

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)**Meeting Minutes****Wednesday, November 9, 2022****12:00pm-1:30pm****ADMIN 245**

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

I. Chair's Report – Michael Scheibner - 12:00pm – 12:10pm

A. October 21 and November 3 Regular Check-in Meetings UGC Chair Moyes, VPDUE Frey, and VPDGE Hratchian.

- Further discussions were held regarding the announcement of separate graduate and undergraduate commencements. The first graduate commencement will be held in December, and there are currently 27 students who have filed for graduation.
- Discussions were held regarding policy development for 4+1 blended degree programs, which will be further discussed during item VI. of the agenda today.

B. November 1 Divisional Council meeting

- Senate Chair LiWang discussed with EVC/Provost Camfield the issues surrounding the hiring of postdocs and staff.
- Senate Chair LiWang reported that the hiring report issued by UCPB indicates that the number of faculty hires have increased over the past 10 years by 18% compared to administrative hires which have increased by over 100%.
- CAPRA Chair Mitchell provided an update on climate research funds and asked VCR Wilson for details regarding the creation of an institute comprised of three new centers that would administer the climate research funds that UC Merced is receiving.
- CoR Chair Sexton reported that he is finalizing the Call for Proposals for the annual Senate faculty grants competition and the Call for Proposals for an instrumentation grants competition.
- Discussions were held regarding the allocation of potential COVID mitigation funds.
- VCR Gillian Wilson provided additional information on climate research funds, and SNS Dean Dumont and Dr. Vener updated DivCo on the Medical Education Program. VCR Wilson, Dean Dumont, and Dr. Vener will all be joining GC this meeting and next to further discuss these topics.

C. November 2 CCGA Meeting

- Katherine Newman has been appointed as Provost of the UC system.
- Further discussions were held about the union negotiations regarding the teaching and research missions, and UCOP will be sending communications soon.
- UCOP Executive Director Pamela Jennings reported on the additional funds allocated for grants to Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI). The number of HSI fellows on each campus will increase from two to three. The hard deadline for fellowship applications will be announced soon.
- Program Director Ellen Osmundson visited CCGA to further discuss UC Online.
- Several questions from CCGA members were addressed, including whether students can register as a Teaching Assistant (TA) at one campus and conduct their research and attend courses at another.

This would be beneficial for campuses with small programs who struggle to recruit TAs. Students could take their courses via UC Online, and there is currently a TA pilot program (TAP).

- There is a job search for a UC Online Executive Director.
- A survey was issued to all UC Academic Senate faculty and instructors, which collected data about faculty/instructor experiences with remote and hybrid instruction during the pandemic, the personal impact of the pandemic on their work and family lives, and their views of the relative effectiveness of in-person vs. online course modalities.

II. Consent Calendar – Chair Scheibner – 12:10pm – 12:15pm

- A. Agenda
- B. [October 19 meeting minutes](#)

Action:

- The agenda and October 19 meeting minutes were approved as presented.
- GC Analyst will update the Senate website accordingly (completed 11/9).

C. Course Proposals

Action:

- The following courses were approved, and Curriculog will be updated accordingly (completed 11/9):

1. [ECON - 230A - Econometrics I](#)
2. [ECON - 296 - Economics Professional Seminar](#)
3. [ME - 234 - Heat Exchanger Design](#)

Action:

- The following courses were rejected, and Curriculog will be updated accordingly (completed 11/9):

1. [BIOE - 205 - Molecular and Cell Biophysics – clarification on preliminary exam.](#)
2. [CHEM - 206 - Molecular and Cell Biophysics – clarification on preliminary exam.](#)

D. Petitions for Graduate Students to Teach Upper Division Courses

[Caine, Alyson ANTH 169 202310](#)
[Kim, Kay PSY 158 202310](#)

Action:

- The two petitions were tabled for the November 16 GC meeting.

III. Consultation with SNS Dean Dumont and Dr. Margo Vener – 12:15pm – 12:30pm

A. Progress in Medical Education

Dean Dumont and Dr. Vener shared a PowerPoint presentation on the progress in medical education at UC Merced, available [here](#).

The main topics from their presentation are noted below:

- The program has been funded by the state legislature, with a \$15 million annual allotment.
- There are three campuses – UC Merced, UCSF Fresno, and UCSF School of Medicine.
- UC Merced will deliver an undergraduate degree, and the first year and a half of the program will be focused on Foundations 1 (F1). UCSF Fresno will deliver a second half of medical school called Foundations 2 (F2), and the medical degree will be earned from UCSF Medical School.
- Slide 3 includes a timeline for the SJV Prime + BS/MD pathway, with the first incoming class of undergraduate students scheduled to begin in Fall 2023.
- Slide 4 includes a list of core competencies. There are three Biology tracks (Developmental, Molecular and Cell, and Human Biology), a Biological Chemistry track, and a Bioengineering track.
- There is Admissions criteria for conditional acceptance to the UCSF School of Medicine. 12 students will be accepted in Fall 2023 under one of the major tracks and will have conditional acceptance into UCSF School of Medicine. Dean Dumont and Dr. Vener have collaborated with the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee (AFAC) on the admissions criteria.
- Dr. Vener provided a summary of the F1 Workstream, available on slide 7, which is a set of guiding principles for students in their first year and a half of medical school.
- The next steps in the process include approval of any new courses, updates to the University Catalog, providing regular updates to the Senate, and ramping up the work of the F1 Workstream.

Dr. Vener reported that students will be affiliated to both campuses; students will be enrolled as visiting students at UCSF when they arrive in their first year in the baccalaureate at UC Merced. This will allow them access to medical libraries, health services, and other resources. When students transition into UCSF School of Medicine, they will remain enrolled at UC Merced.

Members discussed the approval processes of the medical program, and Dean Dumont confirmed that she has been in consultation with the Undergraduate Council (UGC). There are currently no issues regarding the undergraduate portion of the program because the undergraduate degrees already exist at UC Merced. She confirmed that she will remain in contact with GC throughout the process.

A member wondered whether students must matriculate into UCSF School of Medicine once they complete their first year and a half of the program at UC Merced or if they can choose to complete their medical education at a different school. Dean Dumont clarified that pending good progress at the undergraduate level, students can enroll at a different school but she hopes students would want to continue into the UCSF School of Medicine.

A total of 12 students will be admitted each year. Chair Scheibner wondered if new students would be admitted in place of those who drop out of the program. Dean Dumont and Dr. Vener recognize that medical school is not for everyone; however, they are trying to avoid a competitive program, and therefore, the vacant spots will not be filled. She did, however, state that if F1 is reached and there are significantly less students enrolled in the program than anticipated, they will reopen admissions.

Chair Scheibner also wondered whether there will be TAs allocated from UCSF School of Medicine to train or answer questions from medical students, or if students from UC Merced will be required to meet certain qualifications. Dean Dumont stated that existing tutoring resources will be used, and the medical students will receive additional coaching from physicians.

Dean Dumont and Dr. Vener encouraged GC members to contact them with any additional questions or concerns.

IV. VPDGE Hratchian's Report – 12:30pm – 12:45pm**A. Summer Bridge update**

The Graduate Division is currently implementing an internal proposal process for graduate programs to obtain funding for Summer Bridge for all admits next year. Programs will be required to determine a course of study for a period of five to six weeks. VPDGE Hratchian strongly encourages programs to consider collaboration with other programs. This would help to prepare students, and the Graduate Division would provide resources, as well as support to current graduate fellows to serve as mentors during the program.

B. Recruitment update

VPDGE Hratchian provided Chairs with an admission planning workbook to indicate the number of students they anticipate supporting on grants for Graduate Student Researchers (GSRs), fellowships, or TA programs next year. VPDGE Hratchian plans to provide grant support to students, and the deadlines are quickly approaching, so he has asked the faculty to provide him with this information in a timely manner.

VPDGE Hratchian reported that one of his main goals as Graduate Dean is to increase graduate student enrollments and support their time to degree. He hopes to receive support from the Chancellor for fellowships to help increase Statement of Intent to Register (SIR) rates. Among the ten UC campuses, UC Merced currently has the highest yield rate (highest percentage of students admitted who actually attend UC Merced). A member shared concern about the timing of Graduate Visitation Week, noting that it does not look good when students visit and not many faculty are present.

VPDGE Hratchian provided an update on graduate commencement, which is scheduled to take place in December. There is a website where students can indicate whether they would like to walk at commencement and can request tickets. VPDGE Hratchian will transmit an email to faculty later today or tomorrow letting them know they can request up to ten tickets.

V. Consultation with Student Representative Albert DiBenedetto and Peers – 12:45pm – 1:00pm

Student Representative DiBenedetto and a student representative from each School will discuss the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic, BSP building shutdown (and other building closures if applicable), and the Oracle Ordering System have had on their research and progress to degree.

Requested Action: Members determine whether to create an anonymous survey for students to complete to share the impacts that COVID-19 pandemic, building closures, and the Oracle Ordering System have had on their research and progress to degree.

Two students joined the meeting – one from SNS and one from SSHA - to provide an update on the hardships they are currently facing as graduate students. Several graduate students signed a [letter](#) two years ago expressing their concerns about certain hardships they anticipated facing. Of the concerns listed, the following have been the most detrimental to their experience at UC Merced.

1. Oracle Ordering System

There has been a significant delay in the fulfillment of orders, and changes are constantly being made to the Oracle Ordering System. There are issues when entering COA numbers, and some boxes must be deleted in order to move forward with the purchase. Invoices would also be issued several months following the purchase after the grant has ended, and faculty would have to identify another grant to cover the cost.

2. Research Labs

The students reported that they have felt unsafe in the Biomedical Sciences and Physics (BSP) building after the Fire Marshall had cleared it. Some people have gotten trapped in the building, unable to open the doors. The students also reported that there is a significant delay in response times for other building issues. For example, an issue was reported and a new water pump was needed. The new water pump has been provided; however, it has been sitting in the hallway for two months.

3. COVID-19 pandemic

The pandemic has delayed majority of graduate students' time to degree. This has also caused dilemmas with student visas. The pandemic has made it especially difficult for the SSHA student because they conduct human subject research which must take place in-person. This has delayed their research by almost two years, and the student is now completing their first-year project in their fifth year. Most of their colleagues are also in their fifth year and have not yet advanced to candidacy.

A member asked if extended deadlines would be helpful. While one student agreed, the other noted that they have been provided with the opportunity to TA in order to continue their research; however, their TA work seems to take precedence, leaving very little time to conduct research. Even if students are given additional time to complete their dissertation, not having access to research labs causes further delays.

Action:

- Members agreed to develop a survey to send to graduate students for them to express their concerns about the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic, BSP building shutdown (and other building closures if applicable), and the Oracle Ordering System have had on their research and progress to degree.
- Members are to email the questions they would like included in the survey to Chair Scheibner.
- GC analyst will ask the graduate student guests for their documents that they shared during today's meeting to share with GC members (received, available [here](#)).

VI. 4+1 Blended Degree Programs – Chair Scheibner – 1:00pm – 1:15pm

All materials are available in our shared GC AY 22-23 box folder [here](#).

The development of a policy for reviewing and proposing 4+1 blended degree programs was discussed at the October 19, 2022 GC meeting. Registrar Webb agreed to solicit feedback from other UC campuses, available below:

- [4+1 info from other UCs](#)
- [UCR: BSMS combined 5-year approved framework](#)
- [UCR: CCGA Response UCR Combined BSc MSc](#)

- [UCR: Combine Programs Guidelines](#)

Requested Action: Members to engage in discussion and determine next steps.

Action:

- This item was tabled for the November 16 GC meeting.

VII. [Postdoctoral Scholar Support and Development](#) - 1:15pm – 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:

- This item was tabled for the November 16 GC meeting.

VIII. New Business? – 1:25pm – 1:30pm

Action:

- GC analyst will contact the two new members with information about the four GC subcommittees.