

Undergraduate Council (UGC)

Meeting Minutes
Friday, October 11, 2024
2:00pm – 3:30pm
ADMIN 245

I. Consent Calendar – 2:00pm – 2:05pm

- A. The Agenda
- B. [September 27 Meeting Minutes](#)

Action:

- The agenda and September 27 meeting minutes were approved as presented, and the UGC Analyst updated the Senate website accordingly.

- C. [AY 24-25 ELWR Review Timeline](#)

Action:

- The AY 24-25 ELWR Review Timeline was approved as presented, and the General Education Coordinator was notified.

- D. [Request from SSHA for a one-day extension to UGC's October 14, 2024 deadline to submit AY 25-26 substantial Catalog revisions and major revisions to existing programs.](#)

Action:

- SSHA's request for an extension to submit AY 25-26 substantial Catalog revisions and major revisions to existing programs was approved, and the SSHA Curriculum Manager was notified.

- E. [Request from SSHA for a one-time modality exception to offer SOC 133-01, SOC 191-02, and SOC 205-01 online in Spring 2025.](#)
- F. [Request from SoE for the option to offer CSE 171 fully online from October 20, 2024 through the end of the Fall 2024 semester.](#)

Action:

- The 2 requests for exceptions were approved as presented, and the respective Curriculum Managers were notified.

II. Chair's Report – Chair Sharping – 2:05pm – 2:20pm

- A. October 7 DivCo Meeting

- The UC Regents approved the policy for the acquisition of military grade equipment for several campuses' police departments, including UC Merced.

- The current year’s budget is fairly positive; however, next year there will potentially be a cut depending on the state budget.
- Enrollment is flat; numbers are slightly down this year compared to previous years.
- Capital projects: members discussed the medical education building and upcoming COB 3 building.
- EVC/Provost Dumont reported on several planned events on campus to mark the anniversary of the escalation of violence in the Middle East, including a vigil and a protest. There is also a Demonstration Response Team who received de-escalation training from the National Conflict Resolution Center during the Summer.
- The Library reduced their Saturday opening hours and late weekday hours but plans to restore those beginning November 2 for exams. In the Spring, the Library will resume all normal operating hours.
- The Fiscal Year 2025 budget memo was released. There is funding for teaching releases, expansion of support staff in the Schools, faculty hiring (including two assistant professors FTE lines in the School of Engineering), chemical engineering lab renovation, and staff salary equity increases across all academic affairs units including the Schools.
- Members unanimously approved the renaming of University Extension to the “Division of Professional and Continuing Education (PACE)”.
- Interim VCSA O’Bruba reported on furniture options for outdoor spaces. Hammocks have been added to the Quad, and string lights are forthcoming.

B. October 7 UCEP Meeting

Academic Council Chair Steven Cheung reported the following:

- Health Enterprise Growth – there is a desire to expand UC-related health services into underserved regions.
- Various senior administrative searches - President Drake is stepping down and there will be a search for his replacement, and there are several Chancellor searches due to retirements. The UCSD Chancellor search concluded and the UCD Chancellor search is upcoming.
- Various task forces and workgroups – Online Instruction Task Force, building upon the existing Modalities Task Force; Expressive Activities Task Force; and a Graduate Education Work Group.
- Discussions related to a remuneration study for faculty compensation.
- Recommendation to revise the Compendium, which is a collection of policies. Over the years, policies have been revised, so the Compendium must be updated to reflect the current policies.
- UCEP priorities:
 - Student preparedness post-COVID
 - Academic Integrity and AI (a list of definitions for AI might be helpful)
 - Normalization of course units
 - Undergraduate facilitated instruction policies (policy/guidelines for learning assistance and growing capacity)

C. October 7 UC Online Advisory Committee

Chair Sharping is the UCEP representative on the UC Online Advisory Committee, which will meet three times this academic year.

Members discussed strategic planning and implementation, cross cross-campus instructional funding, online education goals, and grant opportunities and resources.

Jay also mentioned UC Online:

“UC Online has suffered from mismanagement, leading to lack of clear vision and direction, and its creation is motivated more by political consideration than by educational need. As a result, it is unlikely to align with either faculty or student priorities, raising concerns about its ability to develop into a platform that effectively serves the academic community”.

III. UGC AY 24-25 Priorities – 2:20pm – 2:35pm

A. Consultation with Associate Dean of Students Le’Trice Curl - Academic Integrity –Academic Integrity

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities’ Academic Honesty Policy is available [here](#). The AY 23-24 UGC membership discussed using [UCI’s policy](#) as a template to consider designing a Senate Academic Integrity Policy.

Requested Action: Members engage in discussion and determine whether a Senate policy for academic integrity should be developed.

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) oversees both student academic and social behavioral conduct, as well as student of concern work, at UC Merced. The OSRR is governed by the [Academic Honesty Policy](#); however, this policy has not been updated since the campus opened. Dean Curl recommended UGC review the policy to ensure it aligns with current best practices and the needs of both students and faculty.

Dean Curl discussed the process by which academic integrity violations are addressed at UC Merced:

- 1. Determination of Violation:** Faculty assesses and identifies the violation.
- 2. Consequences:** Faculty decides the outcome, which may include assigning a zero on an assignment, requiring the student to retake an exam or redo work, or failing the student in the course.
- 3. Clear Communication:** Faculty should clearly communicate the nature of the violation to the student, ensuring they understand what occurred and the rationale behind the decision.
- 4. Opportunity to Respond:** Providing the student with a chance to present their

side of the story is crucial for fairness. This can help clarify misunderstandings and ensure that all perspectives are considered.

5. **Reporting:** Faculty report the incident to the OSRR, providing the student's name, supporting documentation, and details of the incident. The incident is also reported to the relevant School Dean.
6. **Appeal Process:** Students have 10 days to appeal the faculty's decision. The Dean or their designate reviews the case and can either uphold the original decision, modify the outcome, or overturn the decision. The School Dean makes the final decision. The OSRR also meets with the student because, although the OSRR cannot make final decisions about grades, they can make determinations about student conduct status, which faculty cannot. The faculty only looks at the individual student incident, whereas the OSRR reviews the student's entire conduct record to help determine the type of sanction.

This process emphasizes fairness and due process for students while maintaining academic integrity. Dean Curl emphasized the importance of offering resources for students to understand academic integrity, such as workshops or materials, which could prevent violations from occurring in the first place.

Dean Curl noted that the number of cases has remained elevated, particularly over the past few years, because of Chegg.com and ChatGPT. It is impacting the ability to evaluate student progress and student learning, and the OSRR does not dictate how that happens. Dean Curl did note, however, that there is dramatic under reporting of incidents of academic integrity because faculty are often afraid of potential sanctions for the student or do not want to ruin a student's career. Dean Curl clarified that the OSRR informs the faculty that in most cases they are issuing a warning to the student and connecting them to campus resources. 99% of cases are handled through the OSRR via an informal process.

Dean Curl emphasized the importance of clearly stating what is expected of students in the syllabus. She suggested including more parameters around the use of AI and third-party resources. She also recommended providing the faculty with more information and education about process, providing due process rights for the students, because many faculty are unaware that they must inform the student that they have ten days to appeal once a decision is made.

A consultant shared information about a tutorial the Library collaborated on with OSRR & the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning (CETL) on academic integrity, which mentions generative AI:
<https://library.ucmerced.edu/news/2024/catcourses-module-empowers-students-develop-academic-integrity>. This was developed primarily for Spark courses; however, it is available via Canvas Commons for anyone to pull into their course sites. Students do not know what "academic integrity" means and may be unaware of UC policies. It was suggested to find a way to deliver content like this to all incoming students via a standardized orientation experience.

Additional information for addressing AI in courses & syllabi can be found here:
<https://teach.ucmerced.edu/generative-AI-syllabus>.

Action:

- Members agreed to implement some version of an update, whether to syllabi and a centralized location for each of the School's syllabi, or to the existing [academic honesty policy](#).
- VPDUE Bergerson will touch base with Chair Sharping after her meeting with Vice Chancellor and Chief Information Officer Nick Dugan to discuss this topic.
- Further discussion will take place at a future UGC meeting.

B. UC Merced policies for minors and double majors

During the September 13, 2024 UGC meeting, members discussed [PROC's memo](#), which recommended a review of UC Merced's current policies. Chair Sharping and Vice Chair Gutierrez will meet with the School Advising Directors on October 18, 2024. Further discussion will take place during the October 25, 2024 UGC meeting.

No Requested Action.

C. End of Term Policy

This item will be discussed during a November UGC meeting following consultation with the Policy Subcommittee.

No Requested Action.

IV. VPDUE Bergerson's Report – 2:35pm – 2:45pm

A. Guidance on student absence due to illness

Action:

- This item was tabled for the October 25 UGC meeting.

V. Catalog Review Committee – 2:50pm – 2:55pm

Substantive Catalog revisions are due October 14, 2024 and will be shared with the Catalog Review Committee. Catalog updates are effective Fall 2025.

Requested Action: Establish a UGC Catalog Review Committee (representation from each school). Once all Catalog sections are received, the Catalog Subcommittee will provide its recommendations on the AY 25-26 Catalog Updates. UGC will review and approve the Catalog Updates at the November 22 UGC meeting.

Action:

- Chair Sharping (SNS) and members Santosh Chandrasekhar and Lindsay Crawford volunteered to lead the review of the AY 25-26 Catalog revisions.
- Following the October 14, 2024 deadline, the UGC Analyst will share the Catalog revisions with the review committee.
- The AY 25-26 Catalog revisions will be reviewed and voted on at the November 8 UGC meeting.

VI. Systemwide Review Items – 2:45pm – 3:00pm

A. [Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 479 \(Cal-GETC\)](#)

The proposed revisions aim to enhance transfer student preparedness, especially in high-unit majors where [Associate Degrees for Transfer \(ADTs\)](#) that fully align with [UC's Transfer Pathways](#) have not yet been developed because including the essential courses for UC major preparation would exceed the state-legislated ADT unit cap (60 maximum lower-division units).

Lead Reviewer: Jay Sharping

Members were invited to review the draft memo via Google Forms. The draft memo, which includes all comments, is available [here](#).

Chair Sharping summarized the proposed revisions noting the two meaningful changes:

1. (Page 7, B5) Subject Area 5: Physical and Biological Sciences. The previous requirement stated that one of the two courses they needed to take was a Physical Science course and the other one a Biological Science course, with at least one including a laboratory. The proposed revision states that the two courses must be from two distinct disciplines. It could still be Biological Sciences and Physical Science, but it needs to be two of them, with at least one still including a laboratory.
2. (Page 7, D2): Changing the maximum number of general education courses from 2 to 4 that prospective transfer students are allowed to defer until UC enrollment.

Chair Sharping believes the two proposed changes aim to provide more flexibility for transfer students and recommended approval.

Action:

- Voting members were invited on October 11, 2024 to vote on the draft memo via email (**Deadline: 10:00am, Wednesday, October 16, 2024**).
- UGC Analyst will transmit the final memo to the Senate Chair by October 25, 2024.

B. [Proposed New Senate Regulation 627 \(Posthumous Awarding of Degrees\)](#)

The regulation introduces a Senate policy to govern the awarding of undergraduate

and graduate degrees to students who pass away prior to their completion of the degree.

Lead Reviewer: Jay Sharping

Members were invited to review the draft memo via Google Forms. The draft memo, which includes all comments, is available [here](#).

Chair Sharping summarized his assessment noting that he welcomes the clarification of a policy regarding conferral of posthumous degrees. The UC Merced policy is available [here](#).

Chair Sharping explained that much of the language is the same between the two documents. The first paragraph is about sympathy and compassion for students and families associated with those who have passed away, and there are three rules located near the bottom of the document.

Members agreed that not including a deadline to make a request for the awarding of the degree is a good thing. It should remain open-ended, and the review process will determine if the request is valid.

Members also agreed on a minor revision to UC Merced’s policy to change “The Division of Student Affairs” to “The University Registrar” under item 2 of the Procedures regarding who will review the student’s academic record.

Action:

- Voting members were invited on October 11, 2024 to vote on the draft memo via email (**Deadline: 10:00am, Wednesday, October 16, 2024**).
- UGC Analyst will transmit the final memo to the Senate Chair by October 25, 2024.

VII. [Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation II.3.A \(Academic Probation\)](#) – Chair Sharping – 3:00pm – 3:10pm

The Committee on Rules and Elections (CRE) transmitted a memo to UGC on October 4, 2024 with a request to review proposed revisions to Senate Regulation II.3.A (Academic Probation) to replace “probation” with “academic notice” to align with the [recent amendments to the Systemwide Regulations 900 and 902](#).

Members reviewed the proposed revisions and did not have any concerns.

Action:

- Voting members were invited on October 11, 2024 to vote on the proposed revisions via email (**Deadline: 10:00am, Wednesday, October 16, 2024**).
- UGC Analyst will notify CRE Chair Yoshimi following the closing of the vote.

VIII. Approval of Courses¹ – Santosh Chandrasekhar, Haiyan Liu, and Maria Zoghbi - 3:10pm – 3:20pm**Action:**

- The following courses were approved, and Curriculog will be updated accordingly (completed 10/11)
 1. [CHE - 151 - Unit Operations Lab II](#) (new; Fall 2025)
 2. [COGS - 174 - Cultural Evolution](#) (new; Fall 2025)
 1. [CRES - 148 - Crossing Borders in Africa](#) (new; crosslisted with HIST 148; Fall 2025)
 2. [HIST - 148 - Crossing Borders in Africa](#) (new; crosslisted with HIST 148; Spring 2025)
 3. [CSE - 001 - Introduction to Computer Science](#) (new; Fall 2025)
 4. [BIO - 170 – Neurobiology](#) (modify existing; Fall 2025)
 5. [EE - 060 - Boolean Algebra and Digital Circuits](#) (modify existing; Fall 2025)
 6. [EE - 131 - Power Electronics](#) (modify existing; Fall 2025)
 7. [USTU 15 – Living Learning Community: Pathways to Student Success](#) (new; Spring 2025)
 8. [USTU 16 – Living Learning Community: Pathways to Student Success](#) (new; Spring 2025)

Members discussed several concerns they had about MATH 155:

- The course overlaps with NSED courses and this should be addressed in the proposal.
- The course is missing 3 contact/non-contact hours for it to be considered a 4-unit course (based on my interpretation of the guidelines).
- Being an upper-division course, having no prerequisites and is highly unusual. This means, a student with very little to no background in mathematics will be able to take an upper division MATH course (e.g., a Sophomore English Major). Justification must be provided. This point is unrelated to the overlap with the NSED courses already offered.

Action:

- Members agreed to ask for clarification on the following course:
 1. [MATH - 155 - Mathematics Pedagogy](#) (new; Fall 2025) – request clarification on overlap with other existing NSED courses, contact hours, and lack of prerequisites.

¹ RECUSALS
Catherine - CHE
Santosh – CSE

IX. Any Other Business – 3:20pm – 3:25pm

No other business was discussed.

X. Executive Session – Voting Members Only - 3:25pm – 3:30pm

Due to time constraints, the executive session did not take place. Voting members were invited to vote on three items via email.