

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)**Meeting Minutes****Thursday, April 15, 2021****2:00 – 3:30 PM**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](#)

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**I. Executive Session—MEMBERS ONLY, 20 minutes****A. Graduate Continuing Fellowships—*Guest Eric Cannon***

No minutes were taken during the Executive Session.

**II. Chair's Report (2:20-2:30) -*Chair Hratchian***

A. Updates postponed at the 4/1/21 meeting (3/29 DivCo; Fall Planning): All staff, including instructional staff, is expected to return to in-person work on July 1. Exceptions will be granted to those with medical waiver. Chair, and UGC Chair, discussed with the corresponding Deans the possibility for department chairs to grant instructional flexibility to their department members, rather than having to go through the Curriculog, as an accommodation for medical waiver. Chair invited comments in zoom chat, or by email after the meeting.

ACTION: Chair will draft a policy for faculty with medical waivers to teach remotely, in collaboration with UGC Chair.

B. Fall remote instruction-possible revision of the [ECC](#) and/or the [EEC](#) policy: EECS has Master's students overseas who are willing to pay tuition, but need remote instruction. ECC set terms for remote instruction, and it expires when emergency period ends.

ACTION: By next GC meeting, Chair and Vice Chair will draft a policy for international students to take courses remotely until they are able to travel to US.

C. Extension Non-Degree Program Policy (finalize decision)—having heard no serious concerns, Chair proposed that the policy be reviewed in 1 to 3 years, to ensure that GC is regularly apprised of Extension programs.

ACTION: By next GC meeting, Chair will draft a memo to Extension. Members to provide feedback on how many years the policy should be extended (1-3 years).

**III. Vice Chair's Report (2:30-2:40) -*Vice Chair Hestir***

A. CCGA Meeting (4/7/21): The Council of Deans will be requesting permanent suspension to the TA limits (change to the APM), as an important financial support for students. However, there are concerns about potential exploitation of students. CCGA also discussed revising SRs (520 and 454) to make it clear that the English language requirement is not based on nationality. GSRs are currently moving toward unionization. They are often paid at a higher level than TAs (at other campuses), so unionization means loss of the flexibility for faculty to offer higher wages to incentivize students. If they, as well as post-docs, are represented, fellowship students will be the only ones not represented, and will need assistance navigating between the realm of employment and realm of being students. CCGA is getting close to "closing the loophole" on self-supported programs (programs getting approved and then making substantial changes without CCGA review).

B. PROC (4/12/21): discussed the review of the 2020 project and reflected on the successes and challenges. It was decided that the review would include the financial aspect, and will circulate a report (financial analysis) with DivCo. Better stakeholder engagement was recommended. Also received a summary review for Physics

Graduate Program. One major concern was climate in labs, where unfriendly atmosphere was impacting women in labs, affecting retention rate. Vice Chair asked Interim Graduate Dean Kello if inclusivity is included in the new TA training model, as this (TAs) seems to be the level at which the lab climate is problematic. Interim Dean Kello agreed of its importance, and added that, while it was in the outline, the real question was how integrated it would be in practice.

**IV. [Updates](#) from Undocumented Students Workgroup (2:40-2:50) -Member Ha**

The workgroup met late March. UCM provided institutional funding to address the funding shortage for undocumented students, who were not eligible for the first two waves of federal stimulus funding, and will do so if the third wave has the same limitations on eligibility. Member Ha encouraged GC members to direct their students to the funding sources (listed in the linked update document). Graduating student gift packages are being collected and coordinated, with volunteer faculty. Also fundraising activities are planned. Discussion of eligibility for Graduate Assistance ensued, with Interim Dean Kello stating that the Graduate Division provides financial support and would like to know of any funding issues if they exist. The workgroup is also searching for a way to reach out to incoming undocumented students, as the immigration status of the students cannot be disclosed to the workgroup.

ACTION: Member Ha will update GC on financial support for undocumented students.

**V. Consent Calendar (2:50-2:50)**

- A. The agenda (4/15/21)
- B. [Minutes](#) from the 4/1 meeting

ACTION: The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

**VI. Campus Review: Faculty Initiated Drop Feature in CatCourses (2:50-2:55) -Chair Hratchian**

Registrar's explanation and proposed text describing this new feature to students in the Catalog is [here](#). Chair recommended endorsing the new feature and the proposed text. Vice Chair motioned, member Ilan seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

ACTION: By 5/3/21, transmit a memo to the Senate Chair endorsing the new feature and the text.

**VII. Report on [Faculty-Graduate Student Conflict Resolution Infrastructure \(CRI\) Workgroup](#) (2:55-3:05)-  
Member Chen, Interim VPDGE and CRI Workgroup Co-Chair Kello**

Member Chen updated GC on the workgroup's 4/12 meeting that the counterpart to Maria Nishanian (the Graduate Academic Counselor) for the Faculty is temporarily AVPF Valdez. The flowchart is being revised with the faculty part by the AVPF. It is important for faculty to have the resources, especially the counselor counterpart. Interim VPDGE Kello added that the revisions will be discussed at CRI's next meeting, and that the request to consider conflict scenarios beyond advisor/advisee will be addressed. Chair expressed concerns about listing the graduate support staff and Maria in the conflict resolution chart. The Interim VPDGE reiterated that students should be going to the faculty first and only approach the Counselor as a resource. Chair commented on the need to reduce the student-to-support staff ratio, referencing an LA Times article. The Interim VPDGE commented on the variance in faculty advisors' roles and expectations. Regarding consultation (related GC memo is [here](#)), he welcomes contribution from all.

**VIII. Consultation with VPDGE (3:05-3:15)-Interim Graduate Dean Kello**

Academic Planning—Interim VPDGE Kello would like GC feedback on which of the goals and measures/strategies to focus in the next few years. Funding/budget is not involved in the planning yet. The campus's enrollment focus is on undergraduate and master's students, given the financial implications. Vice Chair expressed her concern about PhD student recruitment, and asked that GD work with ORED and GC to

incentivize PhD students on grants. The Interim VPDGE agreed on the importance of PhD student recruitment, and stated the current 25% tuition cost sharing would be maintained at least.

ACTION: Interim Dean Kello will email the Academic Planning Phase III document to GC for members' feedback.

**IX. Consultation with Senate Chair/Campus Repatriation Coordinator Robin DeLugan on Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Policy and Implementation (3:15-3:30)**

Related announcement from Chancellor's Designee, Teenie Matlock, is [here](#).

This is a 10-campus policy, coordinating to respond to the federal and California laws. An awareness memo similar the statement by Professor Matlock will go out yearly. A process for repatriation will be designed as needed (not expected at UC Merced). UC Davis has a well-developed repatriation program that UCM can use. No action from GC is required at this time.

**X. New Business?** Call for reviewer-[Draft Strategic Plan, 2021-2031](#)

Review is due to Senate Chair on May 3, and the Plan will be discussed at the next GC meeting.

ACTION: Members interested in leading the review will contact the analyst.

**XI. Informational Items**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:32PM. Att. by Chair Hratchian