

DIVISIONAL COUNCIL
Minutes of Meeting
Monday, April 15, 2024

Attendees: Chair Matt Hibbing, Vice Chair Kevin Mitchell, Michael Scheibner, Sarah Depaoli, Charlie Eaton, Marcos Garcia-Ojeda, Jayson Beaster-Jones, Christopher Viney, Shilpa Khatri, Kara McCloskey, Tao Ye, Alexander Petersen, Muey Saeteurn, Emily Jane McTavish

I. EVC/Provost Dumont Updates

EVC/Provost Dumont informed Divisional Council members that she has begun her new role by meeting with various groups of faculty. She will meet with department chairs and School Executive Committees in the coming weeks. The main question she has asked faculty is what they believe she needs to have on her radar both short term and long term. Senate Chair Hibbing shared with Divisional Council members that he and Senate Vice Chair Mitchell met with EVC/Provost Dumont last week about the Senate's priorities. GC Chair Scheibner stated that the future of graduate education remains an important issue. Guidance is forthcoming about distinguishing between graduate students' employment and their academic progress. Some UC campuses have already issued guidance. Faculty representation is needed on negotiating teams or the negotiating teams need to consult with faculty. Divisional Council members also expressed concern for graduate students who were already enrolled at UC Merced before the new requirements were implemented; specifically, the campus needs to accommodate these students in terms of appropriate funding. GC Chair Scheibner added that graduate students and faculty morale is concerning given the setbacks they have experienced which were out of their control: Oracle, building closures, and the pandemic.

II. Chair's Report – Matt Hibbing

A. Academic Council (March 27)

- UCSF has a tentative initiative to grant non-Senate clinical faculty an increased role in the Academic Senate such as voting rights.
- Academic Council endorsed the plan to change the default retirement option for new hires.

B. Meeting with EVC/Provost Dumont (April 8)

- Senate Chair Hibbing and Senate Vice Chair Mitchell discussed the following topics with the EVC/Provost:
 - SSHA restructuring. There appears to be miscommunication between the administration and SSHA about the availability of funding for new staff hires. Senate Chair Hibbing will ask the Chancellor about this at their next meeting.
 - The process has begun to remove Psychology emphasis tracks from the catalog that Psychology is unable to deliver. This is part of a broader problem of how to balance the need for more emphasis tracks to increase enrollment and the need to hire more faculty to deliver the curriculum.
 - 3) TAS work group updates.

Senate Executive Director Paul informed Divisional Council members that the UCSF Provost is visiting UC Merced and wants to have a discussion with Divisional Council about medical education. The date of the visit is not yet confirmed but will occur before the end of May.

III. Consent Calendar

- A. Today's Agenda
- B. March 25 Meeting Minutes

Action: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. Campus Review Items**A. SSHA Proposal for a New Minor in Political Science: Data Science and Policy Analysis (DSPA) ¹**

The proposal was distributed to standing Senate Committees, the SNS and SOE ECs, and the Administration and was hyperlinked on today's agenda.

UGC reviewed the proposal and associated comments from the Senate and the Administration. In its March 20 memo, UGC offered several recommendations and unanimously approved the proposed minor, effective Fall 2025. UGC's memo was hyperlinked on today's agenda.

Comments were received from the below committees and were hyperlinked on today's agenda:

- AFAC
- CAPRA
- LASC
- NSEC
- IEVCP/IVPDUE
- ALO

After UGC Chair Viney briefly summarized the proposal and the Senate committee comments, Divisional Council members discussed the NSEC comments. The NSEC raised two concerns: 1) the proposed minor's name is similar to a few other degree programs on campus and 2) the proposal does not have much coverage of Data Science as a broader discipline. UGC Chair Viney pointed out that UGC did discuss the name similarity issue and did not believe it was an obstacle.

Action: Divisional Council agreed to postpone their vote and to send the proposal back to UGC. Senate Vice Chair Michell (in the Senate Chair's absence due to his recusal) will take the lead on drafting a memo which will be distributed to Divisional Council for review and approval.

B. SOE Proposal for the Establishment of B.A. Degree Program in Management, Innovation, Sustainability and Technology (MIST)

The proposal was distributed to standing Senate Committees, the SNS and SSHA ECs, and the Administration and was hyperlinked on today's agenda.

UGC reviewed the MIST proposal and associated comments from the Senate and the Administration. In its April 3 memo, UGC offered several recommendations and unanimously approved the MIST B.A., effective Fall 2025. UGC's memo was hyperlinked on today's agenda.

¹ Recusal: Senate Chair Hibbing

Comments were received from the below committees and were hyperlinked on today's agenda:

- AFAC
- CAPRA
- GC
- LASC
- SNS EC
- SSHA CC
- EVC/P & VPDUE
- ALO

After UGC Chair Viney briefly summarized the proposal and the Senate committee comments, Divisional Council members had a brief discussion on the NSEC comments. The NSEC had concerns about the lack of pre-requisites, scaffolding of courses, and building of knowledge depth. Overall, Divisional Council supported the proposal.

Action: Divisional Council voted to endorse UGC's approval of the proposed B.A. degree program in MIST.

C. SNS Proposal for the Establishment of a Biochemistry B.S. Degree Proposal ²

The proposal was distributed to standing Senate Committees, the SOE and SSHA ECs, and the Administration and was hyperlinked on today's agenda.

UGC reviewed the Biochemistry proposal and associated comments from the Senate and the Administration. In its April 3 memo, UGC offered several comments and unanimously approved the Biochemistry B.S., effective Fall 2025. UGC's memo was hyperlinked on today's agenda.

Comments were received from the below committees and were hyperlinked on today's agenda:

- AFAC
- CAPRA
- LASC
- IEVC/IVPDUE
- ALO

UGC Chair Viney briefly summarized the proposal and Senate committee comments. Divisional Council members questioned whether there would be support via ACE funding to hire a faculty member in biochemistry. It was pointed out that Former SNS Dean and current EVC/Provost Dumont previously indicated her support in the proposal.

Action: Divisional Council voted to endorse UGC's approval of the proposed B.S. degree program in Biochemistry.

² Recusal: Tao Ye

V. Discussion Item: Regents Policy on Public and Discretionary Statements by Academic Units

The policy was distributed for review on April 2 with comments due by April 17 and was hyperlinked on today's agenda. Divisional Council members were previously encouraged to be prepared to discuss specific ideas/issues about this policy that are likely to be included in the upcoming Committee Chairs' memos.

Senate Chair Hibbing stated that the general consensus among faculty at the systemwide level is that the proposed policy is still not acceptable and encroaches on academic freedom. The expedited review period is also unreasonable.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm

Attest: Matt Hibbing, Senate Chair