

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)

Tuesday, September 21, 2021

1:30 – 3:00 PM

**COB 1, Room 320 (Willow Conference Room)**Zoom 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 called to order at 1:32pm, with Chair Hestir presiding.s

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

- A. Divisional Council (9/2 and 9/16)--Academic Planning implementation starts this year. A new MOU with UCOP has improved campus budget outlook significantly, and it incentivizes the campus to recruit graduate students. The EVC/Provost is redirecting TA funds that exceeds the TA formula-based amount to fellowships, and asked GC to collaborate with CAPRA in longer-term planning for graduate funding. Enrollment management will be necessary for the next 2-3 years, but the timeline and the model need adjustments. EVC/Provost would like graduate students to teach at UCM as well as community colleges. This can be beneficial to students, especially if they are seeking teaching pathways. GC needs to ensure that it is not used as a solution to instructor shortage, by establishing principles, possibly integrating them into the graduate student instructor petition approval process.
- B. Conflict Resolution Infrastructure (CRI) [Workgroup Recommendations](#) and Implementation, per EVC/Provost's [memo](#)--Chair referred to the need to adjust the timeline given an upcoming election of new GSA leadership. Chair proposed a new workgroup consisting of representatives from GC, FWAf, EDI, and administration (Graduate Academic Counselor, and possible another representative), to review the recommendations and possibly identify new polices.

**ACTION:** Members to contact the Chair if they are willing to serve on the proposed workgroup.

**II. Vice Chair's Report (1:40-1:45)—Vice Chair Ha**

- A. Graduate Group Chairs Meeting (8/30)—topics included 7<sup>th</sup> year extension to employment (the usual 12 semester limit was extended by 2 semesters, most likely until next semester); return to in-person instruction (how to accommodate TA office hours given FERPA); Student Assessment (implementation of a new Excel form for reporting, and feedback from groups that used it); and "optional" GRE requirements by graduate groups and trackability of this data. Interim CFO Schnier has been working with school deans on enrollment management, update should be available on 9/29. Chair Hestir recommended preparing a Plan B, to make sure that graduate groups are not given very short notice like last year.

**III. Consent Calendar (1:45-1:45)—Chair Hestir**

- A. The agenda (9/21)
- B. [Minutes](#) from the 9/7 meeting

**ACTION:** The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

**IV. Systemwide Review Items—Chair Hestir (1:45-1:50)**

- A. [Proposed Revision to Senate Regulation 478](#) (IGETC)

The revision was proposed by the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS) to create Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) Area 7 – Ethnic Studies, in response to the new state legislation (AB 1460 (Weber)) requiring the California State University (CSU) to include an Ethnic Studies course in the General Education curriculum for a baccalaureate degree. Chair chose to review it primarily because she believes the ease of transfer to UC facilitates the pathway into graduate programs.

UC Merced's ratio of transfer students relative to frosh students is lower than the systemwide target, although, as a new campus, we are not required meet it yet. A member commented on the potential impact of a higher ratio of transfer students on TA allocations.

**ACTIONS:** A motion to endorse the proposed revision was made, seconded, and unanimously approved. Analyst will transmit endorsement memo with comments on the importance of transfer pathway to Senate Chair by 10/15/21. Chair will invite AFAC to update GC on their approach to increasing transfer and frosh admissions.

**V. Campus Review Item—Chair Hestir (1:50-1:55)**

**A. Summer Session Calendaring**

With three holidays that can all be on Mondays during summer 2022 (Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day), the Director of Summer Session and the Registrar propose that, while the summer session schedule remains the same, Monday only courses (in sessions A and D) and MW courses (in session A) be discouraged. After a brief discussion, a motion to endorse was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

**ACTION:** Transmit GC endorsement to the Senate Chair. (Completed 9/24/21)

**VI. Discussion Item: Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook—Chair Hestir (1:55-2:05)**

GC discussed additional revisions regarding NRST, recommended by GSA President Collignon, and Student Committees (reflecting the change in Campus Regulations, allowing ANR researchers to chair). A member stated that the Handbook does not mention the absolute limit of 6 years (combining NRST awards and waivers), and recommended that this information be included.

**ACTIONS:** GC to provide Graduate Division with the summary of GC discussions. (Completed 9/21/21). Graduate Division to present a revised draft, to be reviewed by GC via email.

**VII. Discussion Item: Online/Hybrid Instruction—Chair Hestir (2:05-2:25)**

**A. Proposed moratorium on online/hybrid course modality approvals:** per WASC guidelines (p.7 of [this document](#)), programs that offer 50% or more of the degree program online are considered online programs. Campus needs to establish clearer guideline and standards for quality online education (based on [this document](#)), and a review process. This is especially relevant for one-year Master's programs, which runs a greater risk of offering an "accidental" online degree. UCM is not accredited to offer online degrees. On the other hand, there are good reasons for offering remote instruction during summer, as well as in specific circumstances (for example, to have industry professionals teach specialized courses remotely).

**ACTION:** GC unanimously voted to institute a moratorium on online/hybrid course proposals until such time as GC decides otherwise.

**B. Confusion over definitions of instructional modalities:** UGC has two separate sets of definitions (one via [Course Approval Policy](#), which informs the section of the Curriculog form, and another via [Supplemental Questionnaire](#)), neither of which matches GC's [Supplemental Questionnaire](#) which suggests hybrid is defined as a course that meets at least 1/3 in person and at least 1/3 by distance learning. Chair pointed out that WSCUC does not acknowledge hybrid as a modality, and shared with members that she has been in a discussion with UGC Chair and the deans of Graduate and Undergraduate Education, where it was proposed to define courses as "online" if less than 25% of credit hours is scheduled to be in person. Chair stated that maintaining two separate criteria for graduate and undergraduate education requires pedagogical explanation. A member suggested that CPS consult with the Policy Subcommittee.

**ACTIONS:** Course Proposal Subcommittee (CPS) will meet with UGC's subcommittee to discuss course modality definitions. (CPS Chair reached out to UGC on 9/25/21) Registrar will provide the list of courses that are approved for online/hybrid instruction through Curriculog, as well as temporarily under exemptions. (Completed 9/21/21)

- C. Extension request to submit course proposals for Spring 2022: Extension is requesting modification to four Teacher Preparation Program courses, so that they can be taught online in Spring 2022. For spring 2022 implementation, the deadline for submission was February 8, 2021. Former GC Chair stated he would recommend agreeing to reviewing them, but GC would need to communicate to Extension to present requests in a timelier manner. Course Proposal Subcommittee agreed.

**ACTION:** communicate with Extension on the approval and the need for timely submission in the future.

**VIII. Discussion Item: Course proposal: IH 202—Vice Chair Ha (2:25-2:35)**

The proposal (Study Plan Design) requests the addition of hybrid and online modalities to the existing in-person modality. It was rejected for concerns about the consistency in student learning experience. The proposer has submitted additional information. The review has been placed on hold because of Action under item VII, but the committee discussed the question of multiple modalities for a course, wherein an instructor can choose. Assigning separate course numbers for the different modalities was discussed. Faculty who reside outside the campus area (their negative impact on local economy, and the difficulty some departments, especially in Engineering, have in recruiting faculty to live/commute to Merced) was also discussed.

**ACTION:** Revisit the topic of dual modality in a future meeting.

**IX. Discussion Item: Proposal for New Concentrations in ES (2:35-2:45)—Vice Chair Ha**

The Environmental Systems Graduate Group is [proposing five new concentrations](#). The proposal and review processes are described [here](#). Vice Chair explained the rationale provided by the proposers, that students face confusion when seeking employment, because “Environmental Systems” does not resonate with most potential employers, and that having a concentration helps students with obtaining focused training.

**ACTION:** Member Li will review in time for GC’s 10/19 meeting.

**X. Consultation with Vice Provost/Dean of Graduate Education —Interim VPDGE Chris Kello (2:45-3:00)**

- A. Acknowledgments on change of advisor form: There were issues in the past about change of advisors. There needs to be some acknowledgment about student’s rights vs. obligations regarding research materials and products. Dean Kello is consulting with the legal office, and will share his findings with GC.
- B. Instructional budgets: To reach R1 by 2030, UCM must meet criteria by 2028, including doctoral conferral. To do this, UCM needs to ramp up recruitment this year, and improve the degree completion rate.
- C. Paying masters incentive: Dean Kello is collaborating with Interim CFO Schnier to make sure funds come back to the graduate group for PhD support. They would like this to happen this year if possible.
- D. Project AMIGA Holistic Review Toolkit-- alternative to GRE?---tabled for next meeting due to lack of time.

**XI. New Business?**

Systemwide Review Item: Proposed Revised Presidential Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment: GC is not a lead review committee. While most of the changes are legally required changes, Chair pointed out notable changes, such as modification on no-contact orders, and the statement that Title IX office would periodically update the parties (the latter was prompted by UCM comments).

**ACTION:** Members interested in reviewing the item to contact Chair and Analyst by October 1.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:05PM. Att. by Chair Hestir.