

Undergraduate Council (UGC)

Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 16, 2024
1:00pm – 2:30pm

Zoom Information:

<https://ucmerced.zoom.us/j/84154985472>

Meeting ID: 841 5498 5472

One tap mobile: +16694449171,,84154985472# US

I. Consent Calendar – 1:00pm – 1:05pm

- A. The Agenda
- B. [April 2 Meeting Minutes](#)

Action:

- Members are to let UGC Analyst know of any revisions to the April 2 meeting minutes **by 5:00pm, Friday, April 19, 2024**. Otherwise, they will be considered approved, and will be posted on the Senate website along with the April 16 agenda.

II. Chair’s Report – Christopher Viney – 1:05pm – 1:10pm

- A. April 15 DivCo Meeting

DivCo had concerns related to UGC’s assessment of the Data Science and Policy Analysis Minor Proposal. The proposal will be referred to UGC for further review and revision.

- B. April 15 UCEP Meeting

- UCEP continues its discussion about proposing amendments to Senate Regulation 634 to require a 2.0 GPA, not for all the courses attempted at the university, but in a minimum of 180 units (for term-based universities) and 120 units (for semester-based universities). Chair Viney had mentioned during the April 2 UGC meeting that he would circulate an email to voting members with additional information; however, during the April 15 UCEP meeting, members agreed to pause this item.
- Members voted to approve the proposal to remove “probation” from the Regulation regarding students on academic probation, and instead use the term “academic notice”.

III. Campus and Systemwide Review Items – All – 1:10pm – 1:40pm

- A. [SNS Proposal for an Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology B.S. Degree Program](#)

The policy governing the review and approval of Undergraduate Degree Programs is

available [here](#).

Lead Reviewer: Bin Liu

Lead reviewer's draft memo and Senate Committees' comments have been shared with UGC voting members.

Requested Action: Members discuss the proposal and lead reviewer's assessment. Voting Members vote in executive session to approve the proposal if there is consensus.

Member Liu summarized his assessment highlighting the following points:

- Adequate data and thorough statistics reveal that this major would be successful at UC Merced by retaining students within the biological discipline and through its ability to bridge the gap between education and career opportunities.
- The curriculum represents similar core requirements to other successful Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB) programs; however, the inclusion of Conservation Biology is exclusive to the EECB program at UC Merced.
- The proposed program is comprised of two distinct tracks - one track focused on the foundation of quantitative knowledge, and the other a Pre-Health track that integrates additional chemistry components.
- No additional resources are required for the first four years of delivery, and the only instructional space needed is for the planning of BIO 142 - Eco-Evolutionary Genetics, which will replace the current BIO 140 – Genetics.
- The proposed program has unanimous support from the SNS Dean, relevant SNS Departments, and Life and Environmental Sciences (LES) faculty.
- Member Liu recommended approval of the proposed program.

Action:

- Voting members approved the draft memo (7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 3 members not present during time of vote).
- UGC Analyst will transmit the final memo to the Senate Chair.

B. [SSHA Proposal for a Science, Technology, and Ethics B.S. Degree Program](#)

The policy governing the review and approval of Undergraduate Degree Programs is available [here](#).

Lead Reviewer: Eileen Camfield

Lead reviewer's draft memo and Senate Committees' comments have been shared with UGC voting members.

Requested Action: Members discuss the proposal and lead reviewer's assessment. Voting Members vote in executive session to approve the proposal if there is consensus.

Member Camfield summarized her assessment highlighting the following points:

- The proposed program aims to attract students who seek to develop the skills for ethical reflection and assessment of both scientific research and technological

development.

- The proposers note that UC Merced has growing programs in Data Science, Public Health, and Environmental Science that are well positioned for engagement with an ethics-focused program, such as STE.
- The proposers did a particularly good job with the job market analysis and documenting the appeal of this new major for students.
- No additional faculty lines are being requested at this time; however, current staffing levels are being accounted for and growth is anticipated.
- There are concerns about the balance between the broad ethical side of the curriculum and the narrow Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplinary side.
- Member Camfield wondered whether students will have enough exposure to varied disciplinary topics to truly have a degree in “Science & Technology Ethics”.
- Member Camfield recommended approval of the proposed program.

Action:

- Voting members approved the draft memo (7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 3 members not present during time of vote).
- UGC Analyst will transmit the final memo to the Senate Chair.

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

The proposal was distributed to all Standing Senate Committees and School Executive Committees.

Lead Reviewer: Christopher Viney

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

Requested Action: Members discuss the proposal and lead reviewer’s assessment.

Voting Members vote in executive session to approve the lead reviewer’s draft memo if there is consensus.

Chair Viney summarized his assessment expressing his support for the proposed statement. A member commented on the language in bullet six of the draft memo: “Perform **excellently** in subsequent graduate study and other research (page 2) and recommended replacing the language with, “Excel in their performance in subsequent graduate study and other research.”

Action:

- Voting members approved the draft memo with the minor recommended revision to the language in bullet 6: “~~Perform excellently~~ [Excel in their performance] in subsequent graduate study and other research.” (7 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions, 3 members not present during time of vote).
- UGC Analyst will transmit the final memo to the Senate Chair.

IV. Approval of Courses¹ – CRF Subcommittee Members Elaine Denny, Bin Liu, Felicia Lopez, Alexander Petersen, and Greg Wright – 1:40pm – 2:00pm

Courses are available at the links below.

Action:

- The following courses were approved, and Curriculog will be updated accordingly (completed 4/16):
 1. [CSE - 157 - Signal Processing for Internet of Things](#) (new; Spring 2025)
 2. [HIST - 163 - Drunken Masters: Philosophy in East Asia](#) (new cross-listed; Fall 2024)
 3. [PHIL - 144 - Drunken Masters: Philosophy in East Asia](#) (new cross-listed; Fall 2024)

Action:

- Voting members agreed to engage in email discussion with member Petersen regarding the updated supplemental questionnaire for the following courses.
- Members agreed to provide a decision on the three courses by Monday, April 22, 2024.

The proposer's updated supplemental questionnaire is available [here](#).

4. [CRES - 011 - Climate Justice](#) (modify existing; crosslisted; Fall 2024)
5. [ESS - 011 - Climate Justice](#) (modify existing; crosslisted; Fall 2024)
6. [MIST - 011 - Climate Justice](#) (modify existing; crosslisted; Summer 2024)

Action:

- The [Online or Blended Course Approval Requests: Supplemental Questions](#), as well as Extension versus UC Online courses, was tabled for discussion at the April 30 UGC meeting.

V. Any Other Business – 2:00pm – 2:05pm

No other business was discussed.

VI. Executive Session – Voting Members Only – 2:05pm – 2:30pm

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

¹ **RECUSALS:**
Alex - MIST