

**GRADUATE COUNCIL  
ANNUAL REPORT  
AY 2024-2025**

During the academic year 2024-2025, the Graduate Council (GC) held a total of 1 regularly scheduled meeting in person, 14 via Zoom and conducted some business via email with respect to its duties as outlined in UC Merced's [Senate Bylaw II.IV.6](#). The Chair of GC attended Divisional Council meetings and provided regular updates at each GC meeting.

University Registrar Erin Webb and Director of UC Merced Center for Data Services Derek Devnich participated in meetings as consultants to the committee.

The structure of GC and the issues that the Council considered this year are described below.

**GRADUATE COUNCIL ORGANIZATION AND REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES**

GC operated with three standing subcommittees that conducted business primarily via email throughout the year.

*Course Proposal Subcommittee:* Susan Ge (SNS); Sandie Ha (SSHA); Min Hwan Lee (SOE)

*Policy Subcommittee:* John Abatzoglou (Chair, SOE); Irene Beattie (Vice Chair; SSHA); Carolin Frank (SNS)

*Awards Subcommittee:* Rebeca Arevalo Seco (SNS); Wan Du (SOE); Jennifer Howell (SNS)

The Awards subcommittee reviewed the nominations for the Graduate Student Supplemental Travel Awards and for the Distinguished Graduate Teaching/Mentorship Award. The names of the Awards recipients are available [here](#).

**CAMPUS AND SYSTEMWIDE REVIEW ITEMS**

GC offered comments or otherwise took action on the following review items:

- Proposal to change the name of UC Merced's University Extension (9/17)
- Proposed New Senate Regulation 627 (Posthumous Awarding of Degrees) (10/1) \*
- UC Merced Interim Policy on Expressive Activities and Assembly: Protests, Demonstrations, Non-University Speakers and Signage on Campus and in University Facilities (11/1)
- SSHA Reorganization Proposal (11/4)
- Presidential Policy on the Use of Animals in Research, Teaching, and Testing (1/24) \*
- Three University Extension Non-Degree Certificate Proposals (1/24)
- Proposal for a new Non-Degree Program from the UCM Division of Professional and Continuing Education (PACE): PK-3 Early Childhood Education (ECE) Specialist Instruction Credential (2/21)
- Proposal for a Dual Degree Program Leading to a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) Degree from UCM and Doctor of Medicine Degree from UCSF (2/21)
- SOE proposal to change the name of the Mechanical Engineering Department to the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering (5/21)

\*Systemwide review items

### *Other*

- GC transmitted a memo to Anthropology & Heritage Studies (AHS) Chair Torres following the Senate and Administration's review of the AHS Graduate Program Proposal (10/28).
- GC transmitted a memo to VPDGE Hratchian and Associate Dean of Graduate Division Sayantani Ghosh providing recommendations for conflict resolution in graduate student committees (11/1).
- GC offered comments on the Implementation of Public Law 117-328: Incomplete Grading Policy for Service Members Called to Active Duty, Training, or State Service (12/16).
- GC transmitted a request to Divisional Council regarding a revised Policy for Graduate Students Teaching Graduate Students for DivCo's consideration (12/16).
- GC unanimously endorsed a proposal from the Graduate Division to change the graduate admissions requirements to accept the Duolingo English Test (DET) in fulfillment of the Examination of English for Non-Native Speakers requirement (1/28).
- GC conducted a preliminary review and provided comments on the Life & Environmental Sciences (LES) Graduate Program Proposal (2/12).
- GC approved amendments to GC's Policy for Establishing Hybrid Undergraduate/Graduate Degree Programs (HDP) and the Procedures for Submitting Graduate Programs and Hybrid Undergraduate/Graduate Degree Programs aiming to allow for an exception to the number of units from the graduate level course work to count toward undergraduate degree requirements (3/11).
- GC unanimously endorsed DivCo's recommendation on the proposed amendments to GC's Policy for Graduate Students Teaching Graduate Students (3/11).
- GC conducted a second review of the LES Graduate Program Proposal and transmitted the proposal to the Senate Chair for campus review (3/24).
- GC transmitted a memo to UGC outlining their comments on a request from the Registrar's Office regarding in-person exam sessions for online courses (3/27).
- GC approved proposed amendments to Section V.F.1. Scheduling of Examinations in the Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook (GPPH) (4/14).
- GC offered comments on the UC Merced Guidelines Concerning Scheduling Conflicts with Academic Requirements (Missed Class Policy) (4/29).
- GC transmitted a request to CRE and UGC to form a Joint Work Group on Senate Oversight of PACE Programs (5/16).
- GC reviewed the campus comments on the LES Graduate Program Proposal, endorsed the proposal, and forwarded it to DivCo with a recommendation for CCGA review (5/29).

### **GRADUATE COURSE REQUESTS**

- GC approved 50 courses (new and revised) in Curriculog.
- GC approved 1 request for revisions to course delivery.
- GC approved 19 requests for an extension to the deadline to submit course proposals.

### **GRADUATE STUDENT APPOINTMENTS AS INSTRUCTOR FOR UPPER DIVISION COURSES**

- GC considered and approved 19 requests to appoint graduate students as instructors for upper division courses. GC also approved 1 reappointment.

### **GRADUATE GROUP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND BYLAWS**

GC approved, effective Fall 2025, revisions to the Policies and Procedures of the following programs:

- Materials and Biomaterials Science and Engineering (MBSE)
- Public Health (PH)
- Management of Innovation, Sustainability & Technology (MIST)/Management of Complex Systems

(MCS)

- Cognitive & Information Sciences (CIS)
- Physics (PHYS)

GC offered provisional approval to the following graduate group Policies and Procedures, provided that the graduate group address GC and the Graduate Division comments.

- Interdisciplinary Humanities (IH)

GC approved, effective Fall 2025, revisions to the Bylaws of the following program:

- Cognitive & Information Sciences (CIS)

GC offered provisional approval to the following graduate group Bylaws, provided that the graduate group address GC and the Graduate Division comments.

- Economics (ECON)

On October 30, 2024, GC approved, effective immediately, an off-cycle request to make a minor correction the number of units and courses needed to satisfy the Master's along the way (MAW) degree requirement for the following program.

- Mechanical Engineering (ME)

### **GUEST CONSULTATIONS**

- Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Sayantani Ghosh joined the October 1, 2024 meeting to discuss impartialities on graduate student committees.
- University of Extension Dean Annette Roberts Webb and Director of Degree Completion Michael Pierick joined the October 1, 2024 meeting to provide an update on University Extension initiatives and discuss the next steps regarding the Curriculum Advisory Board (CAB).
- Curriculum Advisory Board (CAB) Members Zenaida Aguirre-Munoz and Mayya Tokman joined the October 29, 2024 meeting to discuss a charge for CAB.
- VPAP Tom Hansford joined the October 29, 2024 meeting to discuss Assembly Bill 810 and Senate Bill 791.
- Dr. Margo Vener and Professor Joel Spencer joined the November 12, 2024 meeting to provide an update on Medical Education.
- VPAAS Spitzmueller joined the February 7, 2025 meeting to discuss Master's degree programs.
- Associate Dean of the Graduate Division Sayantani Ghosh and Business Intelligence Analyst Jessica Chackoria joined the February 21, 2025 meeting to present UC Graduate Student Experience Survey (UCGSES) results, as well as UC Merced retention and completion results.
- University Committee on Academic Computing and Communications (UCACC) member Lisa Yeo joined the April 18, 2025 meeting to provide an update and discuss her role on the Academic Senate Artificial Intelligence (AI) Workgroup.

Respectfully submitted,

### ***GC Members***

John Abatzoglou, Chair, School of Engineering, CCGA Representative

Irene Beattie, Vice Chair, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts, PROC Representative

Rebeca Arevalo, School of Natural Sciences

Hui Cai, School of Natural Sciences

Wan Du, School of Engineering

Carolin Frank, School of Natural Sciences  
Xuecai Ge, School of Natural Sciences  
Sandie Ha, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts  
Jennifer Howell, School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts  
Min Hwan Lee, School of Engineering

***Ex-Officio***

Hrant Hratchian, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education

***Senate Staff***

Petra Martins, Senate Analyst

Melanie Snyder, Senate Senior Analyst