

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)**Meeting Minutes****Wednesday, October 19, 2022****12:20pm-1:30pm****COB 1 - 320**

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

I. Executive Session - 12:00pm – 12:20pm

No minutes were recorded during executive session. The action items were shared with GC voting members.

II. Chair’s Report – Michael Scheibner - 12:20pm – 12:25pm**A. October 7 Regular Check-in Meeting UGC Chair Moyes, VPDUE Frey, and VPDGE Hratchian.**

Further discussions were held regarding policies and procedures for alternate instructional modality during a heat wave. This is an administrative decision, and faculty are strongly encouraged to refrain from moving their class to Zoom. Instructors cannot decide to resort to online modality during a heat wave without first consulting with their Department Chairs.

Discussions were held regarding the lack of consultation with the Senate prior to the announcement of separate graduate and undergraduate commencements. Further discussions will take place at Divisional Council.

B. October 10 IH program review site visit

Three external reviewers visited UC Merced and met with campus leadership, faculty, and students. They provided their recommendation on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 and will provide a written report to IH faculty and PROC. During their on-site visit, reviewers commented on, among many other aspects, the sustainability of the graduate student population and the departmental composition of IH.

C. October 12 CCGA Meeting

- President Drake shared the following four priorities:
 1. Expanding opportunity and excellence
 2. Leading on climate change
 3. Strengthening an inclusive, respectful, and safe community
 4. Promoting health across California, including its most vulnerable communities
- UCOP held a Townhall on Monday, October 10, 2022 for “Inland Rising”. Chair Scheibner announced that a local Townhall will take place on Thursday, October 20, 2022, and he encouraged GC members to attend.
- The Vice Chair reported on rising application fees and is consulting with other campuses for guidance on how to address the issue.

- There are funds for UC Leads and the Cal-Bridge Program to help recruit students to the UCs from CSUs and other colleges.
- There are continued discussions regarding the Union negotiations; however, much of the issue remains confidential.
- Academic Affairs Graduate Studies discussed their desire to expand pathways to the professionals. Several questions were raised regarding how students who have limited access to education and training can be reached, and how they can be helped to meet the UC needs. Also, how to get students to apply to the UCs from HSIs and HBCUs, as well as tribal colleges and universities.

D. October 18 Divisional Council meeting

- Further discussions were held regarding separate graduate and undergraduate commencements and the lack of communication between the Senate and Administration. EVC/Provost Camfield suggested that Divisional Council considers expressing their concerns about shared governance in a memo to the Administration.
- EVC/Provost Camfield plans to send a memo to the Senate formally requesting revisions to the campus policy on the Establishment of New Schools and Colleges.
- CFO Schnier and Associate VC and Controller Nelson provided an update on the Oracle System stating that they have been working diligently on improving the system but that it will continue to take time before running well.
- AFAC Chair Eaton continued his discussion on institutional student debt, and he hopes Divisional Council will engage the Chancellor on policy resolutions.
- CAPRA Chair Mitchell is seeking clarity from EVC/Provost Camfield on faculty FTE lines. It appears that some departments are hiring, and these lines could be failed searches from the past, replacement lines, or opportunity hires.

III. Consent Calendar – Chair Scheibner – 12:25pm – 12:30pm

A. Agenda

B. [October 5 meeting minutes](#)

Action:

- The October 19 agenda and October 5 meeting minutes were approved as presented.
- GC Analyst will update the Senate website accordingly (completed 10/19).

C. Course Proposals

(New)

Action:

- The following courses were approved and Curriculog will be updated accordingly (completed 10/19):

1. [BIOE - 234 - Frontiers of Molecular and Cellular Biotechnology](#)
2. [CHEM - 234 - Frontiers of Molecular and Cellular Biotechnology](#)
3. [MATH - 234 - Frontiers of Molecular and Cellular Biotechnology](#)
4. [MBSE - 234 - Frontiers of Molecular and Cellular Biotechnology](#)
5. [PHYS - 234 - Frontiers of Molecular and Cellular Biotechnology](#)
6. [QSB - 234 - Frontiers of Molecular and Cellular Biotechnology](#)

Action:

- The following course was rejected and Curriculog will be updated to request that the course description be revised to include that the instructor is responsible for assessing whether students have familiarity with linear algebra, calculus, and basic probability, as the Registrar’s Office does not track this.

1. [EECS - 257 - Signal Processing for Internet of Things](#)

IV. Consultation with Financial Services Director Eric Cannon - 12:30pm – 12:50pm**A. Allocation of graduate funds**

The Graduate Division received \$6.7 million from Central Budget for this academic year. Approximately \$2.4 million is allocated to Non-Resident Supplemental Tuition (NRST) for international students and students from out of state. \$1.6 million is allocated to graduate groups, and that allotted amount increases each year relative to the student population. The remaining \$1.7 million is allocated to fellowships, such as Grant Incentives, Masters Incentive, Graduate Dissertation Fellowships, and other Graduate Division commitments. None of the Graduate Division funds are allocated to TAs, as the funding for TAs derives from the instructional budgets within the three Schools. For Grant Incentives, grants that pay full indirect, the grant is charged 75% of the tuition fees and Graduate Division pays the remaining 25% with fellowship funds. For Master Incentives, funds are returned to the graduate groups who bring in self-supporting master students.

Chair Scheibner wondered whether any funds that are generated from tuition flow into the graduate funds. Director Cannon responded that all fellowship funds received from the budget office are tuition funds. However, a portion from all tuition funds that are collected from the University, including undergraduate, are used for fellowships. The funds that Graduate Division receives are earmarked for graduate students, so they are only provided to graduate students as a form of financial aid. Return-to-aid funds must be given as financial aid. Director Cannon also noted that the Graduate Division received a one-time temporary increase of \$1 million this academic year, which helped to fund all the R1 fellowships. This is the first time in approximately ten years that the Graduate Division has received an increase even though the student population has been increasing. Director Cannon explained how, as funds begin to grow along with the student population, they can be allocated in different ways, with one being for postdocs.

B. Timeline for review of fellowships

Director Cannon shared a draft timeline for conducting reviews of fellowships, available [here](#). Graduate Council had requested the review of Continuing Fellowships to take place in November or December to avoid the simultaneous review of both Continuing and Recruitment Fellowships; however, VPDGE Hratchian was concerned that an early deadline would not provide first-year students with sufficient time to meet application requirements, and thus, proposed a February deadline. A member expressed concern about the workload of having to review both Continuing Fellowships and Recruitment Fellowships concurrently. A recommendation was made to determine whether any first-year students have received a Continuing Fellowship in the past, and if not, then the deadline for students to submit applications could be revised to November 30, 2022, and the review of Continuing Fellowships could begin in early December 2022.

Action:

- Director Cannon will check if any first-year students have received a Continuing Fellowship in the past, as well as revise the timeline to November 30, 2022 for when applications close.
- Further discussion regarding a revised timeline will be conducted via email.

V. Consultation with the Registrar – 12:50pm – 1:05pm**A. 4+1 Blended Degree Programs**

- a. Timeline for when students are eligible to begin taking graduate courses and who approves of their status.

Registrar Webb reported that UC Merced undergraduate students are currently able to take graduate level courses with approval from the instructor, respective School Dean, and Graduate Dean. Although graduate level units display as graduate level courses on a student's transcript, those units count toward the 120-unit undergraduate degree requirement. For 4+1 blended degree programs, the idea would be for students to begin taking graduate courses before their fifth year, but those courses would count toward their graduate master's degree. Both undergraduate and graduate requirements will still need to be met, and one course cannot be used to meet both an undergraduate and a graduate course requirement. Registrar Webb shared her concerns regarding financial aid. Students cannot receive a financial aid award for graduate courses if those are true graduate courses that will count towards a graduate degree. It is unclear how undergraduate courses would be distinguished from graduate courses. Registrar Webb recommended consulting with Financial Aid Director Ron Radney for further clarification. She will also consult with the Registrar Offices at other UC campuses and report her findings to GC.

Action:

- Registrar Webb will consult with other campus' Registrar Office for their policies on 4+1 blended degree programs regarding a students' status and financial aid.
 - Members are to send any recommendations/feedback regarding a policy for 4+1 blended degree programs to Chair Scheibner and member Ryavec.
 - Further discussion will take place at a future GC meeting.
- B. Graduate course proposals without a graduate program (e.g. graduate WRI course in Engineering without a graduate writing program).

Chair Scheibner received an inquiry regarding the processes related to proposing a graduate Writing Engineering course; however, the Writing Program does not have a graduate program. Registrar Webb confirmed that she is unsure of the processes, and she will consult with the Registrar Offices at other UC campuses and report her findings to GC.

Action:

- Registrar Webb will consult with the Registrar Offices at other UC campuses regarding processes for proposing and approving graduate courses that do not have a graduate program, and she will report back to Chair Scheibner and the GC Analyst.

VI. Postdoctoral Scholar Support and Development - 1:05pm – 1:25pm

During the September 7 and September 21, 2022 meetings, members discussed Chair Scheibner's initiative for postdoctoral scholar support and development, along with Vice Chair Abatzoglou's comments.

Associate Dean for Graduate Education Sayantani Ghosh joined the October 5 meeting to further discuss the initiative, and she provided a list of opportunities for postdocs, available [here](#).

Requested Action: Members to continue the discussion of the initiative, as well as Associate Dean Ghosh's list of opportunities for postdocs.

Action:

- Chair Scheibner invites members to share their feedback on the list of opportunities via email.
- Further discussion will take place at a future GC meeting.

VII. New Business? – 1:25pm – 1:30pm

Chair Scheibner announced that Program Director Ellen Osmundson will be joining the November 2 CCGA meeting to discuss UC Online. Chair Scheibner invited members to share any questions or concerns related to UC Online **by Monday, October 24, 2022**.