

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)

Minutes

Tuesday, October 5, 2021

1:30 – 3:00 PM

Administration Bldg. Room 245Zoom URL: <https://ucmerced.zoom.us/j/84757526508> Passcode: 050205

Zoom Phone: 1 669 900 6833, Meeting ID: 84757526508

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

Pursuant to the call, the meeting was convened at 1:36PM, with Chair Hestir presiding.

I. Chair's Report (1:30-1:40)—Chair Hestir

A. Divisional Council (9/30)---CoR led in authoring a memo on research infrastructure. GC provided comments. A motion to endorse the draft memo was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

B. Conflict Resolution Recommendations and Implementation---New GSA leadership is being identified. Graduate Division is working with GSA on the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibility document. Chair has discussed the document with GSA representatives, with suggestions for revision to make it more likely to be endorsed by GC. Chair clarified that GSRR belongs to GSA, and they might choose not to revise. Chair would like to engage stakeholders in crafting the implementation strategy for the recommendations made by the Conflict Resolution Infrastructure Workgroup last AY. GC identified FWAf, CoR, EDI, Department Chairs, and Graduate Group Chairs as stakeholders.

II. Vice Chair's Report (1:40-1:50)—Vice Chair Ha

A. Graduate Group Chairs Meeting (9/27)---Discussed increase in enrollment, which was 4% this year. If UC Merced is to reach R1 in 2030, it needs to increase graduate degree conferral. Also discussed academic forms, and whether processing them through the academic counselor may help with early detection of problems, or it may be too late by the time forms are being filled (change of advisor, for example).

B. PROC (9/30)---Six programs will likely be reviewed this year. Ten were submitted last year. PROC members discussed the assessment of core competencies and the need for a standardized form that is based on information directly from students like they do with PLOs, and the need for guidelines on equity-minded assessment of learning outcomes. Chair asked if 2-year PROC membership was discussed, as another PROC member mentioned it. **ACTION:** Vice Chair will gather more information on this. (Update: Vice Chair requested and obtained information from the PROC analyst that, while 2-year term is ideal, adjustments have been made for feasibility.)

III. Consent Calendar (1:50-1:50)—Chair Hestir

A. The agenda (10/5)

B. [Minutes](#) from the 9/21 meeting

C. [Draft memo](#) on the proposed revision to SR 478

D. [Draft memo](#) to Extension

E. Graduate Student Instructor Petitions

[Serajan, Reza ME 120 202210](#)

[Mishra, Anupam ENGR 151 202210](#)

A member asked how the petition form is designed to make sure the employment is for students' benefit. Chair proposed consideration of new review criteria, and invited comments from members. Chair has asked the Registrar for data on graduate student teaching (a member recommended separating the data between summer and academic year). Chair asked Policy Subcommittee to engage in the discussion of the merits/demerits, and possibly formulation, of additional criteria (guidelines, rubrics, etc.), which would inform GC's general principle on graduate student instructors. **ACTION:** Discuss this item at a future meeting. Subcommittee to produce recommendation on new criteria.

F. Course Proposals (NEW)

EECS 254_Compiler Construction
EECS 259_Topics in Human-Computer Interaction
EECS 268_Datacenter-Scale Computing
EECS 269_Reinforcement Learning

ACTION: Consent calendar was approved with an amendment to item VII (correct proposed definition of online courses).

IV. Systemwide Review Items—*Chair Hestir (1:50-1:55)*[Proposed revised Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices](#)

The policy was revised to update the following sections with new goals, procedures, and clarifications: Green Building Design, Climate Protection (new criteria for purchase of carbon offsets and new reference to climate justice in campus Action Plans), Sustainable Transportation, Sustainable Water Systems, and Sustainability at UC Health, and add a Health and Well-Being Policy section. Chair proposed that GC review this item, as it discusses sustainable transportation, which intersects with housing. Both are relevant issues for graduate students. Chair requested, and the Interim VPDGE agreed, that the transportation survey results shared by Interim VPDGE be incorporated into the review.

ACTION: Member Hratchian will lead the review. Transmit GC comment to Senate Chair by 10/22.

V. Discussion Item: Dual Modality Courses—*Chair Hestir (1:55-2:15)*

GC continued its discussion of dual modality courses, in the context of [this request](#) from SoE Executive Committee. SoE's request was presented to DivCo, which asked UGC and GC to review. As the request concerns undergraduate courses, GC discussion focused on broader policy implications. Campus needs to establish clearer guideline and standards for quality online courses (as in [this](#) document that WSCUC is considering adopting), and a review process. The decision on modality should be based on pedagogy and not labor issues (difficulty with hiring enough instructors).

Members discussed the pros and cons of approving dual modalities for a single course, designating online courses as "online" explicitly (as done at UCSD with their R-designated courses), and having two different course numbers without the explicit designation. A member commented that, if dual modality courses are allowed, it would be important to make sure that the modality is decided at the department level and not individually by the instructor of record. Chair emphasized that GC approves courses, not instructors, for online instruction.

Members then discussed under what conditions distance education may be beneficial for students. Given the difficulty with summer housing, it seems reasonable to offer online courses during summer, especially when it may lead to timely graduation. Special Topics courses, because of its frequent change in content, was also suggested. A member expressed concerns that student learning is of lesser quality in online courses, based on their lab course. Even when there is pedagogical need for online courses, the question of how to ensure equal outcomes must be addressed.

It was suggested that the dual modality question be addressed with UGC, in addition to the hybrid definition.

ACTION: Members provide comments on the SoE request by 10/11/21, for transmittal to the Senate Chair by 10/13/21.

VI. Consultation with Vice Provost/Dean of Graduate Education —*Interim VPDGE Chris Kello (2:15-2:30)*

- A. [Project AMIGA Holistic Review Toolkit](#) A move away from standardized testing has been taking place, in favor of holistic review. Regarding GRE, there are fewer programs requiring them, some making it optional. Based on informal feedback, UCM is the campus that requires/uses GRE as optional more than other campuses. While this is not necessarily better or worse, UCM does need to compete with other UC programs that do not require GREs. Interim VPDGE requested GC consider recommending that graduate programs employ holistic review approach such as AMIGA. A member asked what other campuses' policies are regarding GREs. Interim VPDGE will ask his staff to collect data from Riverside, Santa Cruz, Irvine and Davis. Member Strubbe has information about Physics programs and will share.
- B. Change of Advisor Form: A recent case of change of advisor called the “acknowledgments” in the form into question. Interim VPDGE has proposed revisions to the acknowledgments for which he seeks GC input. Chair asked Interim VPDGE to circulate the old and new language, with the understanding that it is for the short term. GC will review the form in the context of conflict resolution recommendation in the longer term.
- C. Enrollment Management/Funding Model--tabled
- D. Visitation Weekend--tabled

VII. New Business? GPPH revision—GPPH is being reviewed by email. Chair requested that comments be submitted and revision be completed by October 9. (Due to additional inquiries Graduate Division received, regarding Master's Plan II Examination, this item has been placed on 10/19 agenda.)

Entered executive session at 2:32PM

VIII. [EXECUTIVE SESSION] Consultation with Medical Education Director Thelma Hurd (2:30-2:55)
Materials for this item were distributed to voting members and the Interim VPDGE separately.

No actions were taken during the executive session.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:02pm. Att.by Chair Hestir.