

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 14, 2024
11:30am – 12:40pm
COB 2 - 392

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

I. Consent Calendar – Chair Scheibner – 11:30am – 11:35am

- A. Agenda
- B. [February 29 Meeting Minutes](#)

Action:

- The agenda and February 29 meeting minutes were approved as presented.
- GC Analyst will update the Senate website accordingly.

C. Petitions for Graduate Students to Teach Upper Division Courses

[Lee,Sejin PSY 162 202420](#)
[Fish,Adi PSY 120 202420](#)
[McAnally,Kaylyn PSY120 202420](#)
[Zoe,Griffith PSY156 202420](#)
[Meese,Will PSY160 202420](#)

Action:

- The five SSHA petitions were approved.
- Chair Scheibner will sign the petitions, and GC Analyst will transmit them to VPDGE Hratchian.

II. Chair’s Report – Michael Scheibner – 11:35am – 11:50am**A. March 6 CCGA Meeting**

- Chair Tantillo reported on a challenging Federal law that affects undocumented students, both undergraduate and graduate, and it was suggested that the students enroll in experiential learning in lab courses during the summer. UCOP has allocated funding to support the implementation phase.
- Vice Chair Bisley reported on graduate school application fees and whether they should be increased. UC Merced application fees are higher compared to other campuses; however, waivers are still offered.
- UC campuses are losing the unlimited Google accounts; however, this does not impact UC Merced.
- Director of Graduate Studies Pamela Jennings mentioned that invitations will be sent for the Grad Slam, which will take place May 3, 2024. Her office is also providing three years of funding from California lottery funds to support UC LEADS and Cal-Bridge.
- President Drake announced a new systemwide Office of Civil Rights.
- CSU campuses have been allowed to offer doctoral degrees. UCOP is working to

implement a process whereby the CSUs cannot duplicate the doctoral programs and create more competition between the CSU and UC systems.

B. March 7 TAS Budget Work Group Meeting

A meeting took place this morning and last Thursday, March 7, 2024. Members are creating a list of recommendations, which will be shared with the faculty.

C. March 11 DivCo Meeting

- Interim EVC/Provost Zatz provided an update on the several Dean searches. On-campus interviews will take place soon.
- Senate Chair Hibbing mentioned the systemwide review item - Proposed Academic Senate Statement on UC Quality. Chair Scheibner would like for GC to opine on this item, which will be further discussed during today's meeting (item VI).
- Members discussed the “campus experience” requirement (Senate Regulation 630.E.), which is connected to online education and the importance of face-to-face instruction.
- The Interim SSHA Dean is working on the SSHA restructuring and the next draft of the plan will likely be a proposed two-division structure.
- Chancellor Muñoz joined the meeting and announced the groundbreaking for the Medical Education building will be held on May 14, 2024. He also reported on future campus projects including the Promise Housing Residence Hall, COB 3, and the Field Education Center. The Field Education Center will be constructed near the site of the old barn and the goal is to have the Field Education Center ready for use by Fall 2024. The Chancellor informed Divisional Council members that adjacent to the Field Education Center, he would like to build an observatory.
- The Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) recommended to call back funds from UC Merced, and Chancellor Muñoz stated his intention to try to avoid this. The new housing project and COB 3 are tentative. While the San Joaquin Valley is well-represented by lawmakers in the state legislature, there is a chance the campus’s future plans will be negatively impacted by state budget constraints.
- ASUCM President Craven joined the DivCo meeting to report that the number of student clubs on campus have doubled and the student newspaper will resume.

III. Updated Draft Academic Senate Handbook on University Extension – Jennifer Howell – 11:50am – 12:00pm

Dean of University Extension Annette Roberts Webb, Director of University Extension Michael Pierick, and Associate Dean of University Extension Fanis Tsoulouhas joined the January 18, 2024 GC meeting to discuss the draft Academic Senate Handbook on University Extension.

On February 13, 2024, GC, UGC Chair Viney, Senate Executive Director Paul, and ALO Martin offered comments on the draft handbook, available [here](#).

On March 1, 2024, Director of University Extension Roberts Webb provided an updated draft handbook, available in tracked changes and clean versions [here](#).

Requested Action: Members discuss the updated draft Academic Senate Handbook on University

Extension. If there are no further comments, voting members vote to approve the draft handbook.

Member Howell reported that University Extension implemented all of GC’s recommended revisions to the draft handbook, specifically GC’s role in the approval of courses. Extension clarified that they follow the existing procedures for approval of courses, so Extension graduate courses will come to GC for review. They have also included links throughout the document and implemented UGC’s, Senate Executive Director Paul’s, and ALO Martin’s recommendations. Member Howell recommended approval.

GC Analyst mentioned UGC’s additional comment, which was in regards to the review of certificate programs and asking Extension to include interested parties, including the Academic Senate, to whom the written reports will be transmitted. GC members had no concerns about this additional revision, as it would not impact GC.

Action:

- Voting members voted and approved the updated draft handbook (8 members in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 1 member not present during voting).
- GC Analyst will notify Director of University Extension Annette Robert Webb.

IV. Graduate Students Teaching Graduate Students Policy – 12:00pm – 12:15pm

At the February 1 and 15 GC meetings, members further discussed under which conditions to grant exceptions for qualified PhD students to teach graduate courses.

Vice Chair Abatzoglou and VPDGE Hratchian provided additional revisions. Senate Executive Director Paul and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Cisneros were also invited to review the proposed revisions. All proposed revisions are available in tracked changes, [here](#).

Requested Action: Members review the additional proposed revisions. If there are no further recommended revisions, voting members vote to approve the proposed revisions.

Vice Chair Abatzoglou summarized his, Executive Director Paul’s, and Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Cisneros’ additional edits to the policy. Members discussed and recommended the following additional revisions:

- Separate the first enumeration into two separate items (both sections).
- Remove “than” in item 4 (first section).
- Add language in item 5 (second section) stating that if the instructor or record is not a Senate faculty member, a petition for how the TA would be supervised must be filed with GC for approval.

Action:

- Members recommended the following additional edits outlined above.
- Vice Chair Abatzoglou will work with Chair Scheibner on the additional revisions.
- Voting members will be invited to review the final draft policy.

V. VPDGE Hratchian’s Report – 12:15pm – 12:35pm

A. Admissions

Grad Visitation weekend was successful. 120 students visited UC Merced over the last two weeks, and there was great staff and faculty engagement. Grad Visitation Weekend will take place at El Capitan Hotel next year.

UC Merced has received a total of 1,218 graduate applications - approximately 1,000 Ph.D. and 175 master's, resulting in a 19% increase this year. As of today, March 14, 2024, there has been 245 admissions and 73 SIRs (up by 16% this year). VPDGE Hratchian anticipates a class of approximately 115 - 125 incoming doctoral students, which results in approximately 3% lower than last year.

B. Grad Enrollment Management

VPDGE Hratchian has been invited to the Chancellor's Cabinet meeting in May to provide an overview on UC Merced's enrollment management strategy, and he would like to practice his presentation with GC members at an upcoming GC meeting. VPDGE Hratchian has been looking at several different enrollment models for continuing to grow efficiently.

C. Five-year Planning Perspectives

New graduate degree programs should only be reviewed by CCGA if they are included in the five-year plan. VPDGE Hratchian noted that this document has not been followed, and Chair Scheibner confirmed that CCGA members have not referred to this document during their review of new graduate programs.

There are several forthcoming graduate program proposals at UC Merced, which will be included in the five-year planning perspectives, and GC will be asked to review.

D. Grad Funding

The Graduate Division is collecting data from other UC campuses for their ratio of graduate students supported by GSR versus TA/TF versus internal/external fellowships. Data from the NSF's National Survey of Earned Doctorates suggests that UC Merced is behind on GSRs. VPDGE Hratchian will keep GC apprised.

VPDGE Hratchian plans on sharing a memo, in collaboration with ORED, regarding a current policy that states that if a GSR is placed on an extramurally funded grant that has full indirect and charges on it, that the Graduate Division will provide a 20 or 25% tuition reduction. He would like to do away with this policy and redirect the funds to the graduate groups that are generating those GSRs, and let the graduate groups decide how to allocate that funding. The money that the Graduate Division receives each year does not carry forward, so throughout the year, the unit saves conservatively and ends up having remaining funds that get swept. VPDGE Hratchian is looking at incentive structures at other UC campuses to better estimate the amount of funding that can be utilized each year.

VI. Any Other Business – 12:35pm - 12:40pm

A. Systemwide Review Items

- a. [Proposed Academic Senate Statement on UC Quality](#)

Action:

- GC is not a lead reviewer, but Chair Scheibner would like to opine.
- Members are to send their comments to GC Analyst **by Wednesday, March 27, 2024.**

b. [Senate Regulation 424.A.3 \(Area H\)](#)**Action (Optional):**

- GC is not a lead reviewer, but members are welcome to comment.
Members are to send any comments to GC Analyst **by Wednesday, March 27, 2024.**

VII. Executive Session – Voting Members Only – 12:40pm – 1:00pm

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