

**UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL (UGC)
2006-2007 ANNUAL REPORT**

TO THE MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE

During the academic year 2006-2007, the Undergraduate Council (UGC) met fourteen times in person and conducted some business via email. The issues that UGC considered this year are described briefly as follows (in alpha order):

Admissions

The UGC Admissions Subcommittee held regular meetings with Jane Lawrence (Vice Chancellor Student Affairs) and Encarnacion Ruiz (Director of Admissions) to discuss several strategies for increasing enrollment yield, including implementation of a pilot redirect program.

Director of Admissions Ruiz attended UGC on 9/28/06 to discuss enrollment and admissions status at UCM. On 1/31/07 Sue Wilbur, Director of Admissions at UC OP, also met with UGC and presented a system-wide perspective on UCM's admissions status. Items of discussion mostly covered ways to ensure that UCM meet its target in terms of yield.

Catalog

The three Schools submitted their section of the Catalog to UGC for review. Course Catalog materials were thoroughly examined by the committee. UGC approved the Catalog copy in April 2007.

Catalog Rights

UGC approved the proposal for a policy on Catalog Rights in May 2007.

Class Size Policy

As requested by Division Council, UGC examined the Registrar's policy on cancelling small classes, and concluded that the policy and its implementation are satisfactory. The Registrar's office provided an update on the number of cancelled classes in the fall semester, and again UGC found the results satisfactory.

Course Requests Forms

During the course of the academic year, UGC approved over 270 new courses and/or changes to existing courses.

For summer school courses, UGC members agreed that no action from the committee would be required for already approved courses scheduled to be taught for the first time in summer 07. Courses that were new or significantly different in pedagogical terms required UGC review.

Double Major Policy

Following consultation with the three Schools, the admissions office and with UCM academic advisors, UGC approved the following policy on double majors:

“A student in good academic standing wishing to declare a double major must petition the School(s) responsible for the major(s). No more than 16 upper-division units may be used to satisfy requirements for both majors simultaneously, whether these units are explicitly required by the majors or count as electives toward the majors (excluding units required for university-level general education for both majors, e.g. CORE 100).

Double-major students must satisfy all requirements for both majors, including general education requirements across schools if applicable. Coursework for both majors must be completed in 160 semester units or 11 semesters, whichever is greater, from the onset of college-level work. Both majors will be noted on the student's transcript and diploma. If the two majors lead to different degrees (B.A. and B.S.), that fact will be noted on the transcript, and the two degree designations will appear on the diploma. A student who has declared a double major may choose to graduate with a single major, but if so may not continue in the University for completion of the second major.”

Dual Admission Program

UGC conducted an in-depth analysis of the Dual Admission Program (Shared Experience Program/Redirect Program). The committee generated a report listing the program's pros and cons and it was forwarded to the Division Council. UGC's comments on the proposal and the proposal itself were also forwarded to UCM faculty for input. The program was ultimately adopted by UCM administration in March, 2007.

Engineering Redirect Program

The School of Engineering submitted a proposal to UGC for a 4+1 redirect program (as an alternative to the UCM 2+2 shared experience program). The program includes two phases: Phase 1, for fall 2007 admissions and Phase 2, for fall 2008 admissions cycle. UGC requested more information about Phase 2. A report on the outcome of Phase 1 will be forwarded to the committee.

Freshman Seminars/Faculty Workload

Freshman seminars policies were discussed within UGC and other Senate committees. The general concern among faculty included workload issues, availability of resources and the restrictive nature of the utilization of funds.

Honors

The following policies were approved by the faculty via mail ballot and have since been approved by UCEP (University Committee on Educational Policy). They will go to Council and the Assembly of the Academic Senate in fall 2007.

▪ Dean's Honor List

“Students will be eligible for the Dean's Honor List if they have earned in any one semester a minimum of 12 graded units with a 3.5 grade point average or better with no grade of I or NP. Dean's Honors are listed on student transcripts. Any student who has been found to violate the academic integrity policies during an academic year will not be eligible for the Dean's Honor List during that academic year.”

▪ **Chancellor’s Honor List**

“Students who are placed on the Dean’s Honor List for both semesters in a single academic year (fall and spring) will be placed on the Chancellor’s Honor List for that academic year.”

▪ **Honors at Graduation**

UC Merced Regulation 75 – Honors at Graduation (SR 640)

Revisions in **bold**: edits recommended by UCEP and approved by UGC

“To be eligible for honors at graduation, a student must have completed a minimum of 50 semester units at the University of California, of which a minimum of 43 units must have been taken for a letter grade and a minimum of 30 units must have been completed at UC Merced. The grade point average achieved must rank in the top 2 percent of the student’s School for highest honors, the next 4 percent for high honors, and the next 10 percent for honors at graduation. ~~If there are fewer than 50 students graduating in a particular School, the criteria for honors in that School will be based on grade point average determined by the Undergraduate Council.~~ **The number of recipients eligible under these percentages shall be rounded up to the next higher integer.**”

Majors

UGC approved the following majors (to be offered in fall 2007):

▪ **Economics, B.A.**

The major in Economics was proposed by SSHA faculty as an alternative to the Economics emphasis track in the Social and Cognitive Science Major. The proposal was approved by the committee (on 11/09/06) with the provision that the following edit be applied to the program requirement: “All major course requirements must be completed with a grade of € C- or better”

▪ **History, B.A.**

The History major was approved by UGC on 11/30/06. The committee also recommended that prerequisites be consistent with the information on the course request forms. The major in History will replace the B.A. in World Culture and History (emphasis History) and is to be offered in fall 2007.

▪ **Literature and Cultures, B.A.**

The committee approved the B.A. in Literature and Cultures on 02/07/07. The major in Literature and Cultures will replace the B.A. in World Culture and History (emphasis Literature) and is to be offered in fall 2007.

▪ **Management, B.S.**

The B.S. in Management was approved as a conversion of the B.A. degree in Management (approved on 02/07/07).

▪ **Political Science, B.A.**

The Political Science major was approved by the committee on 11/30/06.

UGC approved the following changes:

▪ **Applied Mathematical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Earth Systems Science, Physics and Chemistry**

The School of NS adapted school-wide changes that enable more flexibility in courses that can be used to fulfill school requirements. Each major was asked to designate courses that would

fulfill school requirements. A summary of those changes was distributed to UGC. The committee reviewed and approved the changes proposed by the School of Natural Sciences.

UGC approved the elimination of the following:

- **Social and Cognitive Science Major and Public Policy Emphasis Track.**
- **World Cultures and History Major and emphases in Literature and History)**

Mid-Semester Exam Policy

UGC addressed the general issue of whether mid-term exams can be scheduled outside of normal class time and how conflicts with other classes can be avoided. The committee agreed that a mechanism that would eliminate or at least minimize potential scheduling conflicts needed to be implemented. After consultation with the schools and the Registrar's Office, the following policy was approved by the committee on November 1, 2006.

“Out-of-class midterms are allowed only in (1) courses that have multiple sections (the main lecture section, not lab or discussion sections) that meet at different days or time; or (2) courses with an expected enrollment of 100 or more.

A student who informs the instructor of an unavoidable conflict (e.g. work schedule, child care issues, or religious reasons) at least three weeks prior to a scheduled out-of-class exam time must be given the option to take the exam either during a regular class period or at another mutually agreeable time within a week of the original exam time.”

Minimum Grade Policy (Request from SSHA)

UGC approved the SSHA request to reduce the minimum grade policy from a C to a C- in an effort to be consistent with other schools and to comply with UCM and system-wide Senate Regulations.

Minimum Grade Regulation (Change to Catalog text)

The text in the Catalog informs students that one way they can fulfill the Entry-Level Writing Requirement (ELWR) is to “complete an acceptable writing course at UC Merced (WRI 1 or other acceptable course).” In an effort to avoid confusion about what completion of a course means and what the passing grade for a UCM course is versus fulfillment of a system-wide requirement, UGC approved the proposed change to the language:

“Complete and acceptable writing course at UC Merced (WRI 1 or other acceptable course) **with a grade of C or higher.**”

Minors

UGC approved the following minors:

- Political Science (SSHA)
- Anthropology (SSHA)
- Sociology (SSHA)
- Management (SSHA)
- Natural Sciences Education (NS)
- Physics (NS)
- Revision to the Arts Minor (SSHA)

Minors – Campus-wide Policy

UGC discussed the need for the three Schools to have general guidelines related to minors. The UGC policy subcommittee drafted a campus-wide policy on Minors. It was approved by the committee on 3/26/07.

Readmissions/Reinstatement Policy

The UCM readmission/reinstatement policy was revisited by UGC. Members of the committee suggested that the 24 unit requirement be removed and that some language be added to better emphasize the Schools' authority. On 11/30/06, UGC approved the following revisions to the policy:

Reinstatement Process:

It is expected that all official transcripts from other institution(s) with course work for all terms prior to the current term would be submitted with the reinstatement application, and that a final set of official transcripts then be provided to the University at the conclusion of that current term of enrollment demonstrating the completion of ~~the minimum 24 semester equivalent units and final grades for that term~~ an acceptable number of units (normally 24 semester units).

Reinstatement Criteria:

“A decision to approve the application for reinstatement will only be granted if...” “Deans have the authority to approve, on a case by case basis, an application that does not meet the minimum unit requirements. If a reinstatement is approved, the student will be monitored on probation by the academic advisors for each School, for at least one semester.”

Retention and Mid-Semester Grade Reporting

Elizabeth Boretz, Director of Student Advising and Learning Center, attended a UGC meeting where she reported on retention and mid-semester grade reporting. UGC welcomed further discussions on future development of the program.

Scholarships

▪ Regents Scholarships

UC Merced offered a total of 42 Regents' Scholarships to admitted freshmen with two students accepting. An additional two transfer students accepted scholarships (four offered). The total awarded was \$31,681.

Financial Aid Director, Diana Ralls, attended UGC in October 2006 and requested the committee's input regarding awarding scholarships:

▪ General Scholarships

UGC did not recommend any changes to the current policy for scholarship eligibility (3.25 minimum for entering students and 3.0 for continuing students). Students who fall below the GPA or the 30-unit requirement may have the opportunity to correct their academic status within a semester.

▪ Criteria for Evaluating Regents Scholarships Applications

UGC did not recommend any changes to the current review process.

▪ **Criteria for Maintaining Regents Scholarships**

UGC recommended the following changes to the policy:

“Students must enroll and pass 30 units per year, which may include courses taken during the summer session following their first two semesters of enrollment.”

Justification: it was thought that giving students more flexibility to complete 30 units, and giving them the opportunity to complete courses during summer session, may help retain students.

In February 2007, 250 applications for the Regents Scholarships were evaluated. Of the 65 applicants who were offered the scholarships, nearly half were from the San Joaquin Valley, and eight were from Merced County.

SSHA – Revised General Education Requirement

UGC received a proposal from SSHA to introduce a foreign language requirement. The committee discussed the proposal. Due to resource implications, the proposal was forwarded to CAPRA for comments.

UCM Regulation 60 – Repetition of Courses

“A student may repeat only those courses in which a grade of D, F, or Not Passed was received. Courses in which a grade of D or F has been earned may not be repeated on a Passed/Not Passed basis.

Repetition of a course more than once requires approval by the appropriate Dean in all instances. Degree credit for a course will be given only once, but the grade assigned at each enrollment shall be permanently recorded.

In computing grade-point average of an undergraduate who repeats courses in which the student received a D or F, only the most recently earned grade and grade points shall be used for the first 16 units repeated. In the case of further repetitions, the grade-point average shall be based on all grades assigned and total units attempted.”

▪ **Exception to Regulation 60**

The School of Natural Sciences Curriculum Committee (NSCC) requested that an exception be applied to Regulation 60 for students who received a grade of D+ or lower in Physics 9 during fall or spring semesters of 2006. The NSCC requested that those students be allowed to replace the Physics 9 grade with a successful grade in Physics 19 since Physics 19 was not available to students in 2006 and it covers the same materials as Physics 9. This exception to the Regulation was approved by the committee.

System-wide Senate Regulation 636 allows students who earn a C-, which does not fulfill the Entry-Level Writing Requirement (ELWR), to retake an ELWR course such as UC Merced’s WRI 1. UC Merced’s Regulation 60 does not allow a student with a C- grade to retake that course. In order to insure compliance with UC Regulation 636, UGC agreed to initiate the process of changing Regulation 60 as follows:

“A student may repeat only those courses in which a grade of D, F, or Not Passed was received, **except as provided in SR 636 C. (1)**. Courses in which a grade of D or F has been earned may not be repeated on a Passed/Not Passed basis.”

The proposed language was forwarded to the Rules committee. Following approval by Rules, it will be placed on the Division Council consent calendar and will ultimately be subject to a vote of the faculty.

UC Merced Website

IT Chief Information Officer Kogut and Web Services Manager Gorham attended UGC to address the committee’s concerns about the university’s website and discuss ways to improve the website in an effort to boost enrollment numbers, e.g, by providing more content generated by students and faculty. Additionally, UGC Chair and Writing Program Director Ochsner gathered input from faculty and students about ways to improve the website. Findings were distributed to Communications Director Iestas.

Upper Division General Education (Core 100)

UGC discussed the future of General Education at UCM, particularly Core 100 and the fact that it may not be possible to deliver this course with the current resources. A UGC ad-hoc subcommittee conducted an analysis on workload and resource issues, faculty compensation, and how Core 100 could be scaled up for the next academic year. UGC encouraged College One Executive Committee to develop a formal plan for delivery of upper division general education in 2007-2008. In its report to UGC, COEC recommended the implementation of an alternative to Core 100 which would insure the delivery of general education in case Core 100 cannot be scaled up for 600 juniors.

The view of UGC is that general education is the responsibility of College One faculty and decisions about general education need broad faculty approval before consideration by the committee.

Upper Division General Education Requirement – Natural Sciences

Upon reviewing CRFs for co-listed courses submitted by the School of Natural Sciences, UGC solicited information on the School’s general education requirements; specifically, criteria for counting courses towards upper division communication. The NSCC stated that it is going to consider revisions to the requirement.

Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education

At the request of the EVC/Provost, UGC discussed the job description for the new vice provost position. The committee’s comments were forwarded to the EVC/Provost.

Throughout the year the committee was dynamically involved with admissions and enrollment issues. The committee also kept abreast of discussions within the BOARS, UCEP and UCOPE committees.

Respectfully submitted,

UCM Faculty

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Peggy O'Day, Vice Chair and BOARS Representative (NS)
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Ex-officio

Shawn Kantor, Division Council Chair (SSHA)
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External Consultants

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Student Representatives

Amanda Rushing (until Nov.2006)
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