

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)

Monday, September 28, 2020

Meeting Minutes

Zoom URL: <https://ucmerced.zoom.us/j/2092009728>

Zoom Phone: 1 669 900 6833, Meeting ID: 209 200 9728

Documents available in [Box](#)[Graduate Council Duties](#)

Pursuant to Call, the Graduate Council convened at 1:31PM, with Chair Hratchian presiding.**I. Executive Session (none)****II. Chair's Report ---Chair Hratchian**

A. Divisional Council (9/25/20)---DivCo heard the report from General Education (GE) of two-phase proposal: a set of suggestions to improve on GE curriculum that are easy to implement, another set that require more development and consultation. Other issues discussed included approval of GC's updated COI policy.

B. Graduate Students and Postdocs Status Update: Chair suggested GC have another update mid-term. Just before the meeting, Grad Dean shared data on delay in progress toward degree with GC leadership via email.

ACTION: Members will review the data provided by Graduate Dean, to be forwarded by the analyst.

C. TPP Workgroup Update—additional consultation with the Provost's Chief of Staff took place; Chair proposed to comprise the membership with GC representative, CAB representative (one from the three faculty members), CalTeach representative (Chelsea Arnold), Mari Harris (Education Director of Extension), Laura Martin (Assessment), and Graduate Dean or his designee.

D. [Support Services for Undocumented Students Work Group](#) Chair asked members to read the charge, and email chair and analyst if they are interested. The nomination will be put on consent calendar.

ACTION: Members to read the charge of the Work Group and self-nominate, if interested in serving, by emailing Chair and analyst.

III. Vice Chair's Report ---Vice Chair Hestir

A. Graduate Group Chairs' Meeting: The group discussed in-person vs. remote spring instruction and how to make a decision quickly; and international, deferred students (26 doctoral students deferred to spring). There are issues with employment, as if they telework over 180 days they are out of compliance. UCOP is looking into the matter, to provide as much flexibility as possible. A central question is whether deferred student may audit courses and have units credited when they arrive at campus. Delay in processing such requests has implications for students' progress that GC will need to consider further, if auditing is a policy to be explored.

B. PROC update: ongoing program reviews will continue, but in response to request to delay starting reviews, PROC agreed to a proposed revised timeline, where a couple of reviews scheduled for this year will happen next year. This actually makes the reviews more evenly distributed. As for annual assessments, there was strong advocacy for reduction in service, as well as the need to assess students in the remote environment. After some discussion, it appears that the revised annual assessment will be either optional or streamlined.

IV. Consent Calendar (1:55-2:00)

A. The agenda (9/28)

B. [Minutes from the 9/14 meeting](#)

C. Course Proposals

NEW:

[ME - 245](#) - Structural Vibration and Identification

[MIST - 290](#) - Special Topics in Management of Complex Systems

D. [MBSE P&Ps](#)

E. [Policy and Template for Graduate Group P&Ps](#); and [Instructions and Review Process](#)

Consent calendar was approved as presented.

ACTION: Analyst to upload the approved documents from A, B, and E; forward Course Proposals to the Registrar (item C), and notify MBSE (item D).

V. Systemwide Review Item (2:00-2:05)

A. [Proposed Revisions to SR544](#): Registration—*Member Sandie Ha*

The revisions are intended to facilitate UC students' access to courses offered on other UC campuses by clarifying certain aspects of the cross-campus course enrollment process. Member Ha's review is [here](#), where she finds the suggested revisions reasonable and has some suggestions for clarification.

ACTION: Transmit GC comments, which shall include request for revision using Member Ha's review, with replacement of "I" with "UCM GC," to DivCo by October 6, 2020. The motion was made by Vice Chair Hestir, seconded by member Chen, and carried unanimously.

VI. Campus Review Item (2:05-2:10)

[CCB Proposal](#) to change department name—*Vice Chair Hestir*

The department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology proposes to change its name to Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, effective July 1, 2021. The policy governing the establishment or revision of academic units is [here](#). Vice Chair explained that the proposed name change reflects the current faculty's research interests and course offerings. The department consulted with SNS, chairs of MCB, CCB, etc. all provided support for change. The only implication for GC is a probable incoming name change for the CCB grad group. Motion to endorse the proposal was made by member Ilan, seconded by member Ha, and carried unanimously.

Action: Transmit a memo of GC endorsement to DivCo by October 29, 2020.

VII. Discussion Item: Anti-Racism Workgroup Charge for Graduate Council (2:10-2:25)—*Vice Chair Hestir*

On 6/17/20, members of DivCo established a work group that, over the summer, produced a draft action plan for AY 20-21. DivCo approved the workgroup's Action Plan at its 9/25/20 meeting, which includes a mandate for the Graduate Council.

Vice Chair shared the Charge on screen, which is to review the Manual of the Senate (bylaws and regulations) and the MAPP by December 2020, and the university catalog information in Spring 2021. Chair added that the Student Support subcommittee of the Valuing Black Lives Task Force, where he is a member, held a meeting. The co-leads of subcommittees will meet to examine what cross-interests may exist. Vice Chair commented the central task is to review MAPP and Manual of the Senate to identify where we might be reinforcing structural racism. All senate committees will be reviewing to provide breath of views. Members discussed creative ways to address racism in meetings and classrooms. Vice Chair emphasized that this is an opportunity for GC to shape policies for diversity of graduate students, faculty (via President's Postdoctoral Fellowship Program), and address campus climate issues. It was suggested that, after the proposed reviews are completed by December 2020, as the next step, GC coordinate with Graduate Division to review Graduate Handbook, and bylaws and P&Ps across programs.

Action: Chair and Vice Chair will determine the next steps including assignment of reviewers for the Senate Manual (which includes the Bylaws) and the MAPP.

VIII. New Business: Policies and Procedures for New Types of Programs—*Chair Hratchian*

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

IX. Presentation on Graduate Student Fellowships—*Eric Cannon* (2:35-2:45)

At a GC-GD leadership meeting in August 2020, it was agreed that the Graduate Division would provide GC with a [list](#) of graduate student fellowships and their recipients. Eric Cannon presented the list to GC today, organized by the types of awards, and the number of awards per graduate group and school.

Members asked what the percentage of awards was per enrollment by school and graduate group, as some groups seemed over-represented. Chair asked that Eric Cannon provide this data to the analyst, who will share with members. A discussion about pooling the top-off fellowships into larger packages ensued (also discussed at the last meeting). It was agreed a further discussion on the process and goals for the “top-off” fellowships involving both GC and Graduate Division will take place in the near future.

Action: Eric Cannon will provide data on the percentage of awards per enrollment by school and graduate group to the analyst, who would share it with GC members.

X. Consultation with VPDGE—*Interim Dean Kello* (2:45-2:55)

[Plan for Spring Instruction](#) (with VPDUE Sarah Frey)

VPDUE Frey presented her *Proposal for Spring Instructional Delivery*, which proposes creating clusters of students with 2-3 in-person courses from the beginning of the semester, and offering them housing on campus. As most graduate students are already in Merced or on their way back, housing is not a significant issue for them. Department chairs have discussed with faculty and provided a list of courses. The need to confirm with instructors and graduate students (who would be TAs) their willingness to teach in person, as well as to provide both remote and in-person instruction for the same course (HyFlex), was acknowledged. VPDUE added that this is to be an iterative process, where departments may update their instructional modalities.

Chair requested information from other campuses before GC approval, but no other UC campuses have plans for spring yet (most are on quarter system; Berkeley does not have a plan yet). Questions about housing and student fees refund were raised. No policies have been set yet, partly due to lawsuits the UC system is involved in. On the other hand, campus has provided generous financial aid packages which VPDUE hopes is enough to offset the fees the campus has had to charge the students. Chair asked members to forward their comments, if any, to him, to be shared with Graduate Dean when they meet in early October. Members were also invited by VPDUE Frey to email her at sfrey2@ucmerced.edu with additional comments.

ACTION: Members forward comments on *Proposal for Spring Instructional Delivery* to the Chair.

[Childcare Reimbursement](#) for Graduate Students (no discussion on this item due to time constraints)

XI. Other Business: ECC Policy—*Chair Hratchian* (2:55-3:00)

EVC/Provost requested extension of the Emergency Course Continuity (ECC) policy, and GC was invited to comment on possible revision of the policy for clarification. A [draft revised policy](#) and [memo](#) of the rationale are available in [box](#).

Chair explained the need to announce remote spring instruction soon, for housing needs. Provost asked for extension, with the idea that spring will begin virtually, with possibility of in-person instruction later in the semester. Survey among chairs has been conducted. UGC approved the policy as is. GC chair asked for some time at DivCo, as there are some aspects that need clarification. Chair suggested separating the question of whether or not remote will continue, from HOW it is delivered. While a DivCo vote was underway, Chair was asked that GC address this today. The principal concern is about TAs (as pointed out in the document).

Members discussed the changes and revised the draft policy, removing the duration clause, and restoring the language on the 5 weeks max, with DivCo vote for extension. As Box was temporarily unavailable, draft was revised by shared screen (sent to Chair after the meeting).

ACTION: Chair will present GC's proposed revisions to DivCo.

XII. Informational Items

[Enrollment Trend Data](#) (including Fall 2020 information)

XIII. New item: Request for extension of course proposal deadline

The Economics Graduate Group has requested extension to the deadline for course proposals to reach the Registrar, which is set to be September 21. Their course proposal reached the Registrar 1 step in Curriculog after the deadline.

ACTION: After GC leadership consults with the Registrar, analyst will send the approval of extension as a consent calendar item to members.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:06PM.

Chair, Vice Chair and Registrar had a post-meeting consultation. The Registrar considered the deadline of October 7 would provide enough time for her office to process the course proposal, although it may not be in the schedule of courses in time for its publication (it can be added subsequently).

ACTION: the analyst will contact the Economics Graduate Group Chair to ask if this deadline can be met, and the Chair will follow up with an email about not overburdening staff.

The Registrar also informed them that her office has compiled P/NP data but not S/U--she will make sure statistics for graduate students are included in the final report. About 30 students opted to take courses S/U.