

**Undergraduate Council** (UGC)**Meeting Minutes  
Friday, April 22, 2022  
1:00-2:20pm****I. Vice Chair’s Report – Ryan Baxter – 1:00pm – 1:05pm****A. April 4 UCEP Meeting**

Vice Chair Baxter attended the April 4 UCEP meeting on Chair Moyes’ behalf and reported that the meeting mainly focused on the discussion of online undergraduate degree programs. Members of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) attended the meeting and discussed the issue of students inadvertently achieving an online degree. They reported that all majors and minors are required to undergo WASC review for accreditation if 50% or more of the instructional hours of the major or minor are delivered remotely. WASC refers to instructional hours as lecture hours. They also noted that credits that a student earns at another school do not count toward the 50% of instructional hours; transfer credits do not count toward an online degree. One of the issues with how WASC counts courses is that their calculation includes all courses that a student could possibly take to satisfy their degree program. Their default is to count the maximum number of lecturer/instructional hours that could be attributed to online instruction, rather than just the number of lecture/instructional hours that the student completes. UCEP is currently collaborating to identify a solution to the issue of students accidentally achieving an online degree.

**II. Consent Calendar – 1:05pm – 1:10pm****A. The Agenda****B. [March 11 Meeting Minutes](#)****C. [SNS Request - One-time Exception for Summer 2022 Online Modality](#)****D. [SSHA Request – One-time Exception for Summer 2022 Online Modality](#)****Action:**

- The agenda was approved as presented.
- The March 11 meeting minutes were approved.
- UGC approved SNS’s request for a one-time exception for Summer 2022 online modality. UGC Analyst will notify the School Instructional Manager.
- UGC approved SSHA’s request for a one-time exception for Summer 2022 online modality. UGC Analyst will notify the School Instructional Manager.

**III. Approval of Courses – Jason Lee, Ryan Baxter, Siddaiah Yarra – 1:10pm – 1:25pm**

Courses are available at the links below.

- The following courses were approved by UGC and Curriculog will be updated accordingly:

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1. [BIO - 040L - Course-based Undergraduate Research Experience: Genetic Discovery on the Fly](#)
2. [BIO – 120 - General Microbiology](#)
3. [ENGR - 091 - Professional Development: People in an Engineered World](#)
4. [ENG - 060 - Science Fiction & Climate Disaster](#)
5. [ENVE - 116 - Applied Climatology](#)
6. [ESS - 132 - Applied Climatology](#)
7. [MIST - 116 - Applied Climatology](#)

- UGC Analyst will request further clarification on the following courses before UGC recommends approval:
  1. [ESPT - X002 - Introduction to Esports Organizations](#)
  2. [ESPT - X005 - Culture and Communications in Esports](#)
  3. [ESPT - X010 - Esports Marketing](#)
  4. [ESPT - X011 - Esports Project Management and Operations](#)
- UGC will revisit the following course once policies and procedures are established for course proposals that may overlap with other departments:
  1. [ENGR - 080 - Statistical Modeling and Data Analysis for Engineers](#)

#### IV. Review of the SNS Catalog Updates – Ryan Baxter, Jason Lee, Siddaiah Yarra – 1:25pm – 1:30pm

At the April 8, 2022 UGC meeting, voting members agreed to seek clarification on the comments/questions included in the SNS Catalog revisions. On April 11, 2022, SNS support staff provided updated Catalog sections, available at the link below.

SNS: <https://ucmerced.app.box.com/folder/160958762883?s=nddmu72i3ja9i3urwglfv00rasafbvem>

The CRF Subcommittee members noted that the SNS staff provided revised Biological Sciences Catalog entries, and members did not have any additional concerns.

#### Action:

- UGC approved the updated AY 22-23 SNS Catalog revisions.
- UGC Analyst will notify the Office of the Registrar of UGC's approval of the AY 22-23 SNS, SoE, and SSHA Catalog revisions.

#### V. Systemwide Review Item: [Presidential Policy on Affiliations with Certain Healthcare Organizations](#) – Eileen Camfield – 1:30pm – 1:40pm

All Senate Committees and School Executive Committees were invited to review the policy on March 23, 2022.

**Lead Reviewer:** Eileen Camfield

Lead Reviewer's comments are available [here](#).

Members shared their concerns that the only hospital serving the Merced area is affiliated with Catholic Charities, which violates the terms of this new policy by refusing access to certain

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treatments (e.g., abortion, some forms of birth control, gender reassignment, some cancer treatments). Employees and students relying on UC health insurance would lose access to their only local hospital. Members of UGC find it troubling that Catholic Charities deny students, faculty, and staff access to essential reproductive and sexual healthcare, as well as potentially lifesaving cancer treatments. However, members of UGC do not believe that cutting off over ten thousand people in one of California's poorest regions from their only hospital is a viable response. Therefore, members suggested an exception to this otherwise reasonable policy for Merced and any other UC campus whose only local hospitals engage in discriminatory practices.

**Action:**

- Voting members are to send any additional comments to UGC Analyst **by 5:00pm, Monday, April 25, 2022.**
- Deadline for comments to the Senate Chair is April 29, 2022.

**VI. Inter-departmental Consultations for UGC Course and Degree Requirements – Alejandro Gutierrez, Carolyn Jennings – 1:40pm – 1:50pm**

During the October 22, 2021 UGC meeting, VPDUE Frey discussed a proposal for a formal UGC consultation process for modifications to degree requirements or new course proposals that impact other departments. The Policy Subcommittee met on March 17, 2022 to discuss potential policy language, and proposed revisions to the [Procedures and Policies for Approval of New Undergraduate Courses and Undergraduate Course Changes](#). The proposed revisions are shown [here](#).

Members reviewed the revised language to the CRF Policy that the Policy Subcommittee members recommended regarding the potential overlap between departments for new or revised course proposals. One member wondered if the individual proposing the course would be aware that their course could have potential overlap with another department. It was suggested to change the question in the policy, "Does the course overlap with an existing course or program?" to the following two questions:

1. Does the course content overlap with that of any existing courses?
2. Does the course subject matter overlap with that of an existing program?

Members were also concerned that the proposers would simply state that there is no potential overlap with another department just so their course would move forward in the approval process. A member recommended that the UGC CRF Subcommittee members flag a course if they believe there is potential overlap with other existing departments. The policy should include language that would require the proposer to acquire written notice from the other department. The written notice would state that they have been contacted and that they agree that the course being proposed does not impact their department.

**Action:**

- UGC voting members are to add any additional comments/suggested language to the [Google Doc](#) **by 10:00am, Friday, April 29, 2022.**
- Further discussion will take place at the May 6, 2022 UGC meeting.

**VII. VCSA Nies' Report – 1:50pm – 1:55pm**

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## A. Mental wellbeing during finals

VCSA Nies reported that, as the end of the semester approaches, there is continuous increase in students requesting counseling. Because of the high volume of requests, the staff in the Counseling Center are currently only responding to crisis-related appointments. This has caused many scholars to reach out directly to the faculty, and VCSA Nies wants to ensure that faculty have access to the resources available. The phone number for the Counseling Center is directed to a licensed psychologist after hours. If students are feeling anxious or are uncertain whether to withdraw from a course, they are recommended to seek counseling from an academic advisor prior to receiving counseling from a therapist.

VCSA Nies also reported that Student Affairs has contracted with a national organization called the JED Foundation, which conducts mental health related strategic planning for campuses. The JED Foundation is assisting UC Merced with developing a four-year mental health strategic plan. VCSA Nies will continue to inform UGC of the progress.

## VIII. New Policy Modifications for First-year Students – Alejandro Gutierrez, Carolyn Jennings – 1:55pm – 2:05pm

The proposal is available [here](#).

VPDUE Frey introduced this item at the January 14, 2022 UGC meeting. The Policy Subcommittee met on February 1, 2022 to further discuss the suggested policy modifications, and their recommendations are available [here](#). This item was further discussed at the March 4 and March 11 UGC meetings, and members agreed to continue the discussion at today's meeting.

**Requested Action:** Members further discuss Policy Subcommittee's recommendations. Members vote during executive session to approve the recommended policy modifications.

Member Gutierrez shared which policy modifications the Policy Subcommittee members believed to be the best options to implement:

- 1B. Students with less than 30 total units earned may switch any course to P/NP grading up until the last day of instruction. (Note: Major courses would still need to be taken for letter grade.)
- 2B. Students may drop a course without "W" grade up until week 6 of the semester, provided they register for a "parachute course". (Note: Only available during the Fall semester.)
3. During the last week of instruction, courses may not have culminative final exams or any major assignment due or exam given that is worth more than 25% of the final grade unless the course is officially approved under policy 772 for alternative final structure.

Member Gutierrez noted that it was unclear to him how number four would benefit first-year students. Number four states that, "Students with less than 30 units earned and in good academic standing may switch majors at any time and not be subject to departmental criteria, provided they meet with academic advisor. Students with more than 30 units earned may switch majors subject to departmental criteria and such major changes will be processed within one month of receipt of

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completed petition.”

VCSA Nies clarified that currently, students can only change their major during the first three weeks of the Semester and must meet certain criteria in order to even be considered to do so. The purpose of number four would be to eliminate some of the barriers that currently exist for students who are trying to determine which major is best for them. After receiving clarification from VCSA Nies, members were in favor of number four as well.

**Action:**

- UGC voting members approved moving forward with the Policy Subcommittee’s recommendations.
- Other campus constituents will be invited to review the proposed policy modifications.
- UGC Analyst will work with Chair Moyes and Executive Director Paul on next steps.

**IX. Chair’s Report – Holley Moyes – 2:05pm – 2:15pm**

A. April 21 DivCo Meeting

Chair Moyes shared the following updates from the April 21 DivCo meeting:

- LASC Chair DePrano attended the meeting to further discuss the Library’s budget crisis. Chair Moyes is currently drafting a memo advocating for Library funding and for additional hours of operation, etc.
- VCSA Nies attended the meeting to report on the new safety plans. Chair Moyes invited VCSA Nies to report on this topic at the May 6 UGC meeting.
- Chair Westerling reported concerns from UCOP regarding a budget meeting and that UC Merced is expected to admit 6,000 additional students next year. UC Berkeley has had issues with increasing their enrollment numbers and other campuses have been asked to admit additional students that were not admitted to UC Berkeley. The state is also not providing additional funding for this issue.
- The Honors Program Proposal was circulated for campus review on Friday, April 15, 2022 with a deadline of Monday, May 9, 2022 to provide comments/endorsement. A special DivCo meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday, May 10, 2022 for Chair Moyes to report on the comments received.

B. [April 12 CRE Meeting](#)

Chair Moyes attended the April 12 CRE meeting to discuss the Honors Program Proposal and the proposed revisions to the Senate Regulations-Honors. CRE endorsed the proposed revisions to the Senate Regulations-Honors, which will be presented at the May 12 Meeting of the Division.

C. April 14 Meeting with Prof. Kurtz regarding 4+1 programs

Chair Moyes reported that UGC and GC will be revisiting the 4 + 1 Degree Program Proposal in the next couple weeks. Materials are uploaded in our shared AY 21-22 UGC box folder [here](#).

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**X. Other Business? – 2:15pm – 2:20pm**

No other business was discussed.

**XI. Informational Items:**

A. [The administration's approval of the Writing Studies major, effective Fall 2022.](#)

**XII. Executive Session – Voting Members Only – 2:20pm – 2:30pm**