

Undergraduate Council (UGC)**Meeting Minutes
Friday, September 10, 2021
1:30pm-3:00pm****I. Welcome and Introductions – Chair Moyes – 1:30pm – 1:35pm**

Chair Moyes welcomed new and returning members and consultants.

II. Consent Calendar – 1:35pm – 1:40pm

- A. The Agenda
- B. [UGC's Conflict of Interest Policy](#)
- C. SSHA Petitions for Graduate Students to Teach Upper Division Courses
The relevant policy is available [here](#).
 1. [Chen, Jung_POLI 135_202130](#)
 2. [Cruz, Nicholas_POLI 130_202130](#)

Action:

- The consent calendar was approved as presented.
- UGC Analyst will notify GC Chair Hratchian of UGC's approval of the petitions.

III. Chair's Report – Holley Moyes – 1:40pm – 1:45pm**A. September 2 Divisional Council Meeting**

Chair Moyes provided several updates from the September 2 DivCo meeting:

- Newly agreed upon MOU with UCOP - Chancellor Munoz has secured an MOU with UCOP, which will eliminate a portion of the campus's debt and will provide UC Merced with the same funding mechanism for incremental student growth that other campuses have. As UC Merced's student population grows, funding from UCOP will increase as well, and UC Merced will receive funding for graduate programs, as well.
- Senate Faculty Grants Program. Chancellor Munoz will be funding the Senate and allocating funds to graduate education. Part of the plan would be to have graduate students funded through fellowships rather than TA-ships. UGC Chair Moyes advocated for graduate students to teach more classes.
- Update on procurement system. Oracle has been extremely complicated. EVC/Provost Camfield confirmed that appropriate staff (two per School) will be on campus a few days a week to help with purchasing. Chair Moyes confirmed that there were not any discussions of how potential competition for fellowships might impact graduate student collegiality and culture. A member noted that they encourage advocating for general principles for all graduate students as opposed to competition for all grants (e.g., every grad student gets a finishing year). Chair Moyes recommended consulting with

Graduate Council on this.

- Unit 18 Lecture Strike. EVC/Provost Camfield explained that the campus is heavily dependent on unit 18 lecturers and he is exploring the possibility of shifting some of the workload to graduate student instructors.
- Senate Chair Westerling's Report:
 - Delayed reimbursements. It is untenable for graduate and undergraduate students to shoulder the burden of costs.
 - Social events are paused.
 - Teaching is in-person but with contingency planning.
 - 51 beds have been set aside for quarantine and only a few are being used right now.
 - Comprehensive COVID testing is being conducted. There is a 90% vaccination rate among UC Merced faculty, staff, and students.
 - Supplying Labs. UC Merced has a partnership with Fisher to build a store/stockroom for lab supplies.
 - R1 Status. The campus research infrastructure is experiencing serious challenges. These issues were compounded by the hiring of several new faculty without the appropriate infrastructure to support them. With the current COVID-19 pandemic, the campus is in a place of dysfunction in which faculty cannot conduct their research. The Senate needs to work with the administration to solve these problems.

- B. Update on meetings with VPDUE Frey, Interim VPDGE Kello, and GC Chair Hestir been meeting weekly about contingency plans and what to do if numbers go up and schools shut down. She shared with us yesterday that UCLA has a matrix.

Chair Moyes has been and continues to meet weekly with VPDUE Frey, VPDGE Kello, and GC Chair Hestir to discuss contingency plans in the event that COVID infection rates increase and K-12 schools close. VPDUE Frey has a structured plan for not closing the whole campus. She shared UCLA's matrix model and is preparing a similar model for UC Merced. Messaging should be transmitted to the faculty soon.

- C. FWAf Memo re: Mask Mandate Enforcement on UC Merced Campus

Chair Moyes noted that committee members should have received an email from Melanie asking for review and comments on a memo prepared by FWAf regarding concerns with language posted on the 'Do Your Part' website, more specifically, with continuing class if a student refuses to comply with the mask mandate.

Action:

- Please review the draft memo and provide comments by 12:00noon on Monday, September 13, 2021.

IV. UGC Resources – Chair Moyes – 1:45pm – 1:50pm

- A. [Senate website](#)
- B. [UGC's website](#)

- C. [Senate Policies and Procedures](#)
- D. [UGC's Box site](#)
- E. [Divisional Bylaws and Regulations](#)
- F. [Principles to Guide the Practice of Executive Session](#)
- G. [Consultation guidelines](#)
- H. Distributing work on Undergraduate Council

All campus and systemwide review items will be posted on UGC's Box folder and on the Senate website, here: <https://senate.ucmerced.edu/review-items>. Some review items may be assigned to one or more UGC reviewers before each scheduled meeting.

V. **UGC Goals and Priorities for AY 21-22– All - 1:50pm – 2:00pm**

Members discuss the Council's goals for this academic year, established prior to the Governance Retreat, and propose additional goals.

Chair Moyes noted two major priorities for UGC to focus on in AY 21-22:

1. UGC has been asked to approve several online courses. Chair Moyes is concerned that if too many online courses are approved, students may inadvertently achieve an online degree. There isn't a tracking system for the approval of online modalities. Chair Moyes has convened with VPDUE Frey and has an upcoming meeting with the School deans to formulate a plan to address this issue. UGC needs to decide whether such courses should be approved short-term or long-term. This is also being discussed at UCEP.
2. An Honors program is also being developed and a work group is being formulated. Chair Moyes would like staff and administration representation on the work group. Please let Chair Moyes know if you are interested in serving on this work group.

Chair Moyes also noted continued efforts in addressing COVID-related issues. UGC will work closely with DivCo and VPDUE Frey throughout the academic year to address any COVID-related issues that arise.

Action:

- UGC Analyst will invite members to provide additional goals and priorities via email.

VI. **Reports from VPDUE Frey and Director of Summer Session Johnson– 2:00pm – 2:15pm**

A. [Summer Session Schedule Change Proposal](#)

The existing block schedule begins instruction at 7:30am and continues until as late as 10:20pm. Summer session proposes that the official block schedule begins at 8:30am and extends to 9:50pm.

Requested Action: UGC members approve the proposal.

The 7:30am block is not very popular amongst UC Merced students. The proposal is to eliminate the late evening blocks and shift all blocks back an hour, which would also eliminate the 7:30am block (classes would start at 8:30am instead). Instructors would

still have the ability to request times that are not included in the default blocks. The proposed default blocks would allow efficient use of classroom space and for students to align their schedules to take multiple courses. Director of Summer Session, Tammy Johnson, noted that often times lecturers are scheduled in the early and late blocks who tend to have last preference of teaching times, and that students tend to register for classes that are scheduled for a time other than the early morning or the late evening.

Several members were concerned that many students work full-time and rely on the later block (8:00 – 10:20pm or 6:45 – 10:15pm) to balance work/education. VPDUE Frey and Director Johnson reiterated that there is nothing prohibiting instructors from requesting a time block outside of the default blocks. A member shared her concern that, although an instructor can still request a block outside of the default blocks, some instructors may not be aware of why students are taking the late evening classes, and if the default block schedule does not include a late evening block, then the instructor may opt for a different block. Director Johnson noted that the late blocks are not heavily utilized; there were only four lectures scheduled for those blocks in Summer 2020 and not many students enrolled in them.

A member from the Registrar noted that the same concept can be accomplished without removing any of the blocks by scheduling more classes to begin at 11:15am. In other words, have more blocks available during the desired timeframe rather than eliminating any blocks. VPDUE Frey explained that the next available time after the morning block is 11:15am, so a lot of the morning time would be wasted if the 7:30am block were to remain. Eliminating the 7:30am block would keep the majority of the high peak hours available for the standardized blocks.

A SSHA staff member clarified that lectures do not often get last priority over the time blocks; many of them prefer the early morning classes. Director Johnson noted that she is trying to propose more blocks in times that are preferable to more students, and that early morning and late blocks can be accommodated to those who request them. It is difficult to encourage summer enrollment when the schedule does not offer preferable class times.

An SNS staff member would prefer not to change the block schedule because staff often have to schedule instructors early in the morning in order to avoid scheduling conflicts. The staff member also asked why it would be necessary to revise the block schedule to eliminate the early morning or late evening blocks if instructors still have the option to request them.

Action:

- UGC Analyst will invite members to provide additional comments via email.

B. Update on Fall 2021 In-Person Instruction

VPDUE Frey shared her appreciation in UGC's approval of the freshmen first-year virtual program was approved; however, it was not implemented. Additional housing on campus was allocated, and she also ran into a hurdle with Academic Personnel on

overload appointments that made it difficult to appoint instructors to run said program.

Additionally, the Immunocompromised Household Member In-person Exception that was approved by the Councils appears to be very beneficial. Several faculty members, graduate students, and lectures have taken advantage of this policy. The CDC issued new guidance and VPDUE Frey reiterated her appreciation for UGC's prompt response time.

Lastly, the delayed start-date of in-person instruction by three days was extremely helpful. An additional 2,000 students were moved into on-campus housing the weekend before the start of the semester. VPDUE Frey noted that faculty and students seem to be compliant with the campus mask and testing protocols.

C. Educational Technology Advisory Board (ETAB)

Required Action: Solicit one UGC volunteer to serve on the Educational Technology Advisory Board. The draft charge is available [here](#).

This UGC representative will craft a suggested policy in response to last year's Top Hat discussion and to address the need for a conflict of interest policy related to course materials.

VPDUE Frey would like to formulate an Educational Technology Advisory Board (ETAB) as a follow-up to conversations with UGC last Spring, particularly regarding the Top Hat tool. Students are spending over \$400,000 a year on educational technologies, such as clickers, online textbooks, software programs, etc. How are we approving and vetting this technology, and how are we controlling what technologies are being approved? Member David Kaminsky volunteered to serve as the UGC representative on the Advisory Board. VPDUE Frey welcomes additional volunteers.

A member shared their concern that several large companies are contacting students and faculty to sell their technologies that are not very beneficial to the students. VPDUE Frey confirmed that they are trying to gain more control over the vendors. Top Hat has been asked to stop communication on our campus during ongoing investigations.

VII. UGC Representation on Subcommittees, Work Groups, and Systemwide Committees – 2:15pm – 2:25pm

A. Campus Representation

- Courses/Policies (need five UGC Senate Faculty Members. One member from each school to review courses, and two members to review policies)

This subcommittee reviews and makes recommendations to UGC members on new/revised courses and on policies related to undergraduate education.

Requested Action: Determine membership of this subcommittee.

The following UGC members volunteered as course reviewers:

- Jason Lee – SSHA courses
- Siddaiah Yarra – SoE courses
- Ryan Baxter – SNS courses

The following UGC member volunteered as reviewer for policies:

- Alejandro Gutierrez

Action:

- Identify one additional policy reviewer. Let Chair Moyes know if you would like to volunteer.

- **Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC)**

UGC representative: Brian Utter

The UGC representative on PROC attends each PROC meeting and reports back to UGC; takes turns acting as a lead reader for agenda items approximately once every two meetings (meeting materials are never more than 25 pages, and more typically less than 10, and the reader must read them in advance of the meeting and be prepared to weigh in on a specific questions); and participates in agenda item discussions, representing UGC's perspective and deciding when UGC may need to weigh in on PROC business.

No Action Requested

- Support Services for Undocumented Students Work Group¹

Representative: Alejandro Gutierrez (continuing member)

This work group is charged to annually review efforts and report outcomes of services offered to support graduate and undergraduate undocumented students at UC Merced.

No Action Requested

B. Systemwide Representation

- **University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP)**

Representative: UGC chair Holley Moyes

UCEP considers the establishment or disestablishment of curricula, colleges, schools, departments, institutes, bureaus, and the like, and on legislation or administrative policies involving questions of educational policy.

No Action Requested.

- **University Committee on International Education (UCIE)**

Representative: Michelle Leslie (continuing member)

Oversees all academic aspects of the UC Education Abroad Program, which operates in conjunction with offices on the campuses and serves all UC students.

The committee is responsible for approving new programs, changes in programs, and all program courses and credits. The committee also oversees the regular formal review of programs and advises the President on the appointment of study center directors.

No Action Requested.

Michelle Leslie serves as Vice Chair of UCIE. Per systemwide policy, the vice chair cannot serve as the representative.

Action:

- Identify UGC member to serve as the UCM representative on UCIE.

- **University Committee on Preparatory Education (UCOPE)**

Representative: TBD

Monitors and conducts periodic reviews and evaluations of preparatory and remedial education. In addition, the committee supervises the Entry Level Writing Requirement with special emphasis on establishing appropriate and uniform Universitywide standards for the Analytical Writing Placement Examination. Each year the Committee selects the essay/prompt that is to be used in administration of the Analytical Writing Placement Examination and also sets the passing standard for the exam.

Requested Action: Identify UGC member to serve as the UCM representative on UCOPE.

Eileen Camfield serves as Vice Chair of UCOPE. Per systemwide policy, the vice chair cannot serve as the representative.

Action:

- Identify UGC member to serve as the UCM representative on UCOPE.

VIII. Consultation with GE Executive Committee Chair Valerie Leppert – 2:25pm – 2:40pm

GEEC Chair Leppert relayed that this year's focus is on streamlining the General Education requirements and developing a General Education assessment plant. Undergraduate Council has been an important partner with General Education and Chair Leppert would like to ensure continued collaboration.

Chair Leppert provided a synopsis on the General Education background. In 2003, UC Merced struggled with hiring faculty to staff and deliver courses in the major. Majors were the first area of focus until a General Education Program was constructed. Each school had their own General Education program and it did not necessarily connect with UC Merced's mission/identity. This led to a negative review of the General Education program, and since General Education is a critical element, UC Merced faced reaccreditation. The program was

revamped quickly and presented without a transition period. It is now a better program and accurately reflects UC Merced's institutional identity, but with the quick planning and implementation, there are several issues that have arose and not yet resolved. Most institutions have about a dozen General Education requirements, whereas UC Merced has about two dozen. A General Education survey was conducted last Spring and students relayed that this presents a barrier for timely degree completion. It also makes it difficult for students to understand the purpose of the program and how these requirements fit into the program.

Last year, three requirements were removed – two badges and an e-portfolio requirement. UC Merced did not have the extensive resources required for an e-portfolio program. Spark was also revised so it could be delivered in a sustainable manner. This year, the focus is to remove five General Education requirements. This decision is based on the observation that several of the requirements are redundant. This would help facilitate a shorter time to degree and transfer student admissions. Chair Leppert shared an example of a redundant requirement. The General Education program has a lower division quantitative reasoning requirement, as well as a quantitative and numerical analysis requirement. When students complete the quantitative and numerical analysis requirement, all the courses have the quantitative reasoning requirement badge. Therefore, students are fulfilling both requirements within the one class, so there is no reason to have the second requirement.

Another area of focus is the removal of the three upper division badge requirements. UC Merced's General Education program already has three upper division requirements: Crossroads, Writing in the Disciplines, and the Culminating Experience; a total of six upper division requirements. Most other universities do not have any or only one upper division requirement. This requirement makes it difficult for students to complete their degree in a timely manner. Many of these upper division courses are geared toward the major, so feedback from students in the General Education survey revealed that they felt they are lacking some of the foundational knowledge needed to navigate those courses and they are at a disadvantage with respect to majors in the course. UC Merced is struggling to meet transfer student admission requirements. UC Merced is not meeting the expectations for UC's and is falling behind sister UC campuses. This is because students are faced with at least six requirements that they must complete at UC Merced, so there is a disinclination to transfer to UC Merced when they can complete all their General Education requirements at a community college.

GEEC Chair Leppert would like to attend the September 24 UGC meeting to provide additional details. She would also like to continue consultation with faculty in October to prepare for a Fall vote.

A member asked if a transfer student has IGETC, would they still be required to complete UC Merced's upper division General Education courses. Chair Leppert clarified that IGETC only applies to lower division General Education, and therefore, they would be required to complete UC Merced's upper division General Education courses.

A member asked Chair Leppert if she could provide a written review of goals. Chair Leppert clarified that the goals are streamlining through removal of redundancy and developing an assessment program.

Action:

- GE Executive Committee Chair Leppert will be invited to the next UGC meeting to

provide additional updates.

IX. VCSA Nies' Report – 2:40pm – 2:45pm

A. Housing update

VCSA Nies reported that, in July, students were having difficulties locating off-campus housing rentals, so they began submitting contracts for on-campus housing, which generated a waiting list. In mid-July, those students were notified that UC Merced did not have the space capacity to house them. About 3,600 students were initially budgeted to live on campus, and about 50 beds were set aside for quarantine and isolation. In the beginning of August, several students expressed that Merced Station was not going to be completing their project in time for them to move in and anticipated a new move-in time of September. Merced Station had leases for 550+ UC Merced students. VCSA Nies and VPDUE Frey circulated a survey to students inquiring about their housing needs and received 950+ responses. VCSA Nies and VPDUE Frey began a process to work with the state to expand capacity in the new residence halls. The new residence halls had been recently opened, so they were never used to their full capacity. UC Merced received approval in mid-August to utilize this additional space and began the process of acquiring 500 new beds, dressers, etc. This helped to house the 4,000 students on campus. VCSA Nies and VPDUE Frey reached out to the 950+ students to let them know that additional housing on campus was available, as well as hotel space until Merced Station became available.

Some students completed the survey with IP addresses between Madera and Modesto, so they were offered support as a commuter student. Approximately 200 students received support with gas cards and a free parking pass. An additional 300 students were moved into on-campus housing, and 160 – 170 students are currently in temporary hotel space. There is continued efforts to locate space for those in temporary hotel space.

UC Merced also partnered with a vendor through apartments.com who authorized an off-campus apartment website for individuals to post apartments, beds, space availability, etc. The website charged people to post their vacancies; however, VCSA Nies worked with the company to remove this fee and UC Merced covered this additional expense so that more people in the community could share their available spaces. Since then, Merced Station has received temporary occupancy certification of approval for three of their buildings, so they moved in about 150 students. They plan on another two buildings being completed by the end of September and will reach out to the students who have leases to start moving them out of hotels and into those apartment spaces. For the students that live on campus, their financial aid has been repackaged to cover housing costs. Those that are living in hotels can only be housed for 30 days before costs must be calculated into their financial aid. Therefore, it is important to find these students housing elsewhere as soon as possible. There is still some space to house these students on campus; however, many have declined the offer because they have pets, are living with partners, want the freedom of living off campus, etc. There is continued efforts in trying to find different ways to support these students, but they need to be moved out of the hotels by the end of the month.

X. [Update to the Current Honors at Graduation Awarding Practice](#) – Joshua Reinhold – 2:45pm – 2:50pm

The Registrar's Office is proposing a practice for honors at graduation that more closely aligns

with UC Berkeley:

At the end of each academic year, the Registrar shall determine for each school the minimum grade-point average of the top 2%, the next 4%, and the next 10% of the students graduating in that year. These grade-point averages shall serve each School as minimal criteria for Honors during the next academic year. This will provide both student transparency and increase the speed in which we can confer degrees and issue diplomas each spring semester.

Requested Action: Members to discuss and endorse this proposal.

Deadline: October 31, 2021

The criterion is currently determined at the end of each academic year in the Spring for the students that are graduating. The thresholds are determined after the Spring graduation is over. The proposal is to determine the threshold based on the prior year, so the requirement for earning Honors is transparent for students the following academic year. This would allow the Registrar to process degrees faster, as well.

A consultant noted that the new model shows that there are a few more students that receive Honors and wonders whether this is seen as a positive trend or if it is just how the numbers work out. Associate Registrar Reinhold confirmed that he is not sure if there is positive value attached to the increase in numbers, and that the question is rather are more people receiving Honors? The Registrar's Office is more so concerned if less people would receive Honors and found out that is not the case.

Chair Moyes recommended consulting with the Committee on Rules and Elections.

Action:

- UGC Analyst will invite members to review via email.

XI. Systemwide Review Items – 2:50pm – 2:55pm

A. [Revised Presidential Policy on SVSH](#)

Requested Action: UGC to determine if Council will opine. If UGC decides to opine, identify a lead reviewer. Lead reviewer will provide comments by the September 24, 2021 meeting.

Deadline: October 15, 2021

Action:

- UGC voted to not opine on this item.

B. [Revised Senate Regulation 478 -IGETC](#)

UGC is a lead reviewer.

Requested Action: Assign lead reviewer. The lead reviewer's comments will be sent to Chair Moyes, Melanie Snyder, and Fatima Paul. This item will be discussed at the September 24 UGC meeting.

Deadline: October 15, 2021

IGETC is a transfer program for students enrolled at community colleges, CSU's, and other UC's who can take certain courses that are transferrable and fulfill their General Education requirements.

This proposal is instituting a new requirement for IGETC for an Ethnic Studies course. Chair Moyes asked for a lead reviewer. Member Alejandro Gutierrez volunteered. Chair Moyes would also like to consult with CRES and ANTH.

Action:

- UGC Analyst will invite the Anthropology department and the CRES department to review and provide comments.
- The Lead Reviewer will send their comments to Chair Moyes, Melanie Snyder, and Fatima Paul.
- This item will be discussed at the September 24 UGC meeting.
- Deadline: October 15, 2021.

XII. Any Other Business – 2:55pm – 3:00pm

A member asked if UGC is required to take action if there is a unit 18 lecture strike. Chair Moyes clarified that UGC is not required to take action, and that it was mentioned at the August 22-23 Governance Retreat and the September 2 DivCo meeting. If unit 18 lecturers go on strike, there will be 533 classes that will need to be covered. A member does not believe that other faculty should have to cover those classes. Chair Moyes anticipates future discussions, but to not worry about it at the moment.

XIII. Upcoming Business:

- A. Fall Instruction Campus Policy – Dealing with Disruption
This will be included in the September 24 agenda. Members are to review/comment (or decline) and send their comments to FWAF and fpaul@ucmerced.edu.
Deadline: This will be determined once the FWAF memo is issued.

Chair Moyes reminded the committee to review and respond to Melanie's email by Monday, September 13, 2021.

XIV. Informational Items

- A. [Grading Options for ELWR in Fall 2021](#)
- B. [DACA Statement & FAQ Regarding Texas v. USA](#)
- C. [Interim COVID-Related Dependent Care Modified Duties and Remote Teaching](#)
- D. [Systemwide Guidelines and Recommendations for Campus Re-opening](#)
- E. [AY 21-22 UGC Academic Calendar](#)