

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)**Meeting of the Meeting****Thursday, March 14, 2019**

Graduate Council met at 2:00 PM on Thursday, March 14, 2019, Chair LeRoy Westerling presiding. All members were present; Christina Torres-Rouff and Andy LiWang participated on Zoom.

I. Executive Session

Members did not hold an executive session at this meeting.

II. Chair's Report – Chair Westerling**A. DivCo [3/4 Meeting](#)**

Chair Westerling updated GC members on the March 4 Divisional Council meeting, where the major topics of discussion were:

- Faculty feedback from the Academic Planning Work Group (APWG) town halls and continued discussion on the goal of reaching R1 status. Discussion in Divisional Council focused on the need for diversity of programming, and on the procedure for budget calls in the future in terms of faculty FTE. Faculty FTE allocation decisions will have major ramifications in future planning so it is important for the campus to be strategic.
- Budget Work Group (BWG) is drafting a policy on salary recovery policy, and discussing indirect cost return policy.
- Possibility of multi-year appointments on Senate committees, specifically CAPRA.
- GC's proposed revisions to Part IV. Section II: Master's Degree Requirements of the Merced Division Regulations will be distributed for review by Senate committees.
- Discussion on the future strategic enrollment management committee as proposed by the EVC/Provost.

B. CCGA [3/6 Meeting](#)

Chair Westerling updated GC members on the March 6 Divisional CCGA meeting, where the major topics of discussion were:

- Status of UC-Elsevier negotiations.
- Working title "Teaching Professor" for L(P)SOEs
- Some UC faculty advocate for removing the GRE requirement for graduate admissions.
- Chair Westerling expressed his concerns about open access negotiations, the major concern being a potential proliferation of new journals with questionable editorial practices.

III. Curriculog Update – GC Analyst Dorie Perez

GC members were updated on the Curriculog enhancement project. Feedback strategy sessions for various campus stakeholders (CRF subcommittees of UGC and GC, faculty, Registrar staff, School staff, Senate staff, Deans, graduate group chairs) were held in February and March, 2019. All feedback will be gathered by Friday, March 22, and compiled for GC's review at the April 18 GC meeting. Additional feedback from the graduate group chairs will be shared by VPDGE Zatz.

Action: GC will be apprised of final recommendations to improve the software at the April 18 meeting by IT representatives and Senate Staff.

IV. PROC Report – Representative Maria DePrano**[PROC 3/11 Meeting](#)**

Representative DePrano debriefed GC members on the March 11 PROC meeting. CoR chair Michael Scheibner was in attendance. PROC discussed CoR's policy, drafted in the last academic year, on the establishment and review of

core facilities. This year, CoR is re-drafting the policy for the establishment and review of ORUs. PROC members discussed several alternative strategies for reviewing core facilities, with potential pros and cons, including: 1) within larger reviews of the school administrations and the Office of Research; 2) within academic departmental reviews; 3) by clustering academic reviews of closely related disciplines; and 4) as a campus-wide “resource infrastructure” function.

V. Academic Planning Work Group – Representative Teamrat Ghezzehei

Representative Ghezzehei reported on the activities of APWG. After receiving faculty feedback from the town halls, the APWG is considering focusing on three criteria for reaching R1 status: UC quality scholarship, UC quality programs, and diversity of programs. The APWG will be circulating information to the campus soon. A GC member noted that “UC quality” is controversial, as it may lead to prioritizing one field over another.

VI. Consent Calendar

- A. 3/14 Meeting Agenda
- B. Petitions: Graduate Student as IORs - Summer 2019
 - Andrea Lopez – [PH 102](#)
 - Brandon Bratzloff - [Cog 180](#)
- C. Graduate Program Catalog AY 2019-2020 Revisions:
 - [Electrical Engineering and Computer Science](#)
 - [Materials and Biomaterials Science and Engineering](#)
 - [Mechanical Engineering](#)
 - Management of Complex Systems ([MS](#) & [PhD](#))
 - [Interdisciplinary Humanities](#)
 - [Applied Math](#)
 - [Psychological Sciences](#)
 - [Sociology](#)
 - [Bioengineering](#)
 - [Masters in Management \(MM\)](#)

Action: The Consent Calendar – was approved as presented.

VII. Fellowship Review Process Discussion – VPDGE Marjorie Zatz & Graduate Division staff member Eric Cannon

Per Chair Westerling’s announcement at the February 28, 2019 GC meeting, VPDGE Zatz and Cannon attended today’s meeting to discuss future plans for the review of graduate fellowships. GC members prefer to make the review process more streamlined, effective, and equitable. One suggestion is to implement the use of a standardized form for equitable comparison of applications and regularization of review. Another GC member disagreed, pointing out that students’ personal statements for applications are written differently across disciplines, so these should not be reviewed in a standardized manner by reviewers.

GC members suggested that structural updates might regularize the review process so that different disciplinary cultures can be accounted for. Specifically, GC suggested that recommenders fill out a form, to be developed by Graduate Division and the Academic Senate, with boxes that cover the following areas:

- Why would this candidate stand out in your discipline and campus?
- Why is this candidate a priority?
- Please highlight what you think are important comments from the letters of recommendation.
- Please highlight the important comments from the personal statement.

GC emphasized the need for graduate program chairs (or their designee) and nominators to write strong letters of recommendation for the students being nominated.

Action: GC analyst will circulate a draft memo from GC to the Graduate Division with the aforementioned suggestions and concerns about the graduate fellowship review process. These include reemphasizing the

important role of graduate chairs when nominating and writing letters for their nominees, and rethinking the evaluation process to include more contextual information on the nominee’s work, possibly in tabular form for ease of process.

VIII. GC Award Subcommittee – Chair Westerling

GC members are asked to form an award subcommittee to review nominations for the 2019 Academic Senate Distinguished Graduate Teaching/Mentorship Award. As per the [call for nominations](#), the committee will be composed of a minimum of three members, including the chair, with “balanced representation from a range of academic areas and broad school representation.”

Vice Chair Hratchian (SNS), Member Torres-Rouff (SSHA), and Member Ni (SoE) volunteered to serve on the award subcommittee. A motion was made to approve the award subcommittee membership, the motion was seconded, and passed unanimously.

Action: GC award subcommittee members will review nominations and notify the Senate Office of their selected winner by March 22, 2019.

IX. Campus Review Items

A. [Proposed Distant Teaching Program \(Non-degree\)](#) – Vice Chair Hratchian

GC members were asked to consider [a proposal from University Extension](#) to establish a distance education version of the non-degree program *UC Merced Extension Teacher Preparation Program, Multiple Subject Credential and Single Subject Credential*. The onsite version of this program was approved by the Senate in April 2018.

Vice Chair Hratchian summarized the proposal for GC members. Committee members found the proposal thorough and well-organized, and will meet a crucial need of the area which is developing a constituency of credentialed teachers who live and work in the Central Valley. Resource requirements are modest at this time. However, GC members do request that the program submit for GC’s review the assessment report for the program’s first cohort. GC asks that the report be submitted before recruitment of the second cohort begins. With this review, GC can provide the program with valuable feedback for their continued improvement.

A motion was made to endorse the proposal with the aforementioned request to submit an assessment report, the motion was seconded, and passed unanimously.

Action: GC’s memo will be transmitted to the Senate Chair.

X. Consultation with VPDGE Zatz and Graduate Division Staff

A. Graduate Student Tax Information

Graduate Division staff member Eric Cannon announced changes in tax law this year, and added that the Graduate Division was informed that tax form 1098-T will no longer be distributed to graduate students to help them calculate taxable income from fellowships (and scholarships). To assist graduate students with their taxes, the Graduate Division will create a worksheet.

GC members objected to this change, pointing out that the lack of a form 1098-T places the onus on graduate students to navigate the complexities of taxation formulas without the form that was traditionally provided as guidance.

GC members agreed that the committee should issue a memo to UC Merced’s Student Business Services, stating its deep concerns over the absence of form 1098-T being provided to graduate students.

Action: GC’s memo will be transmitted to Student Business Services.

B. Annual review of graduate students

VPDGE Zatz reported that after speaking with graduate group chairs, she is interested in improving the annual student reviews. She wants to consider: how to ensure the students are part of the conversation, whether a non-committee member (besides the advisor) should be present at the meeting, and whether there are opportunities for the student to comment on the chair and committee members to identify problems or concerns. VPDGE Zatz reiterated that she does not want to dictate policy, but does want to improve the quality of reviews. She is scheduled to meet with faculty representatives from each School to help her in re-thinking the process.

GC members support the annual reviews, but pointed out that they are very time-consuming. In some cases, the reviews take on the nature of an exam and last almost an hour when student presentations are taken into account. A GC member suggested the need for best practices. A GC member also requested that such service should be taken into account in faculty advancement and promotion cases.

Action: VPDGE Zatz will report back to GC with three models for potential best practices of annual review processes.