

**GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)****Wednesday, September 9, 2015****4:00 – 5:30 pm****KL 362****Documents available at: UCM Box "[GC AY 15-16](#)"****I. Chair's Report – Michael Dawson**

- A. Welcome members
- B. AY 14-15 GC Annual Report
- C. Introductory comments
  - GC purpose & purview, structure, [role and responsibilities](#)
  - Continuing business from AY 14-15
    - [IIGP extension](#) & transitions to standalone graduate groups
  - New graduate groups out of existing groups
  - Graduate Group bylaws
  - Graduate Group Policies & Procedures
  - Tracks & Emphases
  - CRF electronic review
  - Update on the status of the Academic Degree policy
  - AY 15-16 Outlook
    - Workload vs. membership ratio
    - Senate Office staff numbers and workload
    - SAF and Project 2020 re. graduate studies
    - Assessment of initiatives/decisions - outcomes & effectiveness, revise/replan?
    - Teaching as scholarship (e.g. QSB 399, its ilk, and workload; units, certificates, etc.)
- D. Conflicts of interest

**II. Consent Calendar**

- A. May 27, 2015 meeting minutes Pg. 1-3
- B. September 9, 2015 meeting agenda

**III. GC Conflict of Interest Policy Pg. 4-5**

**Background:** In AY 14-15 GC reviewed and approved a Graduate Council Conflict of Interest Policy.

**Action:** Committee requested to review, approve, or revise the COI policy. Upon which, Senate Analyst will send the approved GC Conflict of Interest policy to Senate Chair Ricci.

#### IV. Committee and Subcommittee Memberships: Review & Selection

##### A. Existing committee commitments

- CCGA & DivCo (GC Chair)
- PROC (GC Vice-chair); AY 14-15 policy subcommittee overlap for Graduate Advisor's Handbook.
- UCM Reaffirmation (Li)
- Academic Programs Committee (former GC chair Hull is completing)

##### B. GC Representative on LASC

The newly-formed Senate Committee on Library and Scholarly Communications is comprised of members from CAPRA, COR, UGC, and GC (with University Librarian and the campus CIO/AVC of Information Technology).

The committee's charge is appended to this meeting packet. It will meet once in fall semester and once in spring. The fall meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 26 from 1:30 – 3:00 pm in KL 362.

**Action:** GC to choose a representative, preferably from SNS or SoE, on LASC for AY 15-16.

- C. Selection of CRF Subcommittee. Members will review CRFs prior to review by and approval of the committee as a whole. Subcommittee Chair + 2.
- D. Selection of Awards Subcommittee. Members will review and rank graduate student fellowship nominees that are submitted to GC by the Graduate Division. Subcommittee Chair + 2.
- E. Selection of Policy Review Subcommittee. Members will revise and draft policy prior to review by and approval of the committee as a whole. Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, + 1.
- F. Absences
- G. Subcommittee structures

**V. Mechanical Engineering (ME) CCGA proposal**

**Background:** ME submitted a revised proposal in April 2015 that was reviewed by Senate standing committees and the administration. The internal review phase has concluded. ME was asked by GC in August to submit a revised proposal in response to comments and recommendations made by the internal reviewers, ALO, VPDGE, and Provost/EVC by September 4, 2015.

Background documents can be accessed in the [Mechanical Engineering folder](#) on GC's Box site.

**Action:** GC to review and decide whether to request further revisions or to recommend for CCGA review.

**VI. Policy on Concentrations, Emphases, and Tracks**

Pg. 6-10

**Background:** in AY 14-15, GC Policy Subcommittee drafted policy governing establishment of Concentrations, Emphases, and Tracks.

Background documents can be accessed on the [GC policies folder](#) on GC's Box site.

**Action:** GC to review and vote to accept, modify, or reject policy.

**VII. Political Science Graduate Handbook (Policies & Procedures)**

**Background:** POLI SCI submitted a revised Policies & Procedures in AY-14-15 that needs to be reviewed by GC.

Background documents can be accessed on the [Graduate Group policies and procedures folder](#) on GC's Box site.

**Action:** GC to vote on accepting or revising the policies and procedures. A notification will then be sent from GC to the political science graduate group.

**VIII. Campus Review Item**

GASP major revised proposal.

**Background:** This proposal was initially circulated to Senate committees on March 2, 2015 and a recommendation was sent to SSHA on May 6, 2015.

Due to the proposal's length, it is not included in this meeting packet. Materials can be accessed by visiting the [campus review items folder](#) on GC's Box site.

**Action:** GC to review the revised proposal for academic space and resource implications and send any comments to the Senate Chair by October 1.

**IX. Role of GC in Graduate Program Review**

Pg. 11-14

**Background:** AY 15-16 sees program review of the first standalone Graduate Program (ES). GC has been asked to clarify our expectations for involvement.

**Action:** GC to review "Draft Standard Charge for Graduate Programs" and "GC\_Role\_GradGroup\_PeriodicReview\_ES\_Charge.pdf" and respond to the Office of Periodic Review, Assessment, and Accreditation by October 1.

**X. Grade Appeals Policy**

Pg. 15-22

The Grade Appeals policy was revised by UGC and approved in May 2015, following consultation with and input by the Campus Ombuds, General Counsel, Director of Compliance, Senate standing committees, and the Provost/EVC. The policy does not include provisions for graduate students. Per the GC chair's request, the original email request for GC review is appended to this packet.

**Action:** GC to discuss whether the policy should be modified to include provisions for graduate students.

**XI. AY 15-16 Academic Calendar**

Pg. 23-24

Last year's calendar of deadlines for GC is appended to this packet. Also appended, for reference, is UGC's AY 15-16 calendar .

**Action:** GC to review, modify as warranted, and approve this year's academic calendar deadlines.

**XII. Consultation with VPDGE Zatz**

- Graduate admissions and enrollment
- Coverage of nonresident tuition for PhD students and 25% resident tuition for students funded on full-indirect grants
- Professional development plans and recap of Dissertation Boot Camp
- Progress on planning for Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition (PDST) and Self-Supporting Degree Programs (SSDP)
- Graduate Advisor's Handbook

**XIII. Upcoming business**

- GSR appointments
- CCGA proposals etc. as noted in Item I Chair's Report.
- ES program review
- Timing of Award of PhD and MS
- Graduate Advisor's Handbook
- PDST
- Provost/EVC Peterson joins us 4:00-4:30 Wednesday October 14
- Guidelines for TA Supervision, complement to Graduate Handbook guidance on choosing grads for TAships
- Awards
- Summer Lectureships TAs
- UC Merced reaffirmation

**XIV. Other Business**

**Graduate Council (GC)**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**May 27, 2015**

Pursuant to call, the Graduate Council met at 1:00 pm on May 27, 2015 in Room 362 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Kathleen Hull presiding.

I. Chair's Report

Chair Hull updated the GC members on the May 20 joint Division Council/CAPRA meeting:

- The Provost has decided to revise his FTE hiring plan to include foundational hires in the first year. CAPRA will send the Provost a memo with a list of questions it wants him to address as he revises the plan.
- [AB 798](#) – “College Textbook Affordability Act of 2015”. This bill is intended to reduce textbook costs for students; however, faculty are concerned about the implications for intellectual property. The Senate chair is involved in the systemwide discussions.

II. Vice Chair's Report

- Vice Chair Dawson thanked Chair Hull for her service as chair this year.

III. Consent Calendar

**ACTION:** Today's agenda and the May 13 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

- ME 291 was taken off the consent calendar (original discussion conducted via email) per Vice Chair Dawson's request. The revised CRF still does not comply with UCM's credit hour policy. GC members agreed to approve the CRF pending a revised syllabus explicitly stating that students must attend a minimum of eight seminars.

**ACTION:** ME 291 instructor will be asked to submit a revised course outline. The CRF will be considered approved by GC and will be sent to the Registrar when revisions have been made.

## IV. Campus Review Item

- UCM Diversity Statement

**ACTION:** The Senate chair will be informed that GC has no comments.

## V. Consultation with VPDGE Zatz

- appointment and renewal process for graduate group chairs. Dean Zatz sent graduate group chairs and deans a summary chart pertaining to elections according to their bylaws and asked them to collaborate with her to ensure a smoother process next year. The goal is to make the graduate group elections process uniform across campus. In addition, Dean Zatz recommended an annual review of graduate group chairs and asked GC for input next year. Chair Hull pointed out the fortuitous timing of this plan: the Provost's planned interdisciplinary hires into the research pillars will be crucial for graduate education and a more rigorous process should be in place for graduate group chairs. Another GC member warned against being too prescriptive with elections processes.
- input to CAP on faculty mentoring. Dean Zatz suggested that Graduate Group chairs can write a letter to be placed in candidates' files, testifying to the candidates' graduate mentoring activities.
- indirect cost return (ICR). Dean Zatz has preliminary plans to speak to the Budget office about ICR and its impact on NRT slots and PIs' grants.
- small grants solicitation. Dean Zatz received eight proposals. The review committee was comprised of six individuals, two from each school. The committee was pleased with the quality of proposals it chose to fund.
- revisions to the Graduate Handbook (formerly Graduate Advisor's Handbook). Dean Zatz is waiting on the edits from the Academic Personnel office. After GC reviews it, Dean Zatz would like the draft to be reviewed by Legal Counsel. Chair Hull stated that the GC policy

subcommittee (Hull, Vice Chair Dawson, and member Munoz) will review the draft over the summer.

VI. Systemwide Review Item

- APM 133-17-g-j, Limitation on Total Period of Service with Certain Academic Titles.

**ACTION:** The Senate chair will be informed that GC has no comments.

VII. Executive Session

This session was for voting members only, is confidential, and no minutes were taken.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.

Attest:

Kathleen Hull, GC Chair

Minutes taken by: Simrin Takhar, Senate Analyst



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ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION  
GRADUATE COUNCIL (GRC)  
VALERIE LEPPERT, CHAIR

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
5200 NORTH LAKE ROAD  
MERCED, CA 95343  
(209) 228-6312

**September 30, 2013**

**To: Ignacio López-Calvo, Senate Chair**

**From: Valerie Leppert, Chair, Graduate Council (GC)**

**Re: 2013-2014 Conflict of Interest Policy**

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The Graduate Council should conduct itself in such a manner that neither the reality nor the appearance of a conflict of interest should be present in any action taken by the Council.

#### *Committee as a Whole:*

Whenever any matter that affects a member of the Council as an individual or as a member of a department or program is to be decided, that member should absent himself/herself before the vote is taken. If the member does not leave voluntarily, the Chair should excuse the member.

- Members with possible conflicts of interest should discuss the matter with the Council Chair before the pertinent Council meeting. If the Chair foresees a conflict of interest on the part of a Council member, he/she should discuss the matter with the affected member. It is to be hoped that a course of action satisfactory to the member and the Chair can be achieved.
- The Chair of the Council may ask the member to provide information on the matter before the member's departure.
- When confidential information is being provided to the Council, the affected member will be excused by the Chair before the information is provided.
- When student petitions are considered, Council members should consider a student matter in their department/program as a conflict of interest for themselves.
- When routine matters (e.g., course approvals) are being considered, the Chair may elect to allow all members to participate in the discussion and vote. This section is not meant to include program revisions, review committee reports on a specific department or individual student matters.

#### *Subcommittees:*

Subcommittee operations are subject to the same rules as the Council as a whole. The Chair may name a replacement from the Council membership for an individual serving on a subcommittee who has a conflict of interest when necessary.

#### *Students:*

Students are not permitted to be present in Council meetings when matters pertaining to individual students are discussed.

*Review of CCGA Proposals and Graduate Program Reviews:*

Members with possible conflicts of interest will be recused from the discussion and voting.

Cc: Graduate Council  
Division Council  
Committee on Rules and Elections  
Academic Senate Office

## GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)

## Process for Establishing Concentrations and Designated Emphasis within Graduate Degree Programs

Approved on ?

## 1) Introduction

- a) Graduate programs may want formal acknowledgement on student transcripts of specific, focused coursework completed within the graduate program, or formal acknowledgement on the transcript of additional graduate coursework and other requirements met at the University of California, Merced within a specific field of study outside of a student's graduate program. For example, such acknowledgement may be necessary when applying for a teaching position at a community college, or may be desirable as a complement to information available in a letter of recommendation prepared by the student's advisor.
- b) Such formal acknowledgement is established by a graduate program for all students within the program, rather than on a case-by-case basis, via the mechanisms described herein. Such acknowledgement is only available for programs that have been subject to review and approval by Graduate Council and, as necessary, CCGA. There are two options (i.e., Concentrations and Designated Emphases). There is no option for a "custom" concentration or emphasis.

## 2) Definitions and Criteria

- a) **Concentration** - A subcurriculum such as a new method of inquiry or an important field of application that may be interdisciplinary and is applicable to an existing graduate program. It usually consists of a coordinated set of at least 4 graduate level courses (in addition to independent research/study) delivered by the graduate program faculty in conjunction with examinations and a thesis and/or dissertation, and is joined with established graduate program curricula in a manner such that the requirements of the graduate program and the concentration are met concurrently. Concentrations have significant research and teaching components and must be approved by the Graduate Council. The availability of concentrations is noted in each program's description in the *General Catalog*. Each concentration and its requirements are described, and a summary of all concentrations are provided. It is the responsibility of the graduate group to review and update the catalog text pertaining to concentrations, so that current practice is officially recorded. Concentrations are usually reflected explicitly in the content and tenor of the thesis and/or dissertation. The graduate group is also responsible for tracking the concentration(s) of students in the program and providing that information to the Registrar upon the student's completion of all requirements for the degree.
  - i) **Primary Concentration** – A primary concentration is listed on a student's transcript.
  - ii) **Secondary Concentration** – A secondary concentration is available only to PhD students and is not listed on a student's transcript.

**Comment [rev1]:** Note that GC will have to update our guidelines for CCGA proposals to include these definitions and make it clear that these terms may not be used to describe anything other than what is defined herein

44 b) **Designated Emphasis** - A program of study, often interdisciplinary, that focuses on a  
 45 specific area of scholarship and does not reside in the student's graduate program. A  
 46 designated emphasis exists as an external, free-standing graduate program, only open to  
 47 PhD students already accepted into another graduate program at the University of  
 48 California, Merced. It has a defined course of study (in addition to independent  
 49 research/study) that is the same regardless of a student's primary program of study and  
 50 provides somewhat less depth and expertise in a subject (usually three graduate level  
 51 courses) than the student's primary program of study. The subject matter of the  
 52 designated emphasis is integrated into the dissertation, but the coursework and other  
 53 requirements are *in addition to* degree requirements for students who are not  
 54 participating in a designated emphasis. Students do not apply to a designated emphasis  
 55 as part of their admission to UC Merced, but may apply to one with the consent of their  
 56 advisor during their course of study, usually prior to taking his/her Qualifying  
 57 Examination. A designated emphasis is not required as part of any graduate degree. A  
 58 designated emphasis must be approved by the Graduate Council. The designated  
 59 emphasis is listed on the student's transcript. The offering of designated emphasis is  
 60 noted in the *General Catalog*. The requirements are specified under the offering  
 61 program's description. Programs other than the offering program may wish to include  
 62 the option of pursuing a designated emphasis in their catalog descriptions, and point  
 63 students towards suggested possible emphases, according to disciplinary affinity and  
 64 program history.

### 65 3) **Process for Establishing a Concentration**

66 a) Complete and submit a dated "Graduate Group Summary Form" describing the existing  
 67 program. If officially establishing an existing concentration, the accompanying cover  
 68 letter should reference the appropriate pages describing the requirements for the  
 69 concentration(s) within the approved CCGA proposal (and date of approval).

70 b) A request to revise an existing, or establish a new, concentration must also include the  
 71 following appendices:

- 72 (1) Request for Approval to Modify Graduate Degree Requirements Form, including  
 73 a letter describing the revised or new concentration, the rationale for revision or  
 74 addition, the need, and the potential resource implications. Please note that  
 75 WSCUC Substantive Change review may be required if the proposed alterations  
 76 would result in a "significantly different degree program."  
 77 (2) Revised and Dated Graduate Group Summary Form  
 78 (3) Revised Graduate Group Catalog Copy  
 79 (4) Revised Graduate Group Website Copy  
 80 (5) Revised/New and Complete Course Request Form Packet(s)  
 81 (6) Letter(s) of Support from the Lead Dean and affected graduate groups, if  
 82 appropriate.  
 83

84 c) **Routing Process**

Comment [rev2]: Let's discuss at GC

Comment [MD3]: Bump heading onto next page?

- 87 i) For concentration(s) as described in the original, approved CCGA proposal:  
 88 (1) Graduate Group submits the dated Graduate Group Summary Form and cover  
 89 letter to the Graduate Council  
 90 (2) Graduate Council conducts a preliminary review and sends the form and cover  
 91 letter to the Office of Institutional Assessment, Vice Provost and Dean of  
 92 Graduate Education, and the Office of the Registrar for comment.  
 93 (3) Once comments are received, the Graduate Council reviews comments and  
 94 approves or rejects the Graduate Group's request to acknowledge an existing  
 95 concentration. Graduate Council's decision is communicated to the Graduate  
 96 Group and a copy of the decision is sent to the Office of Institutional Assessment,  
 97 Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, and the Office of the Registrar.  
 98  
 99 ii) For revised or new concentration(s):  
 100 (1) Graduate Group submits the dated Graduate Group Summary Form, cover  
 101 letter, and all required appendices to the Graduate Council  
 102 (2) Graduate Council conducts a preliminary review and sends the form, cover  
 103 letter, and appendices to the Office of Institutional Assessment, Vice Provost and  
 104 Dean of Graduate Education, Office of the Registrar, and the Committee on  
 105 Academic Planning and Resource Allocation for comment  
 106 (3) Once comments are received, the Graduate Council reviews comments and  
 107 approves or rejects the Graduate Group's request to acknowledge a revised or  
 108 new concentration. Graduate Council's decision is communicated to the  
 109 Graduate Group and a copy of the decision is sent to the Office of Institutional  
 110 Assessment, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, Office of the  
 111 Registrar, and the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation  
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 114 **4) Process for Establishing a Designated Emphasis**  
 115 a) Faculty considering creation of a new DE should agree on a definition and description of  
 116 the DE and meet with the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education and the Lead  
 117 Dean to discuss the nature of the DE, the faculty affiliated with the proposal, the  
 118 proposed timeline for program implementation, and the potential impact on current  
 119 graduate degree programs.  
 120 Interested faculty must prepare a DE proposal for the designated emphasis following  
 121 guidelines and meeting requirements below.  
 122  
 123 i) Description of the Designated Emphasis  
 124 Provide a description of the academic rationale for the Designated Emphasis,  
 125 including recent developments in the field and the Designated Emphasis'  
 126 importance to students and faculty at UC Merced.  
 127 ii) Requirements for the Designated Emphasis  
 128 Describe the criteria used to determine admission. Describe the curriculum,  
 129 qualifying examination requirements (if any), dissertation requirements (if any), and

**Comment [MD4]:** Do we need to be more explicit about copy for the catalogue, i.e. when it goes to the registrar and the site gets updated? I think we don't need to, but am just wondering. (Also for similar concluding actions elsewhere?)

- 130 the Designated Emphasis conferral process. Provide course descriptions for core  
 131 courses and electives. Describe the Designated Emphasis' potential impact on time to  
 132 degree completion.
- 133 iii) Graduate Group Administration  
 134 Provide a description of how the Designated Emphasis will be administered. List the  
 135 Chair and Executive Committee of the Graduate Group. Describe the structure for  
 136 student advising and the appointment of faculty to the qualifying examination and  
 137 the dissertation committees.
- 138 iv) Resources  
 139 The proposal should address the resources available, such as staff support, student  
 140 support, and available facilities, and the issue of resources required to administer the  
 141 Designated Emphasis. If no additional resources are required, this should be stated.  
 142 If additional resources are required, they should be described and the source of  
 143 support should be identified.
- 144 v) Appendices  
 145 (a) A completed and dated "Designated Emphasis Degree Requirements" form  
 146 (b) Bylaws of the Designated Emphasis Graduate Group (following the template  
 147 for Graduate Group Bylaws)  
 148 (c) The proposal should include letters of support from the Lead Dean and Vice  
 149 Provost and Dean of Graduate Education regarding the resources and  
 150 implications of support for the proposed Designated Emphasis.  
 151 (d) Letter of endorsement from the Graduate Group Chair of the doctoral  
 152 program with which the majority of participating faculty are affiliated and  
 153 selected letters from faculty who agree to participate in the Designated  
 154 Emphasis.  
 155 (e) Roster of participating faculty (participating faculty must be Academic  
 156 Senate members eligible to serve on higher degree committees).
- 157
- 158 b) Requests to revise the curriculum and/or admission requirements for an existing  
 159 Designated Emphasis must be submitted to, and approved by, the Graduate Council.  
 160 The following information should be included in the request:
- 161 i) A Graduate Group Summary Form, a Request for Approval to Modify Graduate  
 162 Degree Requirements Form, and cover letter from the chair of the Designated  
 163 Emphasis that outlines the reasons for the changes requested and includes any  
 164 justification necessary. Of particular concern to the Graduate Council is the impact of  
 165 the changes on the time to degree in the affiliated graduate programs.  
 166 (a) Please note that letters of support from affiliated Graduate Groups' chairs  
 167 may be necessary if the proposed revisions might impact the normative time  
 168 to degree.
- 169 ii) A letter of support from the Lead Dean regarding resources and implications of  
 170 support for the changes requested must also accompany the cover letter.

**Comment [MD5]:** Do we want to see evidence of majority support within the group? At least more than just a breakaway group? Or is this effectively covered by having Deans review resource implications?

171 iii) A revised and dated "Designated Emphasis Degree Requirements" form. The last  
172 approved version of the Designated Emphasis requirements approved by Graduate  
173 Council should be included as Appendix A.

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c) Routing Process

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i) For a new Designated Emphasis

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(1) Graduate Group submits the proposal for "pre-review" by the Graduate Division to ensure that the proposal contains required information and to identify problems that may slow the formal proposal review process. Graduate Division provides the results of this pre-review in a memo to the proposing group.

Comment [rev6]: Should this be another (new?) term to distinguish from regular Grad Groups?

Comment [MD7]: "free-standing graduate program" is used on line 49. Use "The Free-standing Graduate Program Faculty" here?

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(2) Graduate Group submits the proposal, appendices, and response to Graduate Division pre-review to the Graduate Council. Graduate Council conducts a preliminary review. If the proposal is found satisfactory in this preliminary review, Graduate Council sends the proposal and attachments to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation, and Undergraduate Council for comment.

Comment [rev8]: ditto

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(3) Once comments are received, the Graduate Council reviews the comments and approves or rejects the Graduate Group's proposal. Graduate Council's decision is communicated to the Graduate Group and a copy of the decision is sent to the Office of Institutional Assessment, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, Office of the Registrar, Divisional Council. Graduate Council will notify the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA), the relevant UC systemwide committee, of the approval of a new Designated Emphasis program.

Comment [rev9]: ditto

Comment [rev10]: ditto

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ii) For a revised Designated Emphasis

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(1) Graduate Group submits the dated Graduate Group Summary Form and all other required documents to the Graduate Council.

Comment [rev11]: ditto

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(2) Graduate Council conducts a preliminary review and sends the form and related documents to the Office of Institutional Assessment, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, Office of the Registrar, and the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation for comment.

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(3) Once comments are received, the Graduate Council reviews comments and approves or rejects the Graduate Group's request to revise the Designated Emphasis. Graduate Council's decision is communicated to the Graduate Group and a copy of the decision is sent to the Office of Institutional Assessment, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, Office of the Registrar, and the Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation.

Comment [rev12]: ditto

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## ***Review Questions***

The review team may ask any questions they deem appropriate. The following questions are provided to the review team as a guide and to assist the program members in their preparation for the review. Of the suggested questions, certainly only those that are relevant to the program should be asked.

### **1. General**

1. What are the program's educational goals and outcomes? What role is it expected to play on campus in terms of its educational offerings and research? How do the program's goals and outcomes align with those of the University of California as a whole? Is the program meeting its educational goals and outcomes, as well as the expectations of others? How do you know?
2. Does the program fulfill its role in:
  - (a) attracting students of promise?
  - (b) recruiting and retaining faculty members of quality?
  - (c) justifying the instructional resources it requires?
  - (d) flexibility in accommodating changes in the campus mission?
3. How does the quality and productivity of the program compare with other programs in the same discipline?
4. Using relative standards of comparison from the most outstanding programs in the discipline (indicate comparison within the University of California, nationally and internationally), how does the program compare in:
  - (a) breadth of faculty (collectively) and their professional reputations?
  - (b) facilities, library holdings, and financial support for further development?
  - (c) providing a learning environment conducive to excellence in research and scholarship?
  - (d) the quality and number of students in view of the facilities for research, the size of the faculty, and career opportunities for graduates?
  - (e) student demand (e.g., for graduate students, the ratio between applications and admission within the previous five years)?
  - (f) placement of graduates in promising positions?
  - (g) scholarly fieldwork and publications
  - (h) retention, completion and time to degree metrics.
5. Are the national rankings of this program reflecting the state of the program?
6. What special characteristics does the program possess in relation to other analogous programs within the University? Does the program exploit opportunities for interaction with related programs on the campus or within the University? What is the impact on other campus programs and within the University?
7. Has the program changed or developed special emphases to incorporate new knowledge and skills to meet the changing needs of students and the University?
8. What are the plans for future growth and investments?
9. Is the program meeting the needs of the discipline, students, state and society?
10. What is needed to improve the program significantly?



## **2. Faculty**

1. What is the state of faculty morale?
2. Has the program motivated and enabled faculty members to use and develop new knowledge in the discipline?
3. Are there sufficient faculty FTE to support the program?
4. Is faculty participation adequate to support the objectives of the program?
5. Do the faculty receive appropriate credit for participation in graduate education?
6. Are there sufficient facilities in terms of infrastructure and laboratories?
7. How are faculty involved in annual assessment of student learning, including review of student work and assessment results, and the identification and implementation of programmatic changes based on assessment results?

## **3. Student Education**

1. What is the state of the student morale?
2. With what other universities is the program competing in regards to graduate student recruitment?
3. Has the program motivated students to participate fully in enquiry in the discipline?
4. Are the students being mentored and advised in a manner that is appropriate for the discipline?
5. Does the program ensure that consistent information is provided to students as well as advising on program requirements?
6. What contributions do the program's students make to the decision-making, planning, and program organization?
7. Are the students involved in research projects, teamwork, scholarly meetings, and national and/or international activities?
8. Are students knowledgeable about the program's student learning expectations (outcomes), at both the course and program levels, and related assessments?
9. Are the students demonstrating achievement of learning outcomes at expected levels? How do you know? If not, what plans exist to improve student achievement? How will the success of these plans be assessed?

## **4. Course Curriculum**

1. Is there a vision/cohesiveness to the course offerings in the program?
2. Are the core course curriculum, the number or types of courses/regularity of offerings and the number of electives appropriate for the discipline?
3. Is a multi-year assessment plan in place requiring annual assessment of student learning outcomes? Are annual assessments conducted, modifications implemented and complete reports filed as expected? Who receives these reports? Are they integrated into budgeting and planning processes? Are the reports reviewed by a knowledgeable person or committee that offers timely and constructive feedback that is used by the program as appropriate?
4. In preparation for this review, have the faculty evaluated the multi-year assessment plan and the associated assessment results? How has this evaluation been used to revise the multi-year assessment plan?
5. Does the curriculum prepare students for teaching responsibilities in ways that enable knowledgeable and productive support of student learning in relation to the educational

goals and outcomes of the programs they support, and the campus as a whole?

## **5. Student Financial Support**

1. Does the program provide sufficient financial support for its students?
2. Is the number of multiyear fellowships adequate?
3. Is the nonresident tuition support adequate for the number of international students in the program?
4. Are there a sufficient number of research assistantships in the program?
5. What is the role of TA teaching in the program? What educational functions do teaching assistantships serve for the TAs? Is there a TA training program? Are there sufficient TA positions available? How are the TA assignments for the graduate students in the program made?
6. Are the students sufficiently informed of grant opportunities and facilities?

## **6. Resources and Infrastructure**

1. Are sufficient resources being allocated by the University to the graduate program in order to allow it to meet its goals, such as financial resources, space, facilities and equipment?
2. Is the program as productive as possible given the resources available to it?
3. Is the number of faculty FTEs appropriate for the existing size of the program? How many FTEs will be needed to realize future objectives?
4. Is there sufficient administrative support?
5. What is the state of graduate staff morale?
6. Is there sufficient technical support?
7. Are adequate infrastructure and financial support in place for annual assessment of student learning?
8. Are the program's plans for improvement, based on annual assessment, supported by the institution?

We are aware that each program under review presents a special set of circumstances and that your review will need to take these distinctions into account. We intend these guidelines to be suggested topics that you may want to pursue rather than prescriptions of the process. As an External Reviewer, you should feel entirely free to pursue whatever avenues of investigation will yield constructive and relevant insights into the particular programs. We hope to obtain well thought-out and forthright judgments of where we stand in the academic picture, so that UCM may best capitalize on its strengths and take effective steps to correct weaknesses. The Academic Senate will give serious consideration to whatever directions you believe to be most worthwhile in achieving those ends. Any questions concerning the review should be directed to the PROC with a cc to the PROC Analyst.

**Relevant excerpts of correspondence on Graduate Council role in (ES) graduate program review**

**- from AY1415 Chair Hull and AY1415 Vice-chair Dawson**

... the standard charge ... seems to cover many if not all key points. It seems to me that GC might be involved in a couple of ways:

- (i) to provide some higher level guiding statement on the characteristics of successful grad program at UC Merced, and
- (ii) input during the review process on our experiences dealing with a particular program as that could provide a perspective unavailable from other parts of the university.

- Currently, there is no specific mention of enhancing/supporting diversity either in the student body or in the faculty. Diversity is there by implication perhaps elsewhere (e.g., "meeting the needs...of society"), but this may be a topic for PROC/GC to consider moving forward.
- Course Curriculum #5 notes "prepare students for teaching responsibilities." I realize this is specific to preparation to teach at UCM, but it made me think about preparing students in general for future careers and being sensitive to the fact that such careers may not be in academia. This may be embedded within PLOs for particular programs, but may be another issue to consider moving forward.

## **Grade Appeals Policy**

### **Introduction**

All grades, except Incomplete, are considered final when assigned by an instructor at the end of the term. For the purposes of the grade appeal, a term refers to fall or spring semesters, or summer session.

An instructor may request a change of grade when a computational or procedural error has occurred in the original assignment of a grade. An instructor may not change a grade as a result of re-examination or the submission of additional work after the close of the term. No term grade except Incomplete may be revised by re-examination.

A student may initiate a grade appeal only in case of a clerical / procedural error or non-academic circumstances (described below). Students are encouraged to review their work with the instructor for an explanation of the grade assigned. A student may appeal a grade specifically on the grounds set forth in this policy, based on potential reporting errors or criteria not directly reflective of academic performance in this course.

### **Basis for Grade Changes**

There are two valid bases for changing a grade through an appeal. The first is errors and corrections, wherein the appeal is to correct a mistake either in the computation or the reporting of a grade. The second is where it is established that non-academic criteria were applied to determine a grade which includes (a) discrimination based on ethnicity, political views, religion, age, gender, financial status or national origin; or (b) the application of arbitrary criteria in a manner not reflective of student performance in relation to course requirements.

*Point of information:* Other grade policies, outside of the grade appeal processes, address “good cause” considerations which may include illness, serious personal problems, an accident, a death in the immediate family, a large and necessary increase in working hours, or other situations deemed to be of equal gravity. Two grading policies may apply to “good cause” circumstances: an “Incomplete” or “Withdraw” grade. These processes are triggered during the term in which the course is taken and are not available subsequent to the grade being filed.

### **Initial Steps**

The following are recommended preliminary steps that should be taken prior to filing a formal appeal to address grade concerns. These steps precede the formal appeal process, described in the next section.

If a clerical or procedural error in the reporting of a grade by the instructor can be documented within the term following when the grade was filed, a student may contact the instructor and/or the by-law unit chair<sup>1</sup> in writing (an email message is sufficient), describing the error. Grade changes to correct

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<sup>1</sup> A lead faculty contact may be a program director (e.g. the Merritt Writing Program)

clerical and procedural errors may be filed by the instructor (or equivalent proxy) and approved by the Office of the University Registrar. Such grade changes should ensure fairness and equity based on syllabus or other policies, especially for those students whose grades will be unaltered. No final grade (except an Incomplete) may be revised by reexamination or additional coursework.

Concerns about non-academic issues (discrimination or arbitrary treatment) should be discussed with the instructor, if possible; otherwise, students are encouraged to discuss these matters with the by-law unit chair and/or program's Dean<sup>2</sup> (with WRI and Core 1 considerations addressed to the Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education).

## **Appeal Process**

If there are sufficient and appropriate grounds to appeal a grade, based on the above specified criteria and procedures, a student may consider the following process.

### ***Appeal Petition***

Whenever possible, students are encouraged to work directly with their instructor to discuss grades, course policies and expectations. If a student wishes to appeal a grade after speaking to the faculty member in charge of the course and the appropriate administrator, the grade appeal process commences with a written appeal petition.

An appeal petition includes a written summary (250 total words, see below) and is filed electronically with the program's Dean (who will communicate with the instructor and other appropriate administrators). The following is an outline of what a formal grade appeal petition should include:

- Contact Information: *Include name, university email address, student identification number, and phone number*
- Course information: *Include course number and title, instructor name*
- Background to appeal: *In 100 words, briefly describe attempts to resolve concerns with instructor. If the faculty program lead or Dean was contacted, note these details as well.*
- Brief description of appeal: *In 150 words, describe the grounds for the appeal itself. What are the primary criteria and considerations?*
- Appendix: *Include all related documentation*

### ***Appeal Process***

The program's Dean shall proceed to attempt to resolve the dispute independently. (If the program's Dean has a conflict of interest, *e.g.* is the instructor who filed the disputed grade, the program's School Executive Committee Chair will serve as designate on the case. In such a case, all reference to the program's "Dean" refers to this "designate.") After review of the appeal petition, the program's Dean may or may not approve further action.

If an appeal petition alleges discrimination or arbitrary treatment, an initial assessment of the grounds for the case will be considered by the program's Dean. If it is determined that this is potentially a

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<sup>2</sup> A School dean of a given undergraduate or graduate academic program is the appropriate contact. The Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education is the contact for WRI or Core 1.

discrimination case<sup>3</sup>, the petition will be reviewed as a Title VI and/or Title IX matter by the appropriate officer(s).

Written notification about findings will be shared with the student and instructor within four weeks of receipt of the formal petition. If the student or instructor requests a reconsideration of the appeal decision, they must respond within one week of this notification to the Provost (or designate). If there is no request for reconsideration from the student or instructor, the grade shall be sustained or altered in accordance with the findings.

A final appeal to the Provost may be based only on (1) a violation of due process in the grade appeal process or (2) new and substantial information. This final appeal is limited to a 100 word summary, with related evidence, and must be filed to the Provost's Office within one week of the findings. The Provost (or the Provost's designate) will decide if further process is warranted and if so, how this process will be structured. If further process is warranted, additional documentation or interviews supporting the appeal may be requested.

The final decision should occur within the term of the appeal. Decisions may include: 1) no change, 2) removal of course from transcript, or 3) grade correction. In cases where it is determined that nonacademic criteria were significant factors in establishing the grade, students may have the option of either receiving a P or S in the course or retroactively dropping the course without penalty.

If a grade appeal is related to the final term before graduation, submission of an appeal must be made within 30 days after the last day of a student's final term and considered within 30 days after receipt.

## **Timeline**

The following timeline should be followed in all grade appeals. Failure to take actions within this timeline will significantly limit and potentially disqualify the grounds for an appeal.

The following timeframe begins in the term following the one in which the grade in question has been filed.

At the beginning of the term, the student will no later than

*Weeks 1-3:* Initiate communication with instructor and/or program faculty lead, seeking informal resolution of concerns

*Weeks 4-5:* Develop a formal appeal petition, if concerns are unresolved

*By Week 6:* Submit this petition and supporting evidence to the program's Dean for review

The goal of the appeal process is for findings to be shared with the student and instructor as soon as possible. The following are estimated times for reviewing the petition, exploring information, and summarizing findings.

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<sup>3</sup> Discrimination refers to protected groups based on ethnicity, political views, religion, age, gender, financial status or national origin.

In the process that follows, the program's Dean will:

*Weeks 7-9:* Review the formal appeal. Findings and summaries are developed, with the potential for seeking further information or consultation.

*Weeks 10-12:* If possible, findings are shared. Please note that some cases are complex and require either further consultation or information gathering, with associated time added. The final decision should occur within the term of the appeal.

*Findings:* When findings are released, the student and instructor have one week to respond via a brief summary (100 words) to the Provost (or Provost designate). This is the final step in the appeal process, and there may be no further petitions or appeals.

*Informational Item:* Please note that the timeline for appeals concerning the final term before graduation is abbreviated to 30 days.

## Final Note

These procedures are designed solely to guide grade appeal processes. No punitive actions may be taken against the instructor solely on the basis of these procedures. Neither the filing of an appeal nor the final disposition of the case shall, under any circumstances, become part of the personnel files of the instructor. The use of nonacademic criteria, however, is a violation of the Faculty Code of Conduct and in some instances Title VI and/or Title IX policies, which may result in potential sanctions.

## Simrin Takhar

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**Subject:** FW: UGC Business - Grade Appeals Policy - Request for GC Comments

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**From:** Fatima Paul  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 19, 2015 3:17 PM  
**To:** Mayra Chavez  
**Cc:** [senateoffice@ucmcrops.ucmerced.edu](mailto:senateoffice@ucmcrops.ucmerced.edu); Kathleen Hull; Jian-Qiao Sun; Jack Vevea;  
[ugc1415@ucmcrops.ucmerced.edu](mailto:ugc1415@ucmcrops.ucmerced.edu); [gc1415@ucmcrops.ucmerced.edu](mailto:gc1415@ucmcrops.ucmerced.edu)  
**Subject:** UGC Business - Grade Appeals Policy - Request for GC Comments

Hi Mayra,

The attached Grade Appeals policy was approved by UGC on 2/18/15. Per our discussion, please send it to GC for comments.

Please send comments or edits to my attention by no later than February 27, 2015.

Thank you,

Fatima.

On Feb 9, 2015, at 8:53 AM, Fatima Paul <[fpaul@ucmerced.edu](mailto:fpaul@ucmerced.edu)> wrote:

Dejeune,

On behalf of UGC's Grade Appeal Policy Subcommittee, please find attached a draft policy that will be reviewed and approved by UGC this semester.

The subcommittee suggests that this draft be shared with Campus Ombuds Acker, Legal Counsel Gunther, Wendy Smith (Title IX), Graduate Council, School ECs, and the Provost. Suggestions for additional reviewers are welcome.

UGC is scheduled to meet on February 18.

Thank you,

Fatima.

<Grade Appeal Policy Draft\_9Feb2015.docx>



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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

OFFICE OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE  
JIAN-QIAO SUN, CHAIR  
[senatechair@ucmerced.edu](mailto:senatechair@ucmerced.edu)

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
5200 NORTH LAKE ROAD  
MERCED, CA 95343  
(209) 228-7954; fax (209) 228-7955

April 9, 2015

To: Jack Vevea, Chair, Undergraduate Council  
From: Jian-Qiao Sun, Chair, Division Council  
Re: Draft Grade Appeal Policy Review

Dear Jack,

The standing and executive committees of the Division Council and several key stakeholders reviewed the draft Grade Appeal Policy. Comments were received from the Graduate Council (GC), University Registrar Laurie Herbrand, Legal Counsel Elisabeth Gunther, Director of Compliance Wendy Smith and a faculty member. Attached for your consideration please find the full text of comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Sun".

Jian-Qiao Sun, Chair  
Division Council

cc: Division Council  
Senate Office



ACADEMIC SENATE, MERCED DIVISION  
GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)  
KATHLEEN HULL, CHAIR

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED  
5200 NORTH LAKE ROAD  
MERCED, CA 95343  
(209) 228-6312

**February 27, 2014**

**To: Jack Vevea, Chair, Undergraduate Council (UGC)  
Jian-Qiao Sun, Senate Chair**

**From: Kathleen Hull, Chair, Graduate Council (GC)**

**Re: GC comments on the draft Grade Appeal Policy**

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On February 25, Graduate Council reviewed the grade appeal policy drafted by the Undergraduate Council (UGC) Grade Appeal Policy Subcommittee. In general, members were supportive of the proposed policy that clearly defines the criteria for grade changes and formalizes the steps to appeal a grade.

During the Council's discussion the following comments and questions were raised:

- **Appeal Petition:** The policy notes that an appeal petition includes a written summary that is filed with the program's Dean; by "written" does UGC also include email? Clarification on this point would be helpful so students know if electronic or hard copies will be required. In addition, members believe that an electronic form would be helpful for undergraduate students to use for this purpose.
- **Appeal Process:** As written, the policy indicates that if the program's Dean has a conflict of interest a Dean designate will review the case. Members expressed concern that the conflict of interest may be compounded if the Dean designates the designee. GC suggests that UGC identify the designee to avoid the perception of conflict of interest in such cases; for example, the designee be the program's School Executive Committee Chair.
- **Timeline:** Members appreciate the timeline included in the draft policy, but recommend adding "no later than" language to help students understand the time limitation and when exactly the process for an appeal should begin. It would seem especially critical to set a "no later than" date for initiating the process, since the rules stipulate the process must be complete within one semester. Likewise, given that the policy indicates that the timeframe begins in the semester following that in which the grade in question was filed,

what are the timeline implications for a grade appeal for a spring semester course? Would this mean a timeline for an appeal would begin in the summer? Given such possible confusion, Graduate Council recommends explicitly stating how the summer would be incorporated (or not) in the timeline for potential stages of the appeal processes.

We appreciate the opportunity to opine.

Cc: Division Council  
Graduate Council  
Academic Senate Office

## Graduate Council (GC)

### Submission Deadlines

	Date	Action
<b>CRF<sup>1</sup> Deadlines</b>	October 1 <sup>st</sup> (If weekend then first Monday in October)	<i>Graduate Groups*</i> : Last day to submit <u>all</u> CRFs (new and revised) to the <i>Registrar</i> for inclusion in the upcoming <b>Spring course</b> schedule (offerings).
	March 1 <sup>st</sup> (If weekend then first Monday in March)	<i>Graduate Groups*</i> : Last day to submit <u>all</u> CRFs (new and revised) to the <i>Registrar</i> for inclusion in the upcoming <b>Fall course</b> schedule (offerings).
<b>CCGA<sup>2</sup> Proposal Deadlines</b>	First Day of Fall Instruction	<i>Graduate Groups**</i> : Last day to submit a stand-alone graduate group proposal (CCGA Proposal) to the <i>Graduate Council</i> for internal review and estimated submission to <u>CCGA</u> in the upcoming <b>Spring</b> semester.
	First Day of Spring Instruction	<i>Graduate Groups**</i> : Last day to submit a stand-alone graduate group proposal (CCGA Proposal) to the <i>Graduate Council</i> for internal review and estimated submission to <u>CCGA</u> in the upcoming <b>Fall</b> semester.

\*Graduate Groups refers to Graduate Group Chair or Authorized Designee

\*\*Graduate Groups refers to Lead Author or Authorized Designee

<sup>1</sup>CRF: Course Request Form

<sup>2</sup>CCGA: Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs

Undergraduate Council (UGC)

2015-2016 Calendar for Academic Programs and Courses

Date	Action
Thursday, October 1, 2015	Last day to submit new and revised CRFs to Registrar for inclusion in the spring and summer 2015 schedule of classes.
Tuesday, March 1, 2016	Last day to submit new and revised CRFs to Registrar for inclusion in the fall 2016 schedule of classes.
	Last day to submit proposals for <b>new</b> majors and minors. Proposals must include draft Catalog copy.
	Last day to submit revisions to <b>existing</b> majors and minors. Revisions must include draft Catalog copy.

{Fall 2015 semester ends Friday, December 18, 2015}

{Spring semester begins Tuesday, January 12, 2016 and ends Friday, May 13, 2016}