

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)**Meeting Minutes****Wednesday, November 30, 2022****12:15pm-1:30pm****ADMIN 245**

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

I. Executive Session – Voting Members Only – 12:00pm – 12:15pm

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

II. Chair’s Report – Michael Scheibner - 12:15pm – 12:20pm

A. November 18 Regular Check-in Meetings UGC Chair Moyes, VPDUE Frey, and VPDGE Hratchian

Further discussions were held regarding the strike, as well as blended degree program proposals which will be discussed later during today’s meeting (item VI.).

III. Consent Calendar – Chair Scheibner – 12:20pm – 12:25pm

A. Agenda

B. [November 16 meeting minutes](#)

Action:

- The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

IV. Proposed Guidelines to Support Pilot of Concurrent Review for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs – Chair Scheibner – 12:25pm – 12:35pm

The Periodic Review Oversight Committee (PROC) invites UGC and GC to review proposed guidelines to support a pilot of a concurrent review for an undergraduate and graduate program.

Requested Action: Members to endorse the proposed guidelines.

Chair Scheibner shared his review of the proposed guidelines and welcomed feedback from the membership. VPDGE Hratchian noted that outside reviewers are difficult to identify, and thus, recommending five reviewers may be too high. He recommended revising to four reviewers, and a member mentioned that reviewers should receive compensation. VPDGE Hratchian also stated that this proposal would benefit the entire campus educational ecosystem and assist in maintaining a holistic community. Interdisciplinary graduate programs will also still receive legitimate reviews as a truly interdisciplinary program.

Action:

- GC Analyst will incorporate members' recommended revisions to Chair Scheibner's draft comments (completed 12/1; updated version is available in Google Docs [here](#)).
- Voting members are to review the updated version of the comments and provide any additional comments **by 10:00am, Monday, December 5, 2022.**

V. Anonymous Graduate Student Survey – Chair Scheibner – 12:35pm – 12:55pm

During the November 9 GC meeting, two graduate students discussed the impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic, BSP building shutdown, and the Oracle Ordering System have had on their research and progress to degree. Members agreed to develop an anonymous survey for other graduate students to indicate the impacts that these three things have had on their research and progress to degree.

Member Arevalo proposed several questions, available [here](#).

Requested Action: Members to discuss and recommend additional questions to include in the survey.

Members discussed and recommended the following revisions to member Arevalo's list of survey questions:

- Revise question 2 to include more options because there are many barriers other than the COVID-19 pandemic and the BSP building shutdown that have impacted students' progress to degree.
- Make clear that this survey is soliciting feedback related to campus issues, not personal issues.
- A question asking if students have changed research groups because of the impacts they listed in question 2.
- Rephrase question 4 to "does your dissertation research require access to a physical location on campus?"
- Add a question asking students if they have discussed their research delays with a PhD advisor and/or the Doctoral Committee.
- Add a question regarding the Oracle Ordering System.
- Revise question 8 into separate questions because a student may want to strengthen their CV for reasons other than because of the time lost due to the pandemic. Add a question: "Are you considering delaying your graduation to recover from the time lost due to the pandemic, Oracle System, the BSP building shutdown, etc.?" → "If yes, are you considering delaying your graduation to strengthen your CV?" → "If yes, how long are you considering delaying your graduation?". Another recommendation to add, "Are you delaying your graduation because your dissertation cannot be completed until you complete additional research?"
- Change "BSP building" to indicate any buildings.
- It may be helpful to add a question to inquire how many graduate students are seeking an academic career versus an industry career.
- Add a closing question, "Do you have any feedback/comments/suggestions?"

A member inquired about GC's use of the received feedback. Chair Scheibner explained that this data will inform GC of the impacts on the graduate students' careers and progress to degree from their point of view. GC can then funnel the information to higher levels on campus to provide them the opportunity to implement mitigation measures. Another recommendation was made to collect information on what program and how far into a program students are, since the impacts might be more profound to students

closer to completion of their degree. Another member recommended sending the survey in Spring 2023 after the strike is resolved. Lastly, members agreed to include both Ph.D. and Master students.

Action:

- Member Arevalo will incorporate members’ recommended revisions to the current list of questions and send them to the GC Analyst.
- GC Analyst will invite voting members to review the updated list of questions and to provide any additional questions or comments.

VI. 4+1 Blended Degree Programs – Chair Scheibner – 12:55pm – 1:10pm

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

At the November 16, 2022 GC meeting, members discussed and proposed revisions to the Procedures for Submitting Proposals for Graduate Emphasis Areas and Graduate Programs. A revised version is available [here](#).

Members also recommended revisions to the draft policy for 4+1 blended program proposals, and an updated version is appended to the Procedures for Submitting Proposals for Graduate Emphasis Areas and Graduate Programs (page 7).

Requested Action: Members to endorse the draft policy for 4+1 blended program proposals and the revised Procedures for Submitting Proposals for Graduate Emphasis Areas and Graduate Programs.

Chair Scheibner discussed his proposed revisions to the Procedures for Submitting Proposals for Graduate Emphasis Areas and Graduate Programs, noting the following:

- Removed language related to the Interim Individual Graduate Program.
- Added a cross reference to the 4+1 Blended Degree Program policy, as well included the drafted policy as an appendix.
- Removed language related to proposing a new emphasis.

Members recommended the following additional revisions:

- Include a link to the policy on the Senate website re: Process for Establishing Concentrations and Designated Emphasis within Graduate Degree Programs.
- Revise the “grc” references to “gc”.
- Remove the “five-year” reference on page 5.
- Instead of naming the policy “4+1 Blended Degree Programs”, consider renaming it “Hybrid Undergraduate/Graduate Degree Programs”.

Action:

- GC Analyst will incorporate members’ recommended revisions to the Procedures for Submitting Proposals for Graduate Emphasis Areas and Graduate Programs (completed 12/1; updated version is available on Google Docs [here](#)).
- Members are to review the revised Procedures for Submitting Proposals for Graduate Emphasis Areas and Graduate Programs and add any additional recommended revisions **by 10:00am, Monday, December 5, 2022.**

VII. VPDGE Hratchian’s Report – 1:10pm – 1:25pm

VPDGE Hratchian reported that the UC has reached a tentative agreement with the postdocs’ and academic researchers’ sections of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Union. The agreement, if and when ratified, stipulates that the raises will be implemented by April 2023. Postdocs and academic researchers may stop striking once the contract is ratified; however, they may continue to sympathy strike. VPDGE Hratchian has not received a hard copy of the salaries; however, he mentioned that the negotiations always appear larger than they are. It is important to note that there have been zero discussions regarding a pool to support budget shortfalls. VPDGE Hratchian and Chair Scheibner plan to collaborate with Senate Chair LiWang to circulate language regarding guidance related to grading and graduate student enrollment.

A. Funding guarantees

There are several students who have passed their funding guarantee (120 out of 700 students). VPDGE Hratchian plans to work closely with students who are significantly past their funding guarantee, and the large number suggests that the Graduate Division should revisit funding guarantees because it appears that the current timeline is too narrow.

B. Graduate group restructuring proposal

VPDGE Hratchian will bring to a future GC meeting, a discussion regarding the differentiation of vertically aligned programs and truly interdisciplinary programs. VPDGE Hratchian would like to help Graduate Division resourcing better support truly interdisciplinary programs, and he would like the vertically aligned programs to begin working with their associated departments to build a campus ecosystem and a sense of holistic community at UC Merced.

VIII. Any Other Business? – 1:25pm – 1:30pm

Chair Scheibner asked the membership if anyone is available to attend the 9:00am CAB meeting on Friday, December 2, 2022, and report back to GC. Member Lee volunteered, and the GC analyst will provide him with additional information.

Registrar Webb announced that the Registrar’s Academic Calendar included incorrect dates for spring break. She realized spring break should be scheduled for the last week of March to align with UC Berkeley’s calendar. She confirmed that the correct dates are now reflected on the Registrar’s website and in the University Catalog.