

**UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL (UGC)
ANNUAL REPORT
2014-2015**

The Merced Division of the Academic Senate: The Undergraduate Council (UGC) and its standing subcommittees held a total of 13 regularly scheduled in person meetings and conducted some business via email with respect to its duties as outlined in UC Merced's Senate Bylaw II.IV.2.B. Many of the Council's agenda items were delegated for preliminary review by the appropriate subcommittee(s), followed by full Council review. The issues that UGC considered this year are described briefly below.

Undergraduate Council Organization

The Undergraduate Council designated several subcommittees that met separately throughout the year:

- General Education (GE)
- Admissions/Financial Aid
- Undergraduate Academic Programs/Policies/Courses

In addition, ad-hoc subcommittees were formed for the Undergraduate Distinguished Teaching Awards for Faculty and for Non-Senate Lecturers.

General Education

Throughout the academic year, UGC received regular updates from Dr. Anne Zanzucchi, Chair of the General Education Subcommittee (GESC), on activities related to the program review of General Education. The GESC's objective was to prioritize and expand institutional efforts to develop a comprehensive and sustainable GE program, in the context of GE's program review. During Fall 2014, the GESC authored a self-study that focused on (1) Development of a broadly inclusive GE program that is reflective of the institutional context; (2) Processes for systematic and sustainable assessment of GE; and (3) Structures for allocating appropriate resources and incentives to engage Senate faculty in the oversight and delivery of GE.

In February, a [visiting team](#), representing national and systemwide expertise in GE¹, came to campus to meet with faculty, staff, and students.

The GESC contacted academic programs to request feedback on the undergraduate hallmarks and found that it was challenging to solicit responses from Engineering and the School of Natural Sciences and considered outreach strategies to increase feedback from across disciplines. A memo summarizing common threads, particular to GE competencies, specific topics or courses, and program structure, became the basis for retreat planning.

In April, the external team report was transmitted to the GESC. The review team report provided an analysis of campus needs and highlighted established GE models for consideration with program development. Shortly thereafter, PROC provided guidance with the following emphases:

¹ External team members included Barbara Sawrey from UC San Diego (Review Team Chair), Jillian Kinzie from Indiana University, and Terry Rhodes from the Association of American Colleges and Universities.

- Continue to act as the “chair” of the GE program
- Pursue multiple avenues for enlisting faculty participation
- Ensure administrative inclusion in the response phase
- Evaluate the Strategic Academic Focusing pillars as an organizing structure for the redesign of GE
- Attend to the WSCUC accreditation expectations that intersect with General Education

In May, the GESC revised its bylaws with Undergraduate Council’s review and approval. Those revisions were intended to strengthen the subcommittee’s bylaws and diversity of membership by including Unit 18 lecturers and expanding the disciplinary scope of Senate faculty involvement. To develop capacity and leadership structure, a GESC Vice Chair role was added, too.

In June, the GESC hosted another retreat that involved Senate and Non-Senate faculty, and staff. The foci of both retreats were a discussion about the meaning of a degree and the role of the GE program within it; the development of a mission statement and learning outcomes that reflect the role of GE at UC Merced. Following the retreats, the GESC committed to summarizing a planning process that includes the GE mission statements and outcome description drafts. Working in small teams during July, the Subcommittee identified common threads and distinctive ideas from retreat team projects.

GESC members agreed that the action plan would include a GE program proposal template with draft notes. That action plan and proposal would feature a mission statement and learning outcome descriptions, with opportunities for campus input to confirm priorities and emphases.

Academic Program Reviews

In accordance with the Undergraduate Program Review policy, UGC made recommendations to PROC and to the GESC on the academic program reviews of the following:

- Computer Science and Engineering Major (September 22 2014)
- Chemistry Major (January 22 2015)
- Cognitive and Information Sciences Major (April 7 2015)
- Psychology Major (April 9 2015)
- General Education (May 19 and July 10 2015)

Catalog

In accordance with the UGC Academic Program Calendar distributed to Schools early each academic year, the three Schools submitted their respective sections of the Catalog for review and approval by UGC. UGC provided feedback to the Registrar and to the Schools.

UGC approved a flowchart, proposed by the Registrar, describing the Catalog review process.

Courses and CRF System

According to the UCM Bylaws, UGC is charged on behalf of the Division to review and approve all new undergraduate courses and modifications to existing undergraduate courses, including withdrawal, conduct, credit evaluation, description, and classification of existing courses. The UGC

analyst transmitted CRFs to UGC via the web-based system. UGC reviewed and approved over 200 courses, changes to existing courses and discontinuation of courses.

Community and Research Service (CRS) Minor – Effective Fall 2015

This proposal was previously discussed by UGC and standing Senate committees. Several questions were raised and subsequently addressed by the faculty who proposed the minor. A revised proposal was submitted for review and was approved in March, 2015, with the caveat that it be reviewed within two years of its implementation.

SSHA Proposal for a Global Arts Studies Major – Effective Fall 2016

UGC reviewed this proposal and requested additional information from SSHA. The review of this item was carried over to AY 15-16.

Public Health CCGA Proposal

UGC reviewed this proposal and requested additional clarification in April 2015.

SSHA Suspension of Appraisal Form

The form was no longer serving a useful purpose so members agreed to approve its suspension.

SSHA Transfer Admission Criteria

UGC approved the SSHA request to revise its transfer criteria for History, Management, and Political Science to be consistent with current UCM course offerings.

Bioengineering Program PLOs

The BIOE program requested to change its program learning outcomes to the ABET A-K outcomes, in preparation for programmatic accreditation. UGC endorsed the program's request and encouraged BIOE to:

- Ensure that the BIOE PLOs are aligned with the standards and requirements set by professional organizations that ABET is aligned with.
- Develop a curriculum map for the program that is compliant with the ABET criteria and process.

CSE Entry on AP/IB Chart

UGC approved the School of Engineering's request to add CSE to the AP/IB exam Chart.

Senate Administration IT Council Charge

In response to a request from the AVC of Information Technology, UGC responded that it had no objection to the establishment of the Senate Administration IT Council and recommended that its membership be expanded to adequately represent research and pedagogy.

Grade Appeals Policy

A UGC subcommittee was established and tasked with revising the Grade Appeals policy. The policy was re-written to provide criteria or grounds for students to pursue an appeal, to make sure that the implementation process is homogeneous across the schools, and to clarify the role of

the faculty. UGC solicited input from Senate committees and various key campus constituents before approving the policy in May, 2015.

Core 1 60 Unit-Cap

Background: The Core 1 unit-limit restricts Core 1 enrollment for freshmen and sophomores to maintain its pedagogical purpose. Under this restriction, if Core 1 is not completed within 60 units of coursework, students have a registration hold placed on Core 1 and must petition to enroll. As Core 1 is a campus-required GE course, students who fail to complete the course are ineligible to graduate. At the request of the VPDUE, UGC discussed the large number of petitions filed by students who are incoming freshmen and are referred to as “super freshmen”; who enter the university exceeding the unit limit through AP credit, CC credit or other UC or non-CC credit. UGC approved granting academic advisors the authority to override the 60-unit cap policy for “super freshmen”, at their discretion.

SNS and SSHA Undergraduate Chairs Two-Year Pilot Program

This was proposed as a pilot program by the VPDUE and the Coordinator of Institutional Assessment. This program’s main goal was to 1) organize responsibilities; 2) identify points of contacts within SNS and SSHA; 3) provide a venue for faculty to be recognized and compensated for their work towards ensuring undergraduate students’ success through the delivery of the curricula and assessment of learning outcomes. UGC reviewed the proposal and recommended that a report on the assessment of the pros and cons of this pilot be submitted to the Senate in January 2017.

Steering Committee for WSCUC Reaffirmation of Accreditation

The Provost requested a UGC representative to serve on the Steering Committee for WSCUC Reaffirmation Accreditation. Dr. Marcos Garcia-Ojeda agreed to serve as the UGC representative. The committee is tasked with overseeing, coordinating, and ensuring successful completion of all aspects of UCM’s reaffirmation of accreditation process.

CAPRA Space Principles

In response to the crisis of research and laboratory space for faculty, researchers, and graduate students, CAPRA drafted a statement of space principles. UGC provided comments on the principles and suggested a few edits to the document.

UGC Bylaws

At the request of the Division Council, UGC reviewed and proposed amendments to its Bylaws (March 17 2015).

University Honors Task Force

UGC Chair Jack Vevea and Member Mario Sifuentez agreed to serve on this task force. The task was co-chaired by VPDUE Liz Whitt and Jane Lawrence, Special Assistant to the Chancellor. The group worked on a proposal during the spring and summer with the goal of submitting a report to the Senate at the beginning of AY 15-16.

Pending/Carried Over Items

Reading, Review/Recitation Week (RRR Week)

In 2010, UGC proposed an optional policy whereby faculty had the option of having a RRR week. Some faculty did not endorse the proposal; therefore, it was not implemented. During AY 14-15, a UGC member requested the implementation of a RRR week at UCM. It was agreed that a small group of UGC members would lead the drafting of a RRR policy proposal.

Withdraw Policy

A concern was raised by a faculty member about the implementation of the policy and how it seemed to overrule an instructor's discretion in the assignment of grades. This item will be revisited by UGC at the beginning of AY 15-16.

Revisions to the UGC and GC Program Review Policies

PROC recommended that the UGC and GC Policy Subcommittees each join the PROC Subcommittee for collaborative revisions of the undergraduate and graduate program review policies. The joint PROC-GC-UGC subcommittee will pursue its work on policy revisions in AY 15-16.

Respectfully Submitted:

| | |
|---|--|
| Jack Vevea, Chair | SSHA |
| Christopher Viney, Vice Chair | Engineering |
| Anne Zanzucchi | SSHA |
| Carrie Menke | Natural Sciences |
| Harish S. Bhat | Natural Sciences |
| YangQuan Chen | SOE |
| Katherine Steele Brokaw | SSHA |
| Kelvin Lwin | Engineering |
| Linda-Anne Rebhun | SSHA |
| Marcos Garcia-Ojeda | Natural Sciences |
| Mario Sifuentez | SSHA |
| Nigel Hatton | SSHA |
| Paul Gibbons | SSHA |
| Sholeh Quinn | SSHA |
| Jian-Qiao Sun, <i>ex-officio</i> , non-voting | Senate Chair, Engineering |
| Cristian Ricci, <i>ex-officio</i> , non-voting | Senate Vice Chair, SSHA |
| Jane Lawrence, <i>ex-officio</i> , non-voting | VC for Student Affairs |
| Elizabeth Whitt, <i>ex-officio</i> , non-voting | VP and Dean of Undergraduate Education |
| Staff: Fatima Paul | |