

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL 2005-2006 ANNUAL REPORT

TO THE MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE:

During the academic year 2005-2006, the Undergraduate Council (UGC) met nineteen times to conduct business. The issues that UGC considered this year are described briefly as follows:

Instructional Review/WASC Accreditation

The committee discussed the needs for procedures to be developed at UC Merced. The UGC Chair worked with UCEP to find exemplars for the committee to review.

Distinguished Teaching Awards

As requested by the Division Council, UGC discussed this topic. UGC members acknowledged the positive aspects of teaching awards but considered it somewhat premature for UC Merced to be awarding teaching honors. The committee continued to fine-tune the award procedures in anticipation of inaugurating them in the 2006-07 academic year or later.

Dean's Honor List and Chancellor's Honor List

UGC approved the policy on honors drafted by UGC Chair.

Diplomas for commencement

UGC gathered input from faculty members and students to facilitate the creation of the first UC Merced undergraduate diploma.

Add/Drop Policy-Modification of UC Merced Regulations

The committee discussed the UC Merced add/drop policy and it was felt that an additional week should be added to enable students to drop a course without penalty. UGC requested that a policy be drafted for implementation of a W or withdrawal grade. The revised add/drop policies were reviewed and approved by UGC in April, 2006.

Pass/Not passed for Freshman Seminars

Members discussed this item with former College One Chair Merritt to reaffirm the committee's intent that Freshman Seminars be offered as P/NP only.

Admission by Exception

In response to Director of Admissions Ruiz's request, UGC drafted guidelines for the use of Admission by Exception. All campuses may use 6% of their total freshmen for exceptional enrollment. Up to 2% of the Admission by Exception enrollments may be reserved for Special Talents or Potential Applicants and up to 4% may be used for Disadvantaged or Limited Educational Opportunity Applicants.

Proposed Change to UC Merced Regulation 65.B.

Minimum Progress-Quantitative Standards

The language was originally proposed by the Registrar's office, discussed at several UGC meetings and approved by UGC in June, 2006. UC Merced's Rules and the Division Council reviewed and approved the proposed changes. UC Rules and Jurisdiction approved in October, 2006.

Policy for Readmission to UC Merced

The purpose of the proposed policy was to establish a common foundation for the review of students who wish to be readmitted or reinstated at UC Merced. The policy was approved by the Deans of the three Schools and by UGC.

General Education Requirement - Change

Originally the general education requirements stated that beyond Core 1 and 100 and Writing 10, there was one lower division requirement from SSHA and three upper division SSHA courses. The faculty within the School of Natural Sciences put forward a proposal to change these General Education requirements to allow students to experience breadth in their General Education experience. UGC approved the following changes: General Education requirements to consist of four courses in SSHA, with at least one in Humanities, at least one in Social Sciences, and at least one upper division course.

GE Requirements for Transfer Students

Proposal: "Students coming to UC Merced with less than 45 units have to take Core 1 and any additional courses to satisfy General Education requirements. Students with more than 45 units are exempt from taking Core 1." This proposal was collectively approved by UGC.

Regents Scholarships

UGC discussed and approved a request from the Financial Aid Office that Regents' Scholarships be reviewed annually. Members also agreed that appeal decisions should be made at the end of the academic year.

UGC considered two Regents Scholars students' appeals for continued scholarship support despite not meeting the academic criteria. The two appeal cases were reviewed at the end of the academic year and were denied.

Additionally, UGC discussed the academic criteria necessary for **continuing students**. Noting the importance of high standard of academic excellence, members agreed on recommending a minimum 3.0 GPA with the stipulation that a student with a 2.8 GPA would be eligible for continued scholarship funding contingent upon raising their GPA to a minimum of 3.0 in the following semester.

Summer Sessions

UC Berkeley was used as a model to define the set of summer teaching policies for UC Merced. The policies were discussed on several occasions by UGC in coordination with the office of the Registrar and revisions were applied to the proposal. This was approved by UGC in the spring of 2006.

Grades – No Report (NR)

UGC approved the removal of NR as an option from the Catalog. Members agreed that the designation should only be used by the Registrar. Faculty should only use *I* (Incomplete) or *IP* (In Progress).

Grades – Incomplete

UGC approved changes applied to the policy by the Registrar (see “I-Grade Policy and Procedure Revision” memo). In the past, a petition had to be filed by a student before the examination period. A petition will now have to be filed before the first day of instruction of the next semester (which would include summer sessions).

Grade Appeal Process

UGC implemented a UC Merced policy on grade appeal process.

New Course Approval

During the course of the year, UGC approved twenty-four courses.

Approval of New Emphases Tracks

UGC approved the following:

- Cognitive Sciences (Social and Cognitive Sciences degree)
- Computer Science and Engineering (Applied Mathematical Sciences)
- Engineering Mechanics (AMS)

Approval of New Minors from SSHA

UGC approved ten new minors proposed by SSHA.

Changes to Life Sciences Major - SNS

UGC approved the proposed change to the Biology major: Human Biology was incorporated and a new core was added. The new degree program is Biological Sciences and includes three Cores: Molecular and Cell Biology, Human Biology and Integrative Biology.

Justification: The reasoning for this proposal was twofold, first to resolve a number of continuing problems with the Human Biology degree program, additionally several members of the Natural Sciences faculty expressed concern about having three separate degrees in the life sciences, while only a single degree in the other physical sciences and mathematics.

Modification of Math courses

Math 5

The committee approved the changes to this course (course was broken into smaller sections with the addition of a series of assessments) mainly because the size of the lecture was not working for many students, in particular those with basic math skills.

Mathematical Sciences

UGC approved the title change to *Applied Mathematical Sciences* to emphasize the interdisciplinary characteristic of this course.

Math 32

UGC approved the School of Natural Sciences’ proposal requesting that Math 32 (Probability and Statistics) be listed as a requirement for a degree instead of a General Education requirement.

Psychology Major (BA, Social and Cognitive Sciences)

UGC discussed and approved a proposal put forward by SSHA regarding the creation of a new undergraduate Social and Cognitive Science major.

Catalog Copy

Each School submitted a catalog copy to UGC for review. Draft copies were thoroughly studied and approved by UGC in the spring of 2006.

Throughout the year the committee was dynamically involved with enrollment issues, admissions, and financial aid and kept abreast of discussions within the BOARS committee. Additionally, in an effort to increase student enrollment at UC Merced, UGC was actively involved with key faculty within the three Schools to focus on the implementation of new majors.

(Upon request to the Senate Office, UGC Meeting Minutes and Agendas are available in a single PDF file.)

Respectfully submitted,

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