees and forwarded their rankings to the Graduate Division for award selection.

Miguel Velez Fellowship- 3 awarded in Fall for AY2010-11, 3 awarded in Spring for AY2011-12

Fletcher Jones- 2 awarded in Fall for AY2010-11, 1 awarded in Spring for AY 2011-12

Eugene Cota-Robles- 6 were recommended for award in Spring for AY2011-12

Faculty Mentor Program- 3 were recommended for award in Spring for AY2011-12

President's Dissertation Year- 2 awarded in Spring for AY2011-12

Chancellor's Graduate Fellowships- There were 9 fellowships available. A total of 14 students were identified as potential recipients to allow the Graduate Division to extend offers if the initial recipients turned down the fellowship.

Awards-

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award- A GRC subcommittee evaluated and ranked the nominations from each graduate group and forwarded their rankings to the Graduate Division for award selection. The Graduate Division requested GRC contribute to a cash award for each TA award. GRC agreed to a \$500 award and committed to provide half of the cash award with the other half provided by the School or Graduate Division. GRC provided a total of \$750 for the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards.

FACULTY

Faculty Research Grants

The Academic Senate received funds from EVC/Provost Alley in the amount of \$120,000 to be disbursed to the faculty for the annual GRC research/travel/shared equipment grant competition and Senate Awards. GRC revised its Call for Proposals to include the review process. The Call was distributed to the faculty with a February 15, 2011 deadline for submission. Twenty-eight (28) proposals were evaluated by GRC; fourteen (14) from the School of Natural Sciences, eleven (11) from the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts, and three (3) from the School of Engineering. Each proposal was assigned two reviewers; both from the same School but not in the same research group. GRC extensively discussed the selection of reviewers and determined it would be mutually beneficial for the reviewers to be from the same School as the PI. This approach is different from previous years. The GRC funded twenty-two (22) proposals for a total of \$114,602. Ten (10) were distributed to the School of Natural Sciences faculty, ten (10) were distributed to faculty in the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts and two (2) were distributed to faculty in the School of Engineering.

Senate Research Awards

For the third year in UC Merced's Academic Senate history, faculty were recognized with Senate Awards. GRC had jurisdiction over the following awards:

- Distinction in Research

The Senate Award for Distinction in Research (for tenured faculty) is intended to encourage and recognize individuals for research and/or other creative activities that have had a major impact on the field, either through a sustained record of contributions or through a specific, highly influential contribution. Awarded to Will Shadish, Professor of Psychology

- Distinguished Early Career Research

The Senate Award for Distinguished Early Career Research (for non-tenured faculty) is intended to encourage and recognize individuals for research and/or other creative activities that have had a major impact on the field, either through a sustained record of contributions or through a specific, highly influential contribution. Awarded to Ming-Hsuan Yang, Assistant Professor in Computer Science

- Graduate Teaching/Mentorship Award

The Senate Distinguished Graduate Teaching/Mentorship Award is intended to encourage and recognize individual excellence in teaching at the graduate level and mentorship of graduate students. Both of these are important functions of faculty at a research university. Awarded to Ignacio López-Calvo, Professor of Latin American Literature

GRC formed a review subcommittee for the three research award categories, evaluated the nominees, and selected the recipients. The Academic Senate announced all award recipients at the Meeting of the Division on April 14, 2011.

Hellman Fellows Program

The Hellman Foundation awarded UC Merced \$100k per year for five years with the possibility to make the funding permanent. The awards are open to support assistant professors in all fields of study at UC Merced who have served at least two years at the assistant professor rank as evidence of their promise of distinction.

Criterion for the award include: the quality of the research proposed is most important, awards are to be made without regard to the apparent timeliness or popularity of the field of study and without reference to ethnicity or gender; preference may be given to research not supported substantially by other sources and to faculty who have not previously received an award from the fund.

GRC was asked by the EVC to help develop the Call for proposals as well as create a review panel. GRC considered award amounts of different sizes (20K, 25K, 33K), and agreed with the EVC that a \$20k maximum was the best option to 1) support as many junior faculty as possible and 2) given the criterion of at least 1/3 of the awards for SSHA faculty (2 of 5 would be 40%).

GRC suggested that the review process be further specified and made explicit in the Call. GRC suggested that each proposal be reviewed by at least two (2) faculty members (to eventually include prior Hellman awardees), and rated on merit as well as need for bridge funding. In this case, "need" could be with respect to the individual, as well as the project and area of research. To better assess the former, the proposer could be asked to include internal and external fund balances at the time of submission, including future commitments. Ratings could be weighted equally and then proposals would be ranked accordingly. Given Senate workload, reviews would not include written feedback. The process proposed by the GRC mirrors the process for Faculty Research Grants and Summer Fellowships for graduate students.

GRC suggestions were sent to the EVC in April and a formal Call was sent to sixteen (16) eligible junior faculty. Twelve proposals were submitted, 75% of eligible faculty. A subcommittee of GRC members was constituted with one representative from each School. The proposals were ranked and recommendations were sent to the EVC. Awards were presented to three (3) faculty in SSHA and two (2) in SNS.

**DIVISION
BUSINESS****Memos to DivCo**

In response to DivCo requests, GRC submitted memos to DivCo on the following issues: response to the proposed UC Merced Academic Calendars 2013-2016, establishment of a Graduate Course Auditing Policy, Funding Streams, GSA grievance letter, Academic Honesty Policy, and Hellman Award process.

Requests from CRE

The Committee on Rules & Elections (CRE) requested a review of the UCM Bylaws for minor edits. GRC did not identify any changes and approved the Bylaws as they stand.

**SYSTEM-
WIDE
BUSINESS****Systemwide Items Reviewed by GRC**

- Post Employee Benefits
- Proposal to Rename Fees as Tuition
- UCOP Funding Streams
- Systemwide Library Planning Task Force Report

Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA)

GRC Chair Christopher Kello's reports on CCGA activities included the following:

- Budget
- Review of graduate group proposals
- Self-supporting programs and professional fees

- CCGA plans to protect graduate programs at risk for UC downsizing
- CCGA approval of the graduate program proposals for Cognitive and Information Sciences, Quantitative Systems Biology and Psychological Sciences pending minor revisions
- Re-benching and UCOP plans for Funding Streams
- Differential fees arguments pro and con

University Committee on Research Policy (UCORP)

UC Merced did not have representation on UCORP this year.

University Committee on Computer Communications (UCCC)

GRC representative Professor, Maurizio Forte reports on UCCC activities included the following:

- Pod casting and online instruction
- Supercomputing resources and resource sharing
- Wireless infrastructure
- Opti-puter: could be part of UC-wide available resources for a fee if the UC decides to create an infrastructure to allow sharing
- E-Textbooks
- Online instruction
- Private Security

GRC also benefited from consultation and reports throughout the year from VCR Traina and EVC/Provost Alley.

NEXT YEAR'S BUSINESS

Financial Obligations to Graduate Students

GRC requested each graduate group identify their policy on financial obligations to graduate students. The policy was to include formal offers of TA and GSR support that extend over specified periods of time and the outline of a formalized process by which an obligation of support is terminated prior to the contract end date. This process had to specify the conditions that may be cause for early termination, and include review and voting by faculty committee members. No graduate groups had a formalized policy regarding early termination and requested that the Graduate Division and GRC create a UCM policy. VCR Traina will continue working on a policy to present to the GRC and graduate groups in Fall 2011.

Health Sciences Research Institute

Review Health Sciences Research Institute (HSRI) revised Organized Research Unit (ORU) proposal

Academic Honesty Policy

GRC will join UGC as part of a subcommittee to review and rewrite the current UC Merced Academic Honesty Policy.

ORU

Approve CAPRA revisions to the ORU Proposal Review Process and send a detailed memo to DivCo.

Review the revised HSRI proposal.

Continue working on framework for how the campus handles ORU and Indirect Costs.

EECS Bylaw 55 Unit

In March 2011, GRC reviewed and commented on the draft Policies, Procedures and Bylaws for the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) graduate group. Concerns expressed revolved around the examination process and adjudication. GRC hopes to see a CCGA proposal from the group in the Fall 2011.

Course Buy-Out Policy

Vice Chair Shadish researched how course buy outs are handled on other UC campuses. Within the system, buyout policies are typically housed at the school level not at the university level. The amount paid for a buy out varies, however campuses usually funnel the money back in to the associated school as incentive to the deans to allow buy outs. The dean is allowed to spend buy out funds above and beyond the expense of an instructor. GRC agreed that it is important for the campus to set guidelines for course buy outs and will work on a draft to present to the EVC and Chancellor.

Separate Graduate and Research Councils

Continue discussions with Division Council to split the committee into two separate committees; Graduate Council and Research Council

Library Subcommittee

Establish new Library subcommittee with goal to become a standing Senate committee

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Kello, Chair (SSHA), CCGA Representative

William Shadish, Vice Chair (SSHA)

David Kelley (NS)

Michael Spivey (SSHA)

Carolyn Frank (NS)

Ignacio Lopez-Calvo (SSHA)

Matt Meyer (NS)

Ariel Escobar (ENG)

Shawn Newsam (ENG)

Sholeh Quinn (SSHA)

Ex-Officio

Evan Heit, Divisional Council Chair (SSHA)

Anne Kelley, Divisional Council Vice Chair (NS)

Sam Traina, VCR/Dean of the Graduate Division (ENG)

Student Representative

Katie Amrine (NS)