

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)**Tuesday, April 14, 2020**

1:30 – 3:00 PM

Zoom URL: <https://ucmerced.zoom.us/j/2092009728>

Zoom Phone: 1 669 900 6833, Meeting ID: 209 200 9728

Documents available in [Box](#)**[Graduate Council Duties](#)**

Pursuant to call, the meeting was convened at 1:31PM via Zoom, with Chair Westerling presiding.

I. Consultation with VPDGE

VPDGE Zatz gave an update on graduate enrollment, and discussed the potential impact of lower undergraduate enrollment on Teaching Assistantships, as well as options for international students to either defer enrollment (which has been granted quasi-automatically) or matriculate remotely. CCGA has discussed the pros and cons of remote matriculation, but there are currently no systemwide policies. Graduate Division needs to consult with international education office, as previously only one online course was allowed for remote matriculation at graduate level, as well as with graduate groups.

Transition of Graduate Division Leadership was also announced. As of July 1, 2020, VPDGE Zatz will be the interim Vice Chancellor of Research and Economic Development (VCORED), and AVPDGE Kello will become the interim VPDGE. All other Graduate Division personnel will remain the same.

II. Discussion Item: Engagement of CE specialists in Graduate Education

GC discussed engagement of Cooperative Extension (CE) Specialists (funded through UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, or ANR) in graduate education, with guests Vice Chancellor of Research Sam Traina and Professors Tom Peterson and Martha Conklin. Two graduate programs have requested that the Graduate Division consider allowing CE Specialists to chair graduate student committees. Per VCORED Traina, CE Specialists were hired with the understanding that they would have the same rights and responsibilities in research and graduate education activities as regular faculty. Professor Conklin pointed out that, although UCM does not have the authority to review CE specialists, other campuses (at least Berkeley, Davis, and Riverside) do, and opined that, if CE specialists are to be regarded as equivalent of faculty, they should be reviewed as such.

Chair Westerling made clarifications on the authorities for changing rules for CE specialists to be able to chair committees, pointing out that this would require a campus level change in bylaws and/or regulations. GC and Graduate Division cannot make these changes on their own. VPDGE emphasized that, while CE specialists currently may not serve as chairs, they can be advisors, if allowed by graduate group P&Ps. It was agreed that this clarification be communicated to graduate groups for the time being, while GC Policy Subcommittee researches longer term solutions that would allow CE Specialists to serve as chairs.

ACTION: Advise Graduate Groups to allow CE Specialists to be advisors and define advisors' roles in Grad Group P&Ps, as the short term measure. Consult CRE on possible ways to enable CE Specialists to chair Doctoral Committees, with the goal of submitting a proposal for comments by other Senate Committees at the beginning of Fall 2020, with support letters from impacted Graduate Groups and other willing parties.

III. Chair's Report---Chair Westerling

Chair Westerling updated GC on DivCo, which approved the UGC's Pass/No Pass policy and GC's Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory policy, and CCGA, where it discussed remote matriculation, and the risk of a

student who starts be denied visa. The Chair gave the background to the proposed [Emergency Educational Continuity Policy](#) which originated from inquiries from a graduate group. With revisions, motion to approve carried unanimously.

ACTION: Transmit the approved Emergency Educational Continuity Policy to Grad Division and School support staff.

IV. Discussion Item: [Graduate P&P Handbook Revision](#) --*Jesus Cisneros, Chris Kello*

GC and Graduate Division completed the discussion on items leftover from the Spring 2019 review of the Handbook. Motion to approve the revised handbook for AY 2020-21 as presented was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

ACTION: Transmit a memo of approval to Graduate Division.

V. Vice Chair's Report --*Vice Chair Hratchian*

Vice Chair Hratchian updated GC on the UC Merced's Cyberinfrastructure. Emergency infrastructure funding of \$175 Million is being requested, allowing research groups to work remotely, and it includes substantial support for graduate students. Vice Chair Hratchian also updated GC on Graduate Group Chairs' meeting, where a discussion on the funding model continued.

VI. [PROC Report](#) --*PROC liaison Maria DePrano*

PROC Liaison DePrano gave the summary of the external review team report for the Cognitive and Information Sciences (CIS) program, which recommended additional courses, explicit mentoring guidelines, and additional support for students in scientific writing. Resource concerns such as research support and salary, which are issues at the campus level, were also raised. While the team had been skeptical about CIS's move to the Gallo School before the visit, the team is now supportive of the move.

VII. Consent Calendar

A. The agenda (4/14)

B. [Minutes from the 3/31 meeting](#)

C. CRFs

Modify Existing: [MBSE 209](#) and [PHYS 209](#): Soft Matter Physics

[MBSE 245](#) and [PHYS 241](#): Condensed Matter Physics

Discontinue: [PSY 239](#): Cognitive Development and Education

D. [Extension CRF: CRES X 420](#) : Refugee Teaching Institute

Following a brief explanation by the Chair on item D, consent calendar was approved as presented.

ACTION: Communicate GC decision on Extension CRF to Registrar. Update other items online.

VIII. Discussion Item: CRF Policy Review and Revision --*CRF Subcommittee Chair Ni*

CRF Subcommittee presented a [revision to the existing CRF policy](#), reflecting the recent cases of course modification requests that included unit increase. Subcommittee Chair Ni pointed out the need for a comprehensive revision of the policy document, to reflect the use of Curriculog and the revisions to the Curriculog form. Motion to approve the minor revision was made, seconded, and carried unanimously.

ACTION: Upload the revised version of the CRF Policy on Senate Website. Start planning the revision of the CRF Policy document to incorporate changes resulting from use of Curriculog.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00PM. Att. by LeRoy Westerling, GC Chair