

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)**Minutes of Meeting****Tuesday, October 30, 2018**

Pursuant to call, Graduate Council met at 9:00 A.M. in Room 230 of the Social Sciences and Management Building, Chair LeRoy Westerling presiding.

Present: Hrant Hratchian, Maria DePrano, Fred Wolf, Chih-Wen Ni, Rose Scott. Andy LiWang participated via Zoom. Chris Kello joined the meeting in VPDGE Zatz's stead.

I. Executive Session

Members did not have an executive session on October 30, 2018.

II. Chair's Report – Vice Chair Hratchian**Divisional Council (10/23)**

The GC vice chair debriefed GC members on the October 23 Divisional Council meeting which he attended in the GC chair's stead.

The main topics of discussion were:

- CRE voting guidelines document. The document will be revised and sent to Divisional Council (not to Senate committees again).
- Unit 18 lecturers potentially having a presence on Senate committees. It was pointed out that unit 18 lecturers are represented by a union and they are bound by the terms of the union agreement.

This led to a discussion among GC members about unit 18 lecturers participating on Senate committees. A question arose as to how representative the unit 18 lecturers on Senate committees would be, as there are different types of lecturers, i.e. continuing and non-continuing. The program that is most impacted by this debate is the Merritt Writing Program which has over 60 unit 18 lecturers. A GC member asked how the unit 18 lecturers' union voice would differ from the lecturers' voice on Senate committees. It is very different, i.e. the union does not address issues like input on curriculum; the union mainly (but not solely) addresses employment issues. The GC chair asked committee members for input on whether unit 18 lecturers should participate on FWAf. A GC member suggested that the purpose of including unit 18 lecturers on Senate committees would be to help serve the teaching component of the UC mission. However, we already have a professorial series for teaching: L(P)SOEs/Teaching Professors. If the university wants to provide a certain level of teaching, then it needs to allocate resources for hiring additional L(P)SOEs/Teaching Professors. A GC member related some issues that occurred in her department when her colleagues seek to invite unit 18 lecturers to meetings: faculty wanted unit 18 lecturers to know their input was welcome, but were wary of making the lecturers feel as though their time was being taken advantage of. In addition, faculty do not want lecturers to feel like their participation in meetings is required for their reappointments.

Associate Dean Kello noted that these issues arose in AY 2008-2009 during the economic down turn and ensuing budget crisis when there was pushback on the idea of hiring additional L(P)SOEs/Teaching Professors instead of research faculty. A GC member pointed out the upside: that plan would allow the university to focus more on research. The common concern, though, is that the hiring of L(P)SOEs/Teaching Professors count as faculty FTE lines and that compromises departments' ability to obtain strategic lines.

It was suggested that the EVC/Provost develop a position on whether unit 18 lecturers should participate on Senate committees.

III. Budget Work Group – Representative Hratchian

Budget Work Group Meeting (BWG) (10/24)

GC vice chair Hratchian shared with GC that the next top of discussion for the BWG is indirect cost return sharing. He will be soliciting input from GC members on this topic. He explained that the BWG has to build a model to incentivize “good behavior”. Most campuses return indirect cost to their departments in order to build a structure in which faculty are encouraged to continue to seek funding. VCORED Traina pointed out that there was a conversation at UC Merced several years ago regarding a similar indirect cost distribution formula that was favored by faculty but ultimately not implemented.

IV. Consent Calendar

A. October 30, 2018 agenda

B. CRFs

- i. Proposals to discontinue [COGS 203](#) and [HIST 200](#), approved by the CRF Subcommittee on 10/23 and 10/25/2018, respectively.
- ii. [COGS/QSB 222](#), a new course approved by the CRF subcommittee on 10/25/2018.
- iii. [Proposals](#) for the following Extension courses approved by the CRF Subcommittee on 10/23/2018:
 - EDUC X313E: Single Subject Methods – English and Language Arts
 - EDUC X313H: Single Subject Methods – History and Social Science
 - EDUC X313M: Single Subject Methods – Math
 - EDUC X313S: Single Subject Methods – Science
 - EDUC X314: Secondary Reading for Understanding

Action: The consent calendar was approved as presented.

V. Systemwide Review Item

A. [Principles of Accountability with Respect to Financial Transactions](#) - *Chair Westerling*

Members were asked to review the proposed presidential policy [Principles of Accountability with Respect to Financial Transactions](#). As per the [cover letter](#), the policy codifies into the presidential policy template existing UCOP financial policy currently posted on the Chief Financial Officer website.

The lead reviewer recommended that GC decline to comment.

A motion was made to decline to comment, the motion was seconded, and unanimously carried.

Action: The Senate Chair will be notified that GC declined to comment.

VI. [Charges to Program Review Teams](#) – *PROC Liaison DePrano*

GC members were invited provide input on the draft charges to the program review teams for the Psychological Sciences (PSY) and Quantitative Systems and Biology (QSB) graduate programs. Dean Zatz, Dean Dumont (for QSB) and Dean Gilger (for PSY) have been invited to provide their input in parallel. The graduate program review policy is [here](#).

PROC liaison DePrano referred GC to the self-studies and draft charges to the review teams for both programs and then summarized the highlights of the documents.

A. Psychological Sciences: [Self-study](#) and [draft charge](#).

PROC Liaison DePrano stated that the charge does not address the criticism from graduate students that the program could improve with regard to job preparation of students for non-academic careers. A member of the PSY program on GC noted that the program has already begun to address this but still welcomes external input.

GC members agreed that the following language should be added as a fourth charge: “Preparing graduate students for non-academic careers”.

A motion was made to recommend to PROC that this fourth charge be added, the motion was seconded, and was unanimously endorsed with one abstention.

Action: The GC Chair will transmit to PROC GC’s recommendation to add to the charge a point about preparing graduate students for non-academic careers.

B. Quantitative and Systems Biology: [Self-study](#) and [draft charge](#).

PROC Liaison DePrano stated that although experimental design are in PLOs, it was not clear if experimental design is being taught in QSB classes. A QSB member on GC noted that another QSB faculty member is working on the curriculum. He pointed out, though, that techniques and details are laboratory-specific.

The lead reviewer recommended no additional charges. However, a discussion ensued on the need to evaluate the mentoring of graduate students who are pursuing disciplinary job markets.

GC members agreed that the following language should be added: “How to balance the desire for an interdisciplinary program with the need to prepare graduate students for disciplinary positions in the context of mentoring graduate students’ professional development.”

A motion was made to suggest the above language to PROC, the motion was seconded, and was endorsed unanimously.

Action: The GC Chair will transmit to PROC GC’s recommendation to add to the charge a point about balancing the desire for an interdisciplinary program with the need to prepare graduate students for disciplinary job markets.

VII. [Unit Requirements Masters Degrees](#) – *Chair Westerling*

As discussed at the October 18 meeting, Part IV. Section II: Master’s Degree Requirements of the [Merced Division Regulations](#) has been revised to require a minimum of 24 semester units of approved courses for a master’s degree by comprehensive exam (Plan II). The draft revision are posted on Box for the committee’s review.

Chair Westerling reported that there is broad consensus for the proposed revisions. Associate Dean Kello noted that Plan I requires a “general examination”. Plan I therefore appears to include more work than Plan II. A GC member pointed out that in her field, the general examination can refer to the thesis defense. GC members then suggested clarifying Plan I to add “e.g. a thesis defense” in parentheses after the sentence “A general examination is also required”.

A motion was made to approve the revised language, the motion was seconded, and endorsed unanimously.

Action: The proposed revisions will be transmitted to the Senate Chair for campus review.

VIII. Consultation with VCORED Traina

VCORED Traina attended today's meeting to discuss his plans to restructure the research administrative functions on campus.

VCORED Traina reported that he has begun a major, internal restructuring effort within the Office of Research & Economic Development (ORED) and has begun resolving some critical issues. AVC Motton has been placed in charge of many of the functions of ORED. VCORED Traina is proposing two staff FTE lines devoted solely to reviewing standard proposals that require a checklist rather than a thorough review or analysis. A more experienced staff member is required to handle the complex grant proposals, such as those from state agencies or private entities. VCORED Traina met with the deans to update them on the restructuring efforts and reiterated the need for collaboration on problems that occur outside of ORED. Faculty input is needed so that ORED can be responsive to faculty needs.

VCORED Traina asserted that the most critical deadline-driven function is grant proposal submittals. As such, he is advocating for the creation of a unit of approximately 6 staff that are dedicated only to proposal preparation for faculty. They will assist with budgets, data entry, online submission systems, forms, and help develop a database of information that faculty will need to create a proposal. VCORED Traina also wants to develop cross-training amongst the staff so that all staff are able to assist faculty in case of colleagues' absences/vacations. In addition, VCORED Traina envisions that these staff need to be in one unit and report to one supervisor who can, among other things, ensure balanced workload across the staff.

Another critical area in which VCORED Traina asks for faculty input is the post-award process and the question of who manages faculty members' funds at the local level. He stated that there are two possible models: 1) one staff member to handle the total portfolio of faculty members' money they receive from all sources (extramural grants, Senate awards, etc.); 2) one staff member who exclusively handles grants and has knowledge of particular agencies' grants and processes. VCORED Traina asks faculty to send him input on their preferences.

With regard to Research & Development Services (RDS), VCORED Traina wants this unit to return to the function they were originally intended to carry out: capacity building for new faculty. RDS should be focusing their time on identifying funding opportunities for faculty through non-tradition funding sources that do not fall into the category of the NSF and NIH. This is similar to how RDS units on other campuses operate. VCORED Traina also wants RDS to provide a project management function for complex proposals, e.g. those that involve multiple institutions and sub awards. This is increasingly a need at UC Merced; for example, the campus recently submitted a large, and complex proposal to NASA. The goal is to have an RDS staff member serve as project manager, and reviews the proposals editorially (not scientifically). In the past few years, RDS has been compelled to assist other units under ORED on mechanical components of the proposal process at the expense of higher-level project work. With the restructuring efforts and anticipated improvements in the proposal submission process, VCORED Traina hopes that RDS will be able to return to their capacity building role.

UC Merced is very successful with regard to seeking Hispanic-serving institutions (HSI) and minority-serving institutions (MSI) funding opportunities. But, there is a significant amount of cost-sharing requirements that are tied to these opportunities. These proposals involve multiple investigators and are complicated in nature.

A GC member stated that the campus used to be a system whereby a PI could log in and view his/her account balances. VCORED Traina replied that that was an engineering system. He is

looking at a similar system, but the campus is reluctant to fund it. However, the campus is aiming to implement a financial system for the whole campus. The Controller's office created a front end for the UCLA system that will generate reports that can be customized. It still needs to undergo deans' approval.

The GC chair shared his experiences as a PI at UCSD for the past several years. He noted that the model consisting of a group of staff serving several different faculty members is not working. There is a lack of clear lines of authority, faculty cannot build relationships because staff members who handle their accounts are constantly rotating, and there is a problem with accountability.

The GC chair also stated that with regard to the award support side of the process, he has long been requesting a system that allows him to budget salary across multiple grants and to project out into the future. VCORED Traina pointed out that the authority to purchase those types of systems lies with the budget office, not ORED.

GC members also noted that independent of the contracts and grants process reorganization, the campus needs to provide a basic support infrastructure for faculty, i.e. staff should have access to faculty members' past documents and proposals so staff can use them to model budgets for future proposals.

A GC member inquired about the efficiency of the Cayuse system (web-based service connected directly to Grants.gov where faculty PIs and staff log in and create their Grants.gov application for electronic submission). VCORED Traina stated that while there is nothing intrinsically wrong with Cayuse, there are problems with how the campus is using it. Support is needed, but IT has had to focus on developing and maintaining other campus systems.

GC members discussed issues occurring in the Schools, mainly business transactional problems. The problems go behind a lack of a financial system; staff are not completely trained on critical awards management process elements. VCORED Traina reported that the campus is trying to implement internal training for staff on the research administration work. He pointed out that the recruitment of quality staff for this area is a challenge because it is a technical area that is not well paid.

The GC chair inquired about the timeline for progressing with the various changes aforementioned by VCORED Traina. VCORED Traina stated that the process will begin soon, but cautioned that change management tends to move slowly. He estimates the process may be complete by spring of 2020. Structural organizational improvements external to ORED will require a lot of communication.