GRADUATE AND RESEARCH COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
2011-2012

TO THE MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

During the academic year 2011-2012, the Graduate and Research Council (GRC) met 14 times in person and conducted some business via email with respect to its duties as outlined in UCM Senate Bylaw II.IV.3.B. The issues that GRC considered and acted on this year are described as follows:

CAMPUS BUSINESS

SACAP- Digital Assessment Working Group (DAWG) Recommendations

GRC reviewed the DAWG recommendations on course evaluations on September 28. The committee found the information in the report for online evaluations to be innocuous and uncontroversial. It was noted that online evaluations are not ideal in terms of completion rates, but will be cost effective and ease the burden on staff when compiling the evaluation comments. GRC forwarded comments to SACAP.

Compensation for Graduate Group Chairs

Last year DivCo sent a request to the administration to standardize Graduate Group Chair compensation for the campus. The committee discussed the possibility that as the campus matures Bylaw 55 Unit Chairs may have a larger workload relative to Graduate Group Chairs. However, Graduate Group Chairs' workload could be substantial in years when the program undergoes Program Review. In a memo to DivCo, GRC recommended that the amount of compensation for these positions be reviewed periodically to ensure it is consistent with workload, as it is likely the workload levels will fluctuate over time.

POLICY

Use of Grant-Generated Academic Year Salary Funds

GRC sent a formal request to the Deans and the Executive Committees to consider establishing a policy for course buy-out. GRC reviewed information from other UC campuses and decided that a campus-wide policy at UCM would be neither consistent with other UC campuses, nor wise, given the different needs of the schools. Therefore, GRC recommended that each school consider whether to adopt or adapt an appropriate course buy-out policy.

Conjoined Courses

The Registrar, UGC, and GRC had previously discussed the merits of having a policy in which the schools would submit lists for conjoined courses prior to each semester for approval by the committees. However, GRC did not feel that the policy was necessary, but instead thought the current CRF process was sufficient for conjoined course approval. Any change in such courses will continue to be reflected in the form of a modified CRF submitted to both UGC and GRC.

Approval Policy for Online and remote courses

GRC reviewed UGC's draft Policy for Online Courses, which the council viewed more as a set of guiding principals for evaluating proposed online courses. GRC drafted and approved its own policy, which it based on that of UGC for consistency purposes. One minor edit was made to the supplemental questionnaire, so that it was more appropriate for graduate instruction with regard to faculty contact hours:

> "Revised Question 3: The course must at least provide an equivalent educational experience for students. What specific pedagogical advantages does the technologically mediated format offer and how will potential detriments be countered? Specifically, how will the instructor maintain the high proportion of faculty contact hours needed for graduate education?"

The Supplemental Questions for Distance or Blended Course Approval Requests was approved by the Division Council on February 15, 2012.

Credit Hour Policy

The Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) requested that GRC and UGC address a new campus Credit Hour Policy which was adopted by the WASC Commission in response to new regulations promulgated by the U.S. Department of Education. In particular, adherence to the policy will be reviewed during all future substantive change and accreditation reviews. In February, GRC endorsed the revised Credit Hour Policy proposed by UGC and that includes the assignment of credit hours for online courses. The Division Council approved the policy on February 29, 2012.

Policy on the Posthumous Awarding of Degrees and Certificates of Attendance

GRC approved the draft policy, written by the Registrar and based on similar policies at other UC campuses.

UCM Organized Research Unit Proposal Review Process

The Division Council approved the Organized Research Unit (ORU) Proposal Review Process drafted by CAPRA and vetted by GRC. The process was revised to ensure there is some calibration of the proposal prior to it being submitted to the GRC. The review must now include comments from appropriate deans, directors and others on issues of academic quality and significance, organizational design and support, budget, and space. Additionally, the Vice Chancellor for Research must submit the completed ORU proposal package with a synopsis of the dean's comments to the Academic Senate Office for distribution to GRC. The process was also edited so that it aligned with UC Merced Bylaws.

Program Review Policy and Procedures

GRC made several edits to the Program Review Policy and Procedures including:
- CoC appoints the Program Review Committee (PRC) members external to GRC.
- Language was made consistent for the constitution of the subcommittee.
- GRC now determines the final review cycle while the PRC makes recommendations to GRC regarding the review cycle.

- PRC conflict of interest statement was added.
- PRC appointments section was added.
- Faculty survey confidentiality language was added to reflect DivCo-approved changes to the Undergraduate Program Review Policy.
- The Review Team specifically includes two to three external reviewers.
- The title of Vice Provost for Research (VPR) now appropriately reflects the title of Vice Chancellor for Research (VCR).
- Minor grammar and formatting revisions were made throughout.

The Program Review Policy and Procedures was approved and distributed by Division Council on February 29, 2012.

Graduate Course and Program Learning Outcomes
The GRC approved guidelines for developing Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and Project Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for both master's and doctoral programs to ensure an overarching connection between CLOs and PLOs are communicated in syllabi and curriculum maps so that students and faculty are able to develop holistic views of the major.

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

Policy for Lecture Teaching Graduate Courses
GRC was asked to opine on the appropriateness of having non-ladder rank faculty teach graduate-level courses. GRC reviewed relevant information from other UC campuses and decided to draft a policy based on such. GRC approved the draft Policy for Non-Ladder Faculty Eligibility to Teach Graduate Courses on May 30, 2012. The policy was disseminated to DivCo on June 6.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS
Standing Library Subcommittee
Last year, DivCo charged GRC with creating a library subcommittee comprised of GRC and UGC representatives, as well as outside members. The committee would advise GRC on library and archival matters, including budget, collection development, research data support, and space allocation, as well as serve as liaison between faculty and the library administration. In September GRC constituted the Library subcommittee: Sholeh Quinn, Chair and campus liaison for the University Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication (UCOLASC); Rob Innes, GRC representative; and Holley Moyes, SSHA faculty member. The subcommittee is appointed for one academic year, will meet approximately twice per semester, and will report to GRC. On January 18, GRC sent a memo to the EVC&Provost, endorsing the library as the campus curator for data management.

Program Review
The Graduate Program Review Cycle, which was approved by DivCo in June, is scheduled to begin next year, AY 2012-2013. Programs will undergo review based on the year in which they began enrolling students into the Interim-Individual Graduate Program (IGP) umbrella or the year they were approved by CCGA as a stand-along program. The review cycle starts over every seven years. The Committee on committees will be tasked with populating the Graduate Program Review Committee for Fall 2012.

Graduate programs were invited to coordinate their Program Reviews with that of their undergraduate counterparts. This would generally result in moving up the schedule for the graduate group review to match the schedule for the undergraduate review; although, in a few cases an exception would be considered. This year, Mechanical Engineering and Applied Mechanics (MEAM) declined the opportunity to coordinate review with the Mechanical Engineering Program.

Programs scheduled for review in 2012-2013 include Social and Cognitive Sciences, which includes Economics, Political Science, and Sociology. Economics is the only group that has had graduate student enrollments for seven years; therefore, GRC will recommend an amended review process for them.

Master's (M.A. and M.S.) Courses
The Graduate Division requested clarification on whether graduate research units, the 295-299 series, counts as credit towards the degree's 20 required units from the 200 series courses. Currently, 295-299 do not count as credit toward the 20 units. The Graduate Advisor Handbook stated for MS and MA students under Thesis Plan I, "In addition to the thesis, a minimum of 24 semester units in approved courses is also required, at least 20 of which must be earned in 200 series graduate-level courses exclusive of credit given for thesis research and preparation."

GRC requested feedback from the Graduate Groups and received only one response. After researching other UC campus policies, GRC chose to amend the Graduate Advisors Handbook to state that *"at least 50% of* (minimum semester units) *must be earned in 200 series graduate-level courses exclusive of courses numbered from 295-299."*

CCGA discussed and approved the recommendation on March 7, 2012. The Graduate Advisors Handbook was revised and circulated on March 14, 2012.

Graduate Group Review of Policies and Procedures
GRC implemented a practice of annually reviewing Graduate Group Policies and Procedures to ensure that changes in policies are consistent with systemwide and campus policy, as well as to provide a central location for current policies and procedures. A general memorandum was sent to all graduate groups, addressing two recurring issues in Graduate Group Policies and Procedures:

1. Conditional Pass- GRC recommended limiting the number of chances to retake an exam to one, except for extenuating circumstances or unless the proposal makes a clear case that more than one retake is the norm in that discipline at other UC campuses. In the case of minor revisions, a graduate group may wish to allow committees to withhold a Pass on an exam pending revisions.
2. Specification of graduate student fees and stipends in the Graduate Group Policies and Procedures- To ensure accuracy, GRC recommended graduate groups not include specific dollar amounts for fees, but rather refer to the Graduate Division website for the most current information. Regarding student stipends, GRC recommended that graduate groups provide a representative range of stipends that students currently receive, and include a clear disclaimer that the amounts listed are subject to change without notice and that the final stipend will appear in the student's acceptance letter.

In March 2011, GRC reviewed and requested revisions to the policies and bylaws for Electrical Engineering and Computer Sciences (EECS). Concerns revolved around the examination process and adjudication. The group was specifically asked to revise their policy to include a committee for the M.S. thesis so that it adheres to campus policy. GRC also requested bylaw revisions from Environmental Systems (ES) and asked that it consider the composition of the Academic Advising Committee and provide clarification on course requirements. Quantitative Systems Biology voted to amend its bylaws. GRC approved the minor revisions.

Graduate Research Council Future Organization
On February 21, Chair Shadish sent a memo to the council regarding a formalized division of tasks for future GRCs. The GRC Chair proposed changing the organization structure of the council so that workload would be evenly distributed among members. Members were concerned that creating additional committees for GRC might create additional work. GRC agreed to continue handling business on an ad hoc basis and advocating for splitting the council into a Graduate Committee and a Research Committee.

GRADUATE EDUCATION
CCGA Approved Graduate Programs
The following programs have been approved by CCGA: Environmental Systems (2014-2015), Quantitative Systems Biology (2018-2019), Psychology (2018-2019), and Cognitive and Information Systems (2018-2019). Listed inside of the parenthesis are the academic years in which each program will undergo Program Review.

Pending CCGA Proposals:
· Chemistry and Chemical Biology- GRC assigned a subcommittee to conduct an initial review of the proposal and make recommendations to GRC. In November GRC sent the CCGA proposal back to the group to make minor edits, define the relationship between the master's and doctoral programs, better define specialization and how it fits with the current UCM faculty and areas of expertise, define programs' competitive edge for CCB applicants, more evidence of "student demand" (required by WASC), explain discrepancy of number

of faculty versus faculty that run comparable programs. GRC, CAPRA and subsequently Division Council recommended approval of The Chemistry and Chemical Biology CCGA proposal. The proposal was transmitted to the Vice Chancellor for Research who in turn recommended approval from the Executive Vice Chancellor and Chancellor. The Chancellor's office submitted the proposal to CCGA on February 27, 2012.

- Interdisciplinary Humanities, formerly individualized studies World Cultures Graduate Group- Interdisciplinary Humanities, currently World Cultures and History, submitted its preliminary CCGA proposal to GRC in December of 2011. The proposal was sent out for review to three identified reviewers. GRC returned the proposal with its comments on June 29.

Health Sciences Research Institute

The Health Sciences Research Institute (HSRI) proposal was originally submitted to GRC in AY 2009-2010. In response to GRC's request for revisions, HSRI resubmitted its ORU proposal in Spring 2011. In Summer 2011 the institute requested that GRC place a hold on its review, and a further-revised proposal was sent to council in October 2011. This latter proposal maintained the elements and essence of the original proposal; however, it reflected an added emphasis on how HSRI will translate research into changes in policy, practice, behavior, and/or treatment. The revision aimed to increase the visibility of health research at UC Merced, to increase extramural donations, and to improve researchers' competitiveness for extramural funding.

GRC assigned a subcommittee, comprised of three reviewers. The subcommittee found the proposal favorable, though it suggested edits to further strengthen it. An external review committee was assembled in February and was comprised of Fred Meyers, Executive Associate Dean, UC Davis School of Medicine; Michael Peterson, Vice Chair of Medicine, UCSF Fresno; and Stan Glantz -Director, Center for Tobacco Control Research and Education, UCSF. The principal concern of the external review committee was funding. However, according to EVC Alley, two years worth of operational funding had already been budgeted for HSRI.

On April 4, the HSRI proposal was endorsed by GRC and then forwarded to DivCo for approval.

Course Request Forms (CRF)

GRC reviewed and approved 16 courses.

- Approval for conjoined/cross-listed courses: ES 212/ESS112, EECS 277/CSE 177
- Approval for modified courses: EECS 290, PSY 202A, PSY 202B, PSY 209, PSY 280, PSY 221, MEAM 210
- Approval for new courses: EECS 265, EECS 267, WCH 264, MEAM 261, MEAM 229, PSY 225, PSY 225

On September 14, GRC voted to adopt the UGC Calendar for Academic Programs. In the past GRC has loosely followed the same deadlines set by UGC for CRFs and program changes, though it has not officially communicated this to graduate groups.

GRADUATE GROUP FUNDING
Distribution Model for Graduate Funding

The funding distribution model for graduate funding changed due primarily to the following three factors:

1. The Chancellor is committed to finding every opportunity to fund and grow the graduate student population.
2. The new UCOP funding streams model allows the campuses to keep all of its revenues and pay UCOP a tax of 1.6%, and assigns each graduate group a separate account and each school an NRT account. The Dean's Office at each school will manage the funds and allow each graduate group to negotiate its share of the funds.
3. The campus will pay 100% of tuition and fees for every Teaching Assistant. The savings in the instructional budget will stay in the schools and can only be used for graduate student support, e.g., GSR, NRT, fees, TAs, or additional staff support for graduate programs. The accounts will not be swept at the end of each year, so the funds can be recycled through the school for continuous funding.

Eligibility of AB130 Graduate Students
GRC agreed that graduate students that fall under the AB-130 classification should be considered eligible for non-state funding (e.g., private funding), so long as it is a legal use of the funds.

Summer Fellowships
AY 2011-2012 is the final year for the EVC/Provost's annual commitment of $500,000 to GRC for managing student support. Funds are allocated as graduate student support for each graduate group and as student summer fellowships. In AY 2009-2010 a total of $488,008 was allocated to nine graduate groups and to student Summer Fellowships. In AY 2010-2011 at total of $473,008 was allocated to 11 graduate groups and to student Summer Fellowships. AY 2010-2011 Summer Fellowships were supplemented by a surplus of USAP funds, allowing GRC to roll over $51,795 to AY 2011-2012.

Each year the GRC has refined its way of distributing funds based on feedback from the Graduate Division, graduate groups, schools and graduate students. $250,001 was distributed to 11 graduate groups for recruitment and retention and determined by several factors, including number of recruiting faculty with at least one graduate student advisee, faculty in their first and second year (assuming these faculty will recruit), average graduate group size per faculty.

The remaining funding was appropriated for a competition for graduate students in the form of Summer Fellowships of up to $7500 each. The fellowships could be used for research stipends or travel. GRC conducted its review differently this year than it had in the past. Fellowship proposals were submitted directly to the students' Graduate Group Chairs and ranked by the group faculty based on criteria set by GRC in the following order: 1) student accomplishments and credentials, 2) student progress to degree, and 3) quality of the proposed project. The proposals included a list of the students' current forms of summer support. All graduate students were eligible to apply for the funding this year. Students with guaranteed summer funding from other sources, such as grants, were eligible for an award of a lesser amount for research-related expenses, such as travel. Rankings were combined with students'

GRE scores and GPA and then provided to GRC. The council assigned a percent of available Summer Fellowship funds to each graduate group proportionately based on the number of currently enrolled students. GRC then awarded Summer Fellowships to applicants in the order specified by each graduate group until all funds were used.

One-hundred and thirty-three student proposals were submitted to the graduate groups. GRC awarded 49 fellowships, totaling $301,001.

GRADUATE DIVISION FUNDING
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- There were two awards available and four applicants.
· Fletcher Jones- There was one award available and 12 applicants.
· Faculty Mentor Program- There was one award available and 11 applicants.
· President's Dissertation Year- There was one award available and eight applicants.
· Eugene Cota-Robles- There were four fellowships available. Fifteen incoming students were identified as potential recipients, allowing the Graduate Division to extend additional offers if the initial recipients turned down the fellowship. Moving forward, GRC will request the Graduate Division to provide its reasoning for nominations, as well as if fellowship offers should be increased to four years instead of two.
· Chancellor's Graduate Fellowships- There were four fellowships available. Nineteen students were identified as potential recipients, allowing the Graduate Division to extend additional offers if the initial recipients turned down the fellowships. The fellowships were awarded in two rounds. Moving forward, GRC will require the graduate groups to submit a statement for each nominee, including a concise summary of the key factors that the group considered when making their nominations.

Graduate students asked that GRC discuss the requirement that students advance to candidacy before becoming eligible for some internal fellowships. This criteria works for students in SNS and SOE, where they advance to candidacy in their second year, but not in SSHA where they advance to candidacy in their third year. In the case of the Fletcher Jones Fellowship, the requirement was set by the donor of the fellowship. Criteria prescribed by donors are normally difficult to change. GRC requested clarification on the flexibility of the requirements for the internal fellowships.

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. GRC funds half of the $500 cash award with the other half provided by the student's school or the Graduate Division. GRC provided a total of $750 for the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards.

FACULTY FUNDING

Faculty Research Grants

The Academic Senate received $123,000 from the EVC/Provost to disburse to the faculty for the annual GRC research/travel/shared equipment grant competition. The Call for the grant was distributed to the faculty with a March 1, 2012 application deadline. Thirty-five proposals were submitted to GRC. Each proposal was assigned two reviewers and given a rating on a scale of 1-5 for merit and need. 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 22 proposals, totaling of $122,974. Twelve were distributed to the School of Natural Sciences faculty; eight were distributed to faculty in the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts, and two were distributed to faculty in the School of Engineering.

Senate Research Awards

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

· Distinction in Research- Awarded to Thomas Hansford, Associate Professor of Political Science.
· Distinguished Early Career Research- Awarded to Jessica Trounstine, Assistant Professor of Political Science.
· Graduate Teaching/Mentorship Award- Awarded to Jennifer Manilay, Associate Professor of Biology.

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 12, 2012.

COMMUNICATIONS

Memos to DivCo

In response to DivCo requests, GRC submitted memos to DivCo on Graduate Group Chair compensation, ORU review process, constitution of a Library subcommittee, Graduate Program Review schedule, CITRIS Report, Credit Hour Policy, Graduate Online Course Policy, Graduate Program Review Policy & Procedures, Academic Calendars, Guidelines for Graduate CLOs and PLOs, ShaRCS Report, and UCAAD Salary Equity Report.

Memos to VCR Traina

GRC submitted memos to the Vice Chancellor for Research recommending the UC Berkeley Dissertation/Thesis Release Forms be adapted for UC Merced's use.

REQUESTS FROM CRE

The Committee on Rules & Elections (CRE) requested GRC's review of the minor edits it made to the UCM Bylaws. GRC agreed with the edits and approved the Bylaws as presented. GRC also reviewed the UCM Regulations, which only had specific requirements for undergraduate studies. GRC reviewed graduate regulations of other UC campuses and decided to draft a set for UC Merced.

SYSTEMWIDE BUSINESS

Systemwide Items Reviewed by GRC
- UCAAD Salary Equity Report- October 5, 2011.
- ShaRCS Research Computing Report- October 19, 2011.
- UC Observatories Review- February 15, 2012.

Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA)
The GRC Chair's reported on CCGA activities included the following:
- Budget.
- Review procedure of graduate group proposals.
- Systemwide Implementation Task Force- initial report recommended graduate student funding ratios are set lower than undergraduate ratios. 10 to 1 versus 27 to 1.
- Graduate student support in relation to post-doc salaries.
- WASC consideration of an alternative approach to accreditation that would only require graduate courses to go through WASC substantive change review.
- 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 Chemistry and Chemical Biology.
- Unionizing graduate student researchers.
- Endorsement of Governor Brown's tax proposal to avoid an increase in tuition for graduate students if the tax proposal does not pass.
- Re-benching and UCOP plans for Funding Streams.

University Committee on Research Policy (UCORP)
The GRC representative reported on UCORP activities included the following:
- External Review of the UC Observatories.
- Creation of the Taskforce on Principles, Process and Assessment of University-wide Research (PPA).
- Competitive Offers for Graduate Student Admissions.
- CITRIS Academic Review.

University Committee on Computer Communications (UCCC)
The GRC representative reported on UCCC activities included the following:
- Shared Research Computing Services (ShaRCS).
- Systemwide Privacy and Security Initiative.
- Web Conference Software.
- Pedagogical report on instructional software used in all campuses.
- Microsoft and Adobe pilot program for data conferencing systems.
- Proposal to abolish UCCC.

GRC also benefited from consultation and reports throughout the year from the Vice Chancellor for Research and the EVC/Provost.

NEXT YEAR'S BUSINESS

- Align GRC and UCM procedures for establishing new graduate emphasis and programs with those in the CCGA Handbook.
- Draft Graduate Regulations.

Respectfully submitted,
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Ex-Officio
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