

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)
February 9, 2017
10:30-12:00 PM SSB 238
Documents available at: [UCM BOX](#)

Pursuant to call, the Graduate Council met at 10:33 AM on February 9, 2017 in Room 238 of the Student Services Building, Chair Ramesh Balasubramaniam presiding.

I. Consultation with Lynn Reimer, Director of Education Programs, University Extension

- a. With regard to the oversight expected of GC with regard to courses provided by the University Extension, Lynn Reimer was invited to meet with the committee to provide background on the Extension program and answer questions from committee members. Courses will fall into the X300-400 level and Certificate Programs which fall into the scope of GC review, and Lynn noted that policy need not be created, instead the committee is asked to provide Extension with what level of involvement they want to involve themselves in. A document was circulated, "[Establishment of Course and Certificate Approval Process for UC Merced Extension](#)", sent to Senate Chair Amussen from AVC Orcutt, Tammy Johnson, and Lynn. Lynn noted that the Senate always retains post-audit review authority, and may involve themselves further in the review and approval process as deemed appropriate. The shared document highlighted that courses would be approved by GC rather than Lynn reiterated their preference for GC defining what they wish to do, will always retaining the post-audit review authority for courses.

A question was raised about the impact on budget and UCM faculty workload, and the response was that most courses are expected to be offered by community-hired instructors, however our faculty are welcome to propose and conduct courses if they are interested. Extension does not want to usurp existing programs.

VPDGE Zatz asked about to what extent of other UCs having their local Extension branches under the Office of the Provost or under Student Affairs. Most other campuses have their Extension more closely aligned with the academic enterprise, and this raised concern among the committee. Additionally, concern was voiced about credit being transferrable into graduate programs. At this time, there are no programs where such a transfer could occur.

With regard to hiring faculty to provide the courses, Extension has their own CRF system, Student Information System, and transcript-generation mechanism, and when a course is first proposed, an instructor is attached to that course, who "owns" it for 3-5 years. GC would receive these course proposals, and be able to approve them or stop them if a concern is noted.

Of primary concern from GC was that the Extension Office, and their instructors, are not reporting through the Provost's Office. There is a plan to shift the Extension Office from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs over time, the greater worry being that no defined timeline is established.

GC will retain post-review authority as proposed, and a memo will be drafted that GC feels strongly that the Extension Office should report to the academic side of campus. The aspirations raised by both GC and Extension should also be used for future planning in discussion with the administration. Lynn welcomes additional dialogue with GC moving forward.

II. Chair's Report – Ramesh Balasubramaniam

- a. DivCo has requested that discussion topics for the Spring Meeting of the Division that would take advantage of the systemwide Chair and Vice Chair, and the UCM Chancellor and Provost. Chair Balasubramaniam welcomes statements from GC to share at the Spring Meeting.
- b. With regard to international students, the International Office is working very hard to keep up with current events. Offers should be made to international students for now, despite concerns about what may change in the future.
- c. The CPMIS review group has decided on a software application that will unify the UGC and GC CRF process, along with curriculum and catalog incorporation. GC has been asked for a volunteer to represent GC on the working group, taking over from past GC Chair Mike Dawson.

III. Vice Chair's Report – Teamrat Ghezzehei

- a. PROC meeting – January 25, 2017
 - i. The report will be requested and circulated to GC members.
- b. CCGA meeting – February 1, 2017 (GC representatives participated on behalf of Chair)
 - i. Member Filipp commented that the [California Forum on Diversity on Graduate Education](#) will be hosted at UC Merced in April. There was a discussion on graduate mentorship, and rewarding good mentorship rather than punishing poor mentorship. There was a focus on what system can be placed to evaluate faculty advisors on mentorship and the ethics of collecting this information.
 - ii. Vice Chair Ghezzehei noted that the Public Health CCGA proposal was viewed very positively.

IV. Consent Calendar

- a. The January 12, 2017 minutes were approved as presented.
- b. The February 9, 2017 agenda were approved as presented.

V. [Best Practices regarding Senior PhD Students to Teach Upper Level Courses](#)

- a. The committee discussed the recent exception to allow a senior Ph.D. student to teach an upper division course, due to a suitable Lecturer not being available. Grad students are allowed to teach upper division courses, however, this instance included having a Teaching Assistant. VPDGE Zatz noted that the exception allowing a graduate student to TA a course in which the instructor was also a graduate student was made only after consultation with the Graduate Council Chair, with a focus on (a) what the Graduate Group was doing to address the cause of the request for exception and (b) ensuring in writing that a faculty member would supervise both of the graduate students, such that one student would not be supervising the other. GC members feel strongly about not allowing a graduate student to be an instructor of an upper division course with a graduate student acting as a Teaching Assistant, and best practices would not be formulated, as such an event should be very exceptional and rare.

VI. [Extension Course Approval Process](#)

- a. This topic was addressed during the consultation with Lynn Reimer at the beginning of the meeting.

VII. [Graduate Fellowship Awards \(Eric Cannon\)](#)

- a. Assignments of the 86 nominees for the three Recruitment Fellowships will be distributed to each committee member, with an effort for even coverage and mitigation of any conflicts of interest. Rankings will be returned to the GC Analyst for inclusion in a master scoresheet which will be discussed at the February 23 GC meeting.

A member asked about redistributing the allocation of funding, to allow

A member asked if recruitment fellowships should be allocated to adjunct faculty as advisors, and the response was that if they are full-time graduate students, they should be considered for fellowships, with no discrimination allowed.

A member recommended modifying the language in the nominations to “first year of candidacy” from “a student who will now be at dissertation stage” for clarity. Eric noted that confusion about this statement comes up every year, and welcomed GC to propose a revision to the language. A revision will be proposed to Graduate Division to clarify the language.

Additionally, there would be a memo written for the Graduate Division regarding students who are beyond their first year but not yet at the point of dissertation.

VIII. [Campus Review Items](#)

- a. [New WSCUC Policy](#)
Due to time constraints, this item will be added to a future GC agenda.

IX. [Systemwide Review Items](#)

- a. [Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 630.D](#)
Due to time constraints, this item will be added to a future GC agenda.

X. [Consultation with VPDGE Zatz](#)

- a. At the time of the meeting, 775 applications had been received, with 74 admits, with the quality of applicants this year is stronger than last year.
- b. Each Graduate Group has been encouraged to have internal discussions to enhance mentorship, and identifying what happens when things go wrong.
- c. There is a plan to offer and expand the “Competitive Edge Summer Bridge” program, with a hopeful donor being found in March, as well as continuing search for additional funding from businesses and foundations.
- d. There is a plan to move to a new graduate admissions software solution next year, and Fellowships would be handled by this new system.

XI. [Upcoming Business](#)

XII. Other Business

XIII. Executive Session (Voting members only)

There was no Executive Session during this meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:39 AM.

Attest:

Ramesh Balasubramaniam, Chair