<center>UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL (UGC)</center>

<center>**PROCEDURES AND POLICIES FOR APPROVAL OF NEW UNDERGRADUATE COURSES AND UNDERGRADUATE COURSE CHANGES**</center>

<center>Revised September 2, 2022 – Policy effective September 2, 2022</center>

I. Board of Regents Bylaw 40.1 Duties and Powers of the Academic Senate:

The Regents recognize that faculty participation in the shared governance of the University of California through the agency of the Academic Senate ensures the quality of instruction, research and public service at the University and protects academic freedom. The Academic Senate shall perform such duties as the Board may direct and shall exercise such powers as the Board may confer upon it. The Academic Senate, subject to the approval of the Board, shall determine the conditions for admission and for certificates and degrees, and recommend to the President all candidates for degrees. The Academic Senate shall authorize and supervise all courses and curricula, except in the Hastings College of the Law, in professional schools offering work at the graduate level only, and over non-degree courses in the University Extension. No change in the curriculum of a college or professional school shall be made by the Academic Senate until such change shall have been submitted to the formal consideration of the faculty concerned. The Academic Senate may select committees to advise the President and Chancellors on campus and University budgets and, through the President, or to the Regents directly by a formal Memorial, may address the Board on any matter pertaining to the conduct and welfare of the University.

II. General Policy:

According to the UCM Bylaws, Undergraduate Council (UGC) is charged on behalf of the Division to review and approve all new undergraduate courses and modifications to existing undergraduate courses, including withdrawal, conduct, credit valuation, description, and classification of existing courses. After an undergraduate course is approved by UGC, it is transmitted to the Registrar for inclusion in the electronic course system and the UCM Catalog. No undergraduate course can be offered for enrollment and no official change to an existing course can be made by the Registrar without UGC approval.

Approval of new undergraduate courses and course modifications are transmitted to UGC via the existing web-based system (https://ucmerced.curriculog.com/). Questions regarding the electronic system submittal should be addressed to the Curriculog system administrator.

III. Procedure for Course Proposal Submission:

1. *Timeline:* Submission of Course Proposals (CPs) to UGC for approval should adhere to the deadlines in the annual calendar for academic programs and courses prepared by UGC at the beginning of each academic year. **Note that UGC will not consider CPs for approval during winter break or during summer**.

2. *School Curriculum, Executive Committee, Dean, and Assessment Approvals/Reviews:* All CPs must be approved by the Curriculum Committee (CC) of

the School (or other faculty committee designated to review curricular matters e.g. School Executive Committee) submitting the CP. Related resources are reviewed and approved by the Dean of the School (or designee), before the CP is submitted for UGC approval. All newly developed or revised CPs must include evaluation of the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) requirements by program faculty. The Assessment step in Curriculog verifies the connections between the course and program learning outcomes (CLOs and PLOs respectively) to illustrate a course's contribution to the student's overall education in the program. If General Education is part of the CP proposal, then, review of those program outcomes would confirm alignment with campus requirements. This learning outcome focus is not just for campus review purposes, but also for external considerations -- including system wide policies and accreditation requirements.

It is the responsibility of the School Curriculum or Executive Committees to review course content, programmatic contribution, overlap with other courses, and resource implications within the context of the specific program in the School.

3. ***Scope and Organization of Courses:*** Without seeking to infringe on School, departmental, or program judgment as to content of courses, the Undergraduate Council recommends the following criteria when evaluating a course request:

   1. The course should have a clear and essential place in the overall offering of the department or program, either filling a gap in the existing course structure, or strengthening that structure without duplication or needless overlapping. As a rule, duplication of courses normally offered by another department or program and held to lie within its range, is not approved. In those instances, the respective departmental units may wish to consider multiple listing the course."[1]

4. ***Curriculog***: New and revised courses are submitted for review and approval using Curriculog.

   All the required fields in Curriculog must be filled. The information in the "course description" field must align with the catalog copy. A specific description of how credits are earned, through contact hours and preparatory, non-contact work, is required in the "Instructional Types and Contact Hours" section of Curriculog.

   The content of the "course's general design" field should aid reviewers in understanding whether proper learning assessment tools are part of the course and include sufficient information on format, topics, and the types of readings (e.g. textbooks, novels, essays, journal articles, etc.) to adequately assess student workload and potential overlap with other existing or proposed courses.

   This information provides foundation for the syllabus, and is intended to give reviewers information about the general nature and subject of the course - actual details of the course (e.g., specific lecture topics or emphases, readings, or student assignments) may vary with course delivery and instructor.

5. ***General Education***: For courses satisfying General Education, the CP should

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[1] Please refer to page 3 of the Course Proposal Style Guide:
https://senate.ucmerced.edu/sites/senate.ucmerced.edu/files/page/documents/course_proposal_style_guide_ugcapproved_0.pdf

include a description of how the course addresses the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (GE PLO) at UC Merced and how their course learning outcomes connect to the GE PLO they have selected.

6. ***Modifications to an existing course*** are reviewed using the regular review process if they fall under the following categories:

- **New Description**
- **Unit Change**
- **Grading Option Change**
- **Addition of Conjoined or Cross-Listing**
- **Course Modality Change**

All other types of modifications are reviewed in an abbreviated process. In both cases, instructors must indicate briefly in the explanation box the reason for the proposed change(s).

7. ***Cross-listed courses*** are those undergraduate courses (numbered 1 to 199) that have different prefixes, names, and/or course numbers but are intended to be offered as the same course (i.e., same meeting time, requirements, units, and course description). Each course that is cross-listed with another course must have its own CP that indicates the corresponding cross-listed course. Cross-listed courses must have the same course requirements, number of units, prerequisite courses, course description, and anticipated resources. If cross-listed courses originate within different Schools, each School CC/EC must approve the course and the Dean of each School must approve the corresponding CP.

8. ***Conjoined courses*** are those courses that are taught concurrently as both an advanced upper division undergraduate and an introductory graduate course. As per SR 762[2], undergraduate and graduate versions of conjoined courses "must have clearly differentiated and unique performance criteria, requirements, and goals." Each course that is conjoined with another course must have its own CP that indicates the corresponding conjoined course. The graduate version of the course must be reviewed and approved by Graduate Council.

9. ***Online or Hybrid courses*** are undergraduate courses that include blended or online education elements. The following is a brief definition to clarify course units and activities. UC Merced courses are categorized by the following instructional delivery modes[3]:
    - Traditional Face-to-Face – 100% to 70% of course contact hours are delivered in person with the outstanding percentage of contact hours (between 0% and 29%) delivered online or via other distance education technologies (e.g., satellite, audioconference, etc.). Per the UC Merced Credit Hour Policy, contact hours are defined as the number of in-class hours in lecture, seminar, discussion, field,

[2] No student, by merely performing additional work, may receive upper division credit for a lower division course or graduate credit for an undergraduate course. Related courses may share lectures, laboratories or other common content but must have clearly differentiated and unique performance criteria, requirements, and goals. (Am 2 Dec 81)

[3] Allen, E., Seaman, J., and Garrett, R. (2007) Blending In: The Extent and Promise of Blended Education in the United States Sloan Consortium, p. 10.

laboratory, tutorial, and/or studio. Non-contact hours are the number of hours students must dedicate outside of the classroom in support of each in-class element, based on the instructor's assessment of required activities (i.e., assignments, fieldwork, laboratory work, performance, practice, preparation for exams, reading, research, and writing) and specified learning objectives for the course. (For example, a 4-unit class expects 12 hours of work per week per term[4]. This typically consists of 3 hours of in-class time – contact hours - and 9 non-contact hours of work done outside of the classroom per week.)

- Hybrid/Blended –Fewer than 70%, but more than 0%, of course contact hours are delivered in person with the outstanding percentage of contact hours (30% or more, but less than 100%) delivered online or via other distance education technologies. This modality blends online and in-person delivery and, as such, has some in-person meetings but a substantial portion of the contact hours are conducted online or via other distance education technologies (e.g., class lecture meets in person whereas the discussion section meets online). When counting toward a degree, all hybrid courses are considered online education.

- Hybrid Flexible, i.e. "Hyflex" - This modality blends online education and in-person delivery. During course contact hours, students have the option of participating in person or online or, over the course of the semester, via a combination of both. When counting toward a degree, all hyflex courses are considered online education.

- Online Education: 0% of course contact hours are delivered in person and 100% are delivered online or via other distance education technologies. There are no in-person meetings.

Course units per weekly hours for online or hybrid courses are calculated at the same rate as traditional in-person courses.

As per accreditation policy[5], substantive change review is required for programs in which 50% or more of the units required for the degree will be offered through online education. (For undergraduate programs, this is 50% of 120 units.) Program faculty are responsible for identifying, ensuring program adherence to, and communicating these substantive change requirements to the Senate Office and the Accreditation Liaison Officer. Programs should contact the campus' Accreditation Liaison Officer as the program approaches the 50% criterion. All hybrid and hyflex offerings count as online offerings for the purposes of this criterion.

Faculty who are proposing to teach courses in which less than 70% of the contact hours (i.e., scheduled meeting time) occurs in person must explain the rationale via the Supplemental Questions for Online or Blended Course Approval Requests and must indicate in Curriculog that the course employs a web-based instructional method.

10. **Complete CPs will be transmitted to UGC for review.**

The following criteria will be used by UGC in its review:

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[4] Per the UC Merced Credit Hour Policy which states that one unit of credit is equivalent to 3 hours of work per week per term.
[5] https://wascsenior.app.box.com/s/6oju46p2b6mklgigo2om. To ensure the most up-to-date information, please contact GC Analyst Melanie Snyder (msnyder10@ucmerced.edu).

- Are the standards of the proposed course consistent with the standards for other courses taught at UCM?
- Is the level appropriate (lower division, upper division)?
- Are the prerequisites for the course consistent with the level?
- Is the instructional format justified (lecture, lab, etc.)?
- Is the unit value for the course justified?
- Is there an appropriate workload for the number of units offered (governed by SR 760[6])?
- If a course is listed for variable units, does the description specify how unit value will be assigned? Are requirements clearly delineated for unit value?
- Does the course appear to fit within the major or minor curriculum or subject area?
- Does the course content overlap with that of any existing courses?
- Does the course subject matter overlap with that of any existing programs?
- If an interdisciplinary or cross-listed course, are the subject areas and/or content described?
- Is the course description for the Catalog correct and consistent with the information given in the CP?
- Are the anticipated resources consistent with the course format and description?

Additional review criteria for **cross-listed courses** are:
- Do cross-listed courses have identical requirements, units, descriptions, prerequisites, and resource requirements?
- Cross-listed courses must be approved by all of the participating Schools and approved by the Dean of each participating School.

Additional review criteria for **conjoined courses** are:
- Do conjoined courses have sufficient overlap in course structure to facilitate concurrent instruction of both advanced undergraduate and graduate students?
- Are performance criteria, requirements, and goals of the undergraduate and graduate versions of the course clear and distinct?
- Conjoined courses must also be approved by the Graduate Council.

11. If UGC requires further information or indicates that modification of the CP is needed, the Senate Analyst, on behalf of UGC, will notify the School of the request. It is the responsibility of the School and/or the instructor responsible for the CP to provide the requested information or modification to the CP in a timely fashion.

   Once a course is approved by UGC, the Senate Analyst will update it in Curriculog. The Registrar will notify the originating School of approval via Curriculog and the course will be entered into the Catalog. A timeline for notifying faculty should be established, with the UGC Senate Analyst copied on all notifications.

Additional Resources

1. For a complete picture of the campus process and related workflow, visit the Senate Office's CRF workflow.

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[6] Senate Regulation 760: The value of a course in units shall be reckoned at the rate of one unit for three hours' work per week per term on the part of a student, or the equivalent.

2. Looking for teaching resources to inform a course proposal? Consider the Center of Engaged Teaching and Learning's "Teaching Resource Guide."

3. For format consistency for Schools and academic programs, please refer to the Registrar Office's "CRF Style Guide."

4. The following is a CP checklist to review completion of materials:

☐ Completed CP, with all required sections completed;
☐ A course outline with all required information (with clean copy and "track changes or the equivalent" copy for revised CPs are requested);
☐ For General Education courses, the course outline identifies at least three General Education Program Learning Outcomes with a description of course relevance to course focus;
☐ For cross-listed courses, accompanying CPs and course outlines for all courses to be cross-listed with submitted CPs;
☐ For conjoined courses, simultaneous submission of undergraduate CP to GC and related course syllabus;
☐ For online, hybrid, or hyflex courses: supplemental questionnaire.
☐ For online, hybrid, or hyflex courses, a 4-year curriculum plan including summer offerings indicating which courses are upper and-or lower division and which are online/hybrid/hyflex. This curriculum should demonstrate that a student cannot obtain an online degree by accidental combination of different online/hybrid/hyflex offerings.

Decision: ☐Accept   ☐ Hold   ☐ Reject

Course Modification Approval Rubric

Instructor Name:	Course Title and Number:
School/Department:	Date:
Instructional Modality Requested: Online Hybrid	
This proposal provides evidence that this instructor recognizes the amount of time required to develop, train for, and deliver this course in the proposed modality: Yes No	

Rate the following sets of questions:

Section 1: Design and Planning				
	Well-Developed	Somewhat Developed	Under-Developed	Not Addressed
Pedagogical Advantages of Modality Change				
Alignment: CLOs, Assessment, LEs				
Communication Structures/Standards				
Course Navigation & Organization				
Comments:				

Section 2: Content Presentation and Technology				
	Well-Developed	Somewhat Developed	Under-Developed	Not Addressed
Content Presentation & Technologies				
Clear Instructions & Expectations				
Distinction btwn Req. and Optional Materials				
Institutional Services				
Comments:				

Section 3: Community and Engagement				
	Well-Developed	Somewhat Developed	Under-Developed	Not Addressed
Varied Activities for ST-F Interaction				
Varied Activities for ST-ST. Interaction				
Multiple Ways to Engage in Class				
Instructor Presence				
Comments:				

Section 4: Assessment and Evaluation				
	Well-Developed	Somewhat Developed	Under-Developed	Not Addressed
Grading Policies/Eval.				
Balance of Assessment Types & Weights				
Plan for Frequent & Timely Feedback				
Prior Knowledge Expectations & Addressing Gaps				
Effectiveness of the modality/course improvement				
Academic Honesty Assurance				
Comments:				

Section 5: Accessibility and Inclusion				
	Well-Developed	Somewhat Developed	Under-Developed	Not Addressed
Supports DEI				
Accommodations				
Preparing for Special Needs (ADA)				
Assistive Technologies				
Compliance with FERPA				
Comments:				