

**Admissions and Financial Aid Committee (AFAC)****Meeting Minutes****Thursday, March 16, 2023****10:30am – 12:00pm****I. Consent Calendar – Chair Eaton – 10:30am – 10:35am**

A. The Agenda

B. [February 9 Meeting Minutes](#)**Action:**

- The Consent Calendar was approved as presented.

**II. Chair's Report – Chair Eaton – 10:35am – 10:45am**

A. March 6 and 13 Divisional Council Meetings

- The Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA) shared their report on the Gallo School of Management pre-proposal, and DivCo is determining next steps. One of the initial concerns about the pre-proposal was that it would substantially diminish the size of SSHA, which would make it difficult for the School to remain functional. A new working group has been formed, in which members are collaborating to make changes to the existing Policies and Procedures for the creation of new Schools.
- DivCo endorsed a memo from CAPRA to EVC/Provost Camfield and Chancellor Muñoz advocating for departmental staffing across campus.
- Professor Yeakel shared a document containing anonymous anecdotes from faculty and staff about the campus financial systems crisis. EVC Provost Camfield and Chancellor Muñoz confirmed that action will take place to solve these issues; however, it is unclear what the action will be.

B. March 3 BOARS Meeting

- The main discussion that took place at BOARS was in regard to the A-G Ethnic Studies Requirement, which will be discussed during today's meeting with the BOARS Work Group leads.
- Chair Eaton reported on his February 27 meeting with Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Schnier, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (VCSA) Nies, and Senate Chair LiWang to discuss AFAC's institutional debt recommendations. DivCo unanimously endorsed the recommendations, and CFO Schnier and VCSA Nies supported moving forward with implementation. The Associated Students of UC Merced (ASUCM) also endorsed the recommendations, and Chancellor Muñoz will also need to weigh in.

- Chair Eaton reported that 11,000 individuals joined the Public Student Loan Forgiveness (PLSF) campaign, of which 8,000 enrolled in October. It is important to note that applications were accepted when submitted to an individual's employer, not when employer certification was received.

**III. Campus Review Item – [Proposal for a B.A. in Data Science and Analytics](#) – Joel Spencer - 10:45am – 11:00am**

The proposal was distributed to the Chairs of Senate Committees, the SNS Executive Committee, and the SSHA Executive Committee. The policy governing the review and approval of Undergraduate Degree Programs is available [here](#).

**Lead Reviewer:** Joel Spencer

Lead reviewer's draft memo is available [here](#).

Institutional Research & Reporting Manager Gary Lowe provided IRDS data and analysis for majors and minors, available [here](#).

**Requested Action:** Members discuss the proposal and lead reviewer's assessment. If no additional comments, members vote to endorse the draft memo.

**Deadline for comments to the Senate Chair: Friday, March 24, 2023.**

Member Spencer summarized his draft memo. Chair Eaton agreed with the points raised and shared his concerns regarding faculty lines. The new major would require one faculty member per 28 students, and Chair Eaton believes the proposers should specify where the new faculty lines would derive from - via enrollment-declines in another major or new faculty lines.

Another comment Chair Eaton shared was regarding AFAC's final decision on the proposal. AFAC is not required to endorse the proposal contingent upon the proposers addressing AFAC's concerns. AFAC can choose to not endorse the proposal until a revised proposal is received addressing AFAC's concerns. The Undergraduate Council (UGC) ultimately has the authority to approve or reject all new major/minor proposals. AFAC's comments are shared with UGC prior to their final decision, so if AFAC clearly articulates that they do not approve the proposal, hopefully UGC will take that into consideration when making their final decision.

**Action:**

- Member Spencer's draft memo was approved pending the revisions noted during the meeting regarding faculty lines and that AFAC does not approve the proposal until their concerns are addressed.
- Member Spencer will revise the memo accordingly and consult with Chair Eaton and Member Cleary.
- AFAC Analyst will transmit the final memo to Senate Chair LiWang.

**IV. Consultation with BOARS Work Group Leads – A-G Ethnic Studies Requirement – 11:00am – 11:35am**

During the February 9 AFAC meeting, member Doshi provided a brief update on the A-G Ethnic Studies Requirement. Leads from the BOARS Work Group are joining the meeting today for further discussion. Their working draft FAQs are available [here](#).

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

BOARS Work Group Leads Christine Hong and Wallace Cleaves, and BOARS Analyst Ken Feer, joined the meeting to provide additional information on the fourth draft of the A -G Ethnic Studies Requirement proposal, available [here](#). This draft is a very strong and thorough version. The work group leads have visited five UC campuses to discuss the most recent version of the proposal and the benefits of offering ethnic studies courses at high schools.

BOARS initially convened a work group of 20 Ethnic Studies scholars and experts, of which 6 members were charged with creating a document known as course criteria, which accompanies the A – G and new Area H. The A – G/H implementation team has been tasked with finalizing the course criteria and advancing the draft to the next steps in the process. [AB 101](#), which mandates the ethnic studies requirement, has been met by different schools throughout the State of California through Area G, which is the elective, and through courses such as History, Social Sciences, and English Language Arts. It is the responsibility of the University of California to develop a curriculum for Area H that is developmentally significant in the education of all students, not just minority students.

BOARS Work Group Lead Hong shared the new definition of ethnic studies: “Ethnic studies is the critical, interdisciplinary, comparative/relational, and local/national/transnational study of formations of race, ethnicity, and indigeneity, as well as structures of power. It focuses on the histories, lived experiences, and epistemologies of Indigenous peoples and people of color through a lens attentive to gender, sexuality, class, and other intersectionalities. Grounded in a structural critique of racism and a commitment to social transformation, ethnic studies is aimed at producing critical knowledge about power, inequality, and inequity as well as the efforts of marginalized and oppressed racialized peoples to challenge systemic violence and the institutional structures that perpetuate racial injustice” (page 4). There are many different forms of racism, in which not everyone will be satisfied. However, there is flexibility in a structural critique of racism that enables localized specific versions and developments of different kinds of ethnic studies courses as an area of study.

A member inquired about the current barriers and how AFAC can support the proposal moving forward in the process. BOARS Work Group Lead Hong noted the political interference, but that studies have shown ethnic studies courses to boost the overall academic performance of all students, not just the minorities. BOARS Work Group Lead Cleaves concluded that the resistance is from the Regents, as they view the new requirement as a barrier to access into the University of California. AFAC’s role in

supporting this proposal is to convey that having a robust Area H requirement will benefit the entirety of the student population. Chair Eaton recommended AFAC consult with DivCo on their final support memo prior to transmittal to BOARS.

**Action:**

- Member Doshi will draft a memo to BOARS regarding AFAC's support of Area H in the A-G Ethnic Studies Requirement.
- AFAC Analyst will consult with Executive Director Fatima Paul for 10 minutes on the April 3 DivCo meeting agenda to provide an update on this topic (completed 3/17).

- V. **Dual Admissions Program** – Dustin Noji and Ruben Lubers – 11:35am – 11:45am  
The Dual Admissions Program is scheduled to be implemented this Spring for Fall 2023 applicants. The program is a pilot undergraduate transfer pathway targeted at ineligible freshman applicants. Students in the program will receive a conditional offer of admission to one UC campus as a transfer student and preliminary financial aid information.

The Office of Admissions would like to confirm with AFAC which academic programs should be available to students who opt into UC Merced Dual Admissions Program.

**Requested Action:** Members are to determine which programs to include in the Dual Admissions Program, and to inform their departments and schools of the program and admissions commitments to future terms being made based on the present TAG criteria. AFAC can choose to limit majors available to Dual Admissions participants, which will need to be sent to UCOP by April 1, 2023.

Dual Admissions is a program being implemented this year to provide students who are not admissible to UC an option to transfer to a UC campus. The program includes a set of criteria by the participating TAG campuses to guarantee their admission to a UC campus, potentially 2 - 3 years from now. The difference between this program and TAG is that students would be grandfathered into the program because departmental TAG criteria may change in 2 – 3 years from now, and the students would be admitted under this year's TAG criteria.

UCOP has asked if there are academic majors or programs that UC Merced does not want to make available for the Dual Admissions Program. Director Noji asked AFAC members which majors they would like to make available to students opting into the Dual Admissions Program and which majors members would like to refrain from allowing students to enter into. Director Noji recommended that AFAC include any of the TAG programs that are currently open available to Dual Admission students. Public Health, Literatures in English, Bioengineering, Civil Engineering are several programs that do not currently offer TAG at UC Merced.

**Action:**

- AFAC approved inclusion in the Dual Admissions Program all majors that currently use TAG criteria.
- AFAC Analyst will notify Director Noji.
- A discussion will take place at a future AFAC meeting regarding TAG criteria for the current majors who do not have it.

**VI. Academic Activity Tracking – Chair Eaton - 11:45am – 11:55pm**

Follow-up on options for additional automated academic activity tracking using grade functions in CatCourses.

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

Chair Eaton and Financial Aid Director Ron Radney have corresponded via email regarding the tracking of student academic activity. VCSA Nies will schedule a meeting with the new Chief Information Officer Nick Dugan to continue this discussion, and Chair Eaton would like a member from AFAC to join him in the discussion.

**Action:**

- Member Yarra agreed to join the meeting with Chair Eaton, Director Radney, CFO Schnier, VCSA Nies, and the new Chief Information Officer Nick Dugan to discuss student academic activity.

**VII. Any Other Business – 11:55am – 12:00pm**

Chair Eaton and member Yarra agreed to swap the review of the major/minor proposals they are currently leading the review for because Chair Eaton has a potential conflict of interest with Environmental Humanities.

**Action:**

- Member Yarra agreed to lead the review of the proposal for a [SSHA B.A. Degree and Minor in Environmental Humanities](#).
- Chair Eaton agreed to lead the review of the [SSHA Cognitive & Information Sciences Honors Program](#).

**VIII. Informational Items** will be regularly uploaded on the “Informational Items” AFAC Box Folder [here](#).