

Undergraduate Council (UGC)**Meeting Minutes
Friday, January 28, 2022
1:00-2:25pm****I. Chair's Report – Holley Moyes – 1:00pm – 1:10pm****A. January 27 Divisional Council Meeting**

Chair Moyes shared the following updates from the January 27 Divisional Council Meeting:

1. VC/CFO Kurt Schnier attended the DivCo meeting to provide an update on UC Merced's financial system. Chair Moyes asked UGC members if they are having difficulties purchasing items, specifically tickets. A member noted that some faculty are having difficulties ordering supplies for their chemistry labs. Other members noted that the new system is difficult to navigate. VC/CFO Shnier continues to address faculty's concerns regarding the system.
2. Professor Eaton attended the DivCo meeting to provide an update on the proposed Senate review of the Academic Activity Policy. Under the policy, instructors are asked to document academic activity in Cat Courses by the add/drop deadline or use a new online certification tool; and report the last day of attendance when submitting a non-passing final grade. If a student withdraws, the Department of Education requires that UC Merced returns funds for Pell Grants and federal student loans. Auditors told UC Merced in 2020 to use new standards for documenting academic activity. Students are immediately sent a bill to pay back their Pell Grants and their student loans. If students cannot pay this outstanding balance, they cannot re-enroll and their debt is ultimately sold to a debt collector. Divisional Council endorsed the proposed Senate review of AFAC's proposal, and Chair Moyes would like to invite Professor Eaton to a future UGC meeting for further discussion.
3. Senate Chair Westerling reported that cyber security software must be installed in certain campus machines, which has hindered the performance of the machines and faculty are finding it difficult to complete their work. The Committee on Research will explore ways to remove this burden from faculty while still mitigating cybersecurity risks.
4. UC Merced received \$1 million dollars from the McKenzie Scott gift. The plan would be to allocate \$250,000 a year over the next four years for instrumentation grants, professional and student support initiatives, etc. This year, funding was allocated for all Spring 2022 Senate faculty grant proposals, as well as faculty development and student research and travel grants. The Senate will also set up student awards for service.
5. EVC/Provost Camfield attended the meeting to discuss the effects of COVID on student learning. He feels that students are not receiving the best education that they would be receiving if they were meeting more regularly in person, especially with labs. Chair Moyes and VPDUE Frey will work together to rectify this problem in the short term. Chair Moyes noted that VPDUE Frey's proposal for academic flexibility will be discussed at the February 18 UGC meeting.

B. January 21 Regular Check-in Meeting with GC Chair Hestir, VPDUE Frey, and VPDGE Kello.

A memo will be transmitted to the faculty later today to let them know what to expect when returning to the classroom. Everyone will be asked to wear a mask. Instructors will be asked to communicate with their students when and where they will be meeting. During future regular check-in meetings, participants will revisit the matrix for evaluating certain situations related to COVID. VPDUE Frey

would like to reevaluate the matrix based on the Omicron variant.

C. January 20 GC/UGC Joint Meeting to Discuss Online Course Proposal Approval Processes.

The supplemental questionnaire form that faculty are required to complete when submitting course proposals through Curriculog has been updated by the Policy Subcommittee and will be shared with UGC members soon. The GC/UGC joint committee continues to discuss the definitions for hybrid/online and how to improve online courses in the future. Department chairs will also be asked to provide 3-4-year curriculum maps to show how a student can navigate through their program without inadvertently receiving an online degree.

II. Consent Calendar – 1:10pm – 1:15pm

A. The Agenda

Action:

- The agenda was approved as presented.

III. Approval of Courses – Jason Lee, Ryan Baxter, Siddaiah Yarra – 1:15pm -1:25pm

Courses are available at the link and pasted below.

<https://ucmerced.curriculog.com/agenda:168/form>

Action:

- The following courses were approved by UGC and Curriculog will be updated accordingly (completed 2/2):
 1. [BIO - 001 - Contemporary Biology](#)
 2. [BIO - 151 - Molecular Immunology](#)
 3. [BIO - 151L - Molecular Immunology Laboratory](#)
 4. [BIO - 154 - Developmental Immunology](#)
 5. [BIO - 158 – Herpetology](#)
 6. [BIO - 184 - Python Programming for Life Sciences](#)
 7. [BIO - 189 - Behavioral Ecology](#)
 8. [ME - 021 - Engineering Computing](#)

A member noted that the instructor for BIO-120, Marcos Garcia-Ojeda, is currently teaching the course in the same format that is presented in the proposal, and therefore, UGC members agreed to ask for clarification regarding the exact changes to the course before approval.

Action:

- UGC Members have requested clarification regarding the exact modality changes of the following course.
- UGC Analyst will request clarification from the requester and report back to UGC members.
 1. [BIO - 120 - General Microbiology](#)

IV. Request from the MWP for One-time Modality Exceptions for Spring 2022 – Chair Moyes - 1:25pm –1:30pm

1. [Susan Bohrer - WRI 100:8, WRI 117:1](#) (medical accommodation approved through HR).
2. [Nahrin Downey - WRI-10-09, WRI-101-03, WRI 101-05](#) (medical accommodation pending approval through HR).

Action:

- UGC members approved the one-time modality exceptions for Spring 2021.

- UGC analyst will notify the Director of the Merritt Writing Program (completed 1/28).

V. One-time Modality Exceptions for Summer 2022 – Chair Moyes – 1:30pm – 1:35pm

A. Request from SSHA

Many Instructors of Record (IORs) are listed as “TBD” because the application/appointment process does not begin until later in the Spring; therefore, only Senate faculty are listed.

Action:

- UGC members approved the on a one-time exception for the list of Summer 2022 modalities.
- UGC Analyst will notify the SSHA Instructional Manager (completed 1/31).

B. Request from the Applied Mathematics Department

The Applied Mathematics Department would like the list of six courses to be offered both in-person and online in Summer 2022.

Action:

- UGC members approved the one-time exception for the list of Summer 2022 modalities.
- UGC Analyst will notify Professor Sindi and the SNS Instructional Manager (completed 1/31).

VI. VCSA Nies’ Report – 1:35pm – 1:45pm

A. Update on Housing

Approximately 1,500 students out of 3,800 students have moved back into campus housing. Another 1,000 students are expected to move in over the following weekend. Students are asked to test before they arrive on campus; however, several of them do not have access to testing until they arrive back in the area. There are isolation rooms available for students who live on campus. Students who test positive stay in the isolation rooms for 5-6 days and then are moved out if they test negative. If they test positive after 5-6 days, they remain in isolation for 10 days, following CDC and California Public Health guidelines. There is a need for additional quarantine and isolation space on campus; there are currently about 50 rooms available. UC Merced has recently subleased 150 beds from Merced Station, and several students who are currently living on campus are moving to Merced Station to make additional beds available for those who need to quarantine and isolate. UC Merced subleased the apartments at Merced Station rather than having students lease directly from them for their financial aid purposes. UC Merced provided those students who moved from campus into the Merced Station apartments with Target gift cards since they would have to buy different sized bedding and other supplies. The UC Merced Dining Center conducts regular food drop-offs to students at Merced Station, and the Health Center staff does daily check-ins with the students to ensure they are doing okay and recovering well. Several hotel rooms have also been reserved off campus so that if a student is living off campus with someone who tests positive, they can stay in a hotel until their housemate recovers. Rapid test kits are made available to all students in the residence halls and test kits will also be available at kiosk entrance points to the campus for everyone, including faculty and staff. There is only enough for everyone to have one test kit at this time, but additional tests will be ordered. VCSA Nies noted that these tests are effective in identifying the Omicron variant.

B. Update on Current COVID Situation

Regular testing in the California room is still being conducted, along with symptomatic testing in the drive-through area by the bus drop-off, all free of charge. UC Merced is also working with Golden Valley Health Clinic for increased vaccination clinics and booster shots; there are several dates scheduled for them to visit campus to administer vaccines. Additionally, a survey was distributed to all undergraduate students, which received a 30% response rate. The results showed that 66% of

students said they have received the booster, and about 18% of students said they tested positive for COVID in the last 60 days.

VII. Consultation with GE Executive Committee Chair Valerie Leppert – 1:45pm – 2:00pm

- A. [GE Streamlining Vote Transmittal Letter](#)
- B. [AACU Consultant Review of New GE Program](#)
- C. [Text of GE Streamlining Vote](#)

General Education Executive Committee (GEEC) Chair Leppert shared some background on the revisions to the General Education (GE) Program. The first step was to receive approval of the Bylaws, which was requested in 2019. In Spring 2022, the GEEC began addressing concerns related to the GE program. One concern was regarding the number of distinct requirements. There are currently 26 distinct requirements; however, underprepared students are required to take American History and Writing 10, which raises the requirements to 28. Some courses can satisfy more than one requirement; however, finding the appropriate classes to do so in order to graduate on time is challenging. The proposed revisions to the GE Program would reduce the number of distinct requirements by eight.

The GEEC proposed changes to the program without drastically changing the overall program because the initial implementation of the program took three years and drastic changes may affect students who are currently navigating the program. There were also issues related to sustainability, so there was an e-portfolio requirement that would have required an additional 2-4 staff members. In order to support this, Chair Leppert included a consultant report from Vice President of the American Association of Colleges and Universities, Kate McConnell. Chair Leppert noted that the revised GE Program aims to address the concerns noted in Vice President McConnell's report, such as cost and the ability for students to graduate on time.

The GEEC would also like to address the imbalance across disciplines. Chair Leppert explained the changes to the intellectual badge framework for fulfilling requirements that are generally considered GE requirements, such as history, literature, and art. The report also lists several groups that the GEEC consulted with over the past two years. Furthermore, Chair Leppert noted that GE Program is structured as an academic program.

Chair Leppert shared the Senate faculty voting results with members, which can be found on page two of the [General Education Faculty Vote on Proposed General Education Requirement Changes](#).

Regarding Senate faculty's vote to include the introduction of Life and Physical Sciences requirement, a member posed the following question:

- Does the Life and Physical Science classes need to include a lab?

Chair Leppert stated that it has not yet been specified whether the Life and Physical Science classes require a lab, and that it would be very difficult to deliver. The GEEC is concerned with students having the intellectual tools to make good decisions as individuals and members of society. Chair Leppert confirmed that the Life and Physical Sciences requirement would not be included in existing classes such as Chemistry.

Action:

- UGC voting members approved the proposed revisions to the GE program.
- UGC Analyst will draft a memo and circulate to voting members for review.
- UGC Analyst will notify the Registrar (completed 1/28).

VIII. Campus Review Items – 2:00pm – 2:15pm

- A. [Proposal for a B.S Degree in Electrical Engineering](#)

The proposal was distributed to the Chairs of Senate Committees, the SNS Executive

Committee, and the SSHA Executive Committee with comments due by February 18, 2022.

Lead Reviewers: AFAC, CAPRA, GC, UGC and SNS and SSHA Executive Committees.

Requested Action: Identify one or two lead reviewers. Senate Committees' comments will be shared with the lead reviewer(s). Lead reviewer(s) will respond with their assessment and recommendation by March 1. Comments will then be shared with voting members of UGC and discussed at the March 4 UGC meeting.

Deadline: March 4, 2022

Action:

- Member Michelle Leslie and Member Alejandro Gutierrez volunteered as lead reviewers.
- Lead reviewers will share their comments with UGC Analyst by March 4, 2022.
- The proposal, all Senate committees' comments, and lead reviewers' comments will be shared at the March 4 UGC meeting.

B. [UCM Community and Labor Center ORU Proposal](#)

The policy for the establishment and review of ORU proposals is available [here](#).

UGC's comments may be found [here](#).

Requested Action: Members to review and discuss UGC's comments.

Deadline: February 4, 2022.

Chair Moyes shared her comments with members. She felt that the proposal needed updating, specifically regarding space, student engagement, and funding. She also discussed cross disciplinary research and would like more involvement from Engineering faculty.

A member summarized their comments, noting that there is a single pool of money available for all ORUs. Adding another ORU would take money away from existing ORUs. If this is true, then it would be helpful to know the exact overlaps of this ORU with other ORUs. In order to make a decision on this issue (one ORU may be essentially taking money from others) it seems important to have a full list of all the ORUs and what they are contributing to campus. The member recommended examining the proposal on its own merits, which are well described in the proposal; however, if UGC members are to assess the ORUs in a zero-sum capacity, then additional information is required. Overall, it would be helpful to request clarity on how UGC members should be assessing this ORU.

Action:

- Members are to send any additional comments to Chair Moyes and UGC Analyst by Monday, January 31, 2022.
- UGC Analyst will prepare a memo and circulate to members for review (completed 2/4).