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Academic Senate

April 2020 Newsletter | senate.ucmerced.edu

Division News:

From the Senate Chair: As we enter the final weeks of AY 19-20, I realize that the transition to online classes can be stressful for some of you, in addition to the worries and challenges the COVID-19 pandemic is bringing to your families, friends, colleagues, our students, and the campus community. In these challenging times, we have had to make many decisions, and do so rapidly.

Below, please find links to some resources for remote instructions from UCOP's Innovative Learning Technology Initiative (ILTI):

- **UCM Educational Continuity Resources for Faculty**
<https://it.ucmerced.edu/EdContinuity>
- **UC Guidance to campuses**
<https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/2020/01/ucs-response-to-coronavirus.html>

- **Keep Teaching: Faculty Resources and Links** - Useful information for teaching remotely
<https://www.ucop.edu/innovative-learning-technology-initiative/covid19/index.html>
- **Drop in Technical Sessions** - One-on-one sessions with technical experts if your campus resources are overloaded
<https://www.ucop.edu/innovative-learning-technology-initiative/covid19/drop-in-technical-sessions.html>
- **Cross Campus Enrollment Site** - Students can enroll in already approved online courses offered by another campus
<https://crossenrollcourses.universityofcalifornia.edu>

The UCM Senate and administrative leaderships continue to monitor the continuing developments regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. The Senate recently approved an amendment to the Emergency Course Continuity Policy to allow students flexibility to change their grade options from letter grades to Pass/No Pass. The policy was drafted to address the challenges students and instructors are presently facing due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy is available [here](#) and is effective immediately. The Graduate Council has approved a similar policy to address grading options at the graduate level. The policy is available [here](#).

On March 31, The University of California implemented temporary measures to ease admissions requirements to help students and families during these difficult times. This relaxes the undergraduate admissions requirements for students who plan to enroll at UC for fall 2020 and future years as applicable. Such requirements and further information may be found [here](#).

The nomination period for the Academic Senate's nine Senate Awards closed at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2020 after two extensions to the deadline. Thank you very much for nominating your fellow colleagues!

As noted in the March 2020 issue, the Senate has completed its review of the proposal for a new major: a B.S. in Civil Engineering, effective fall 2021. WSCUC has determined that substantive change review is **not** required for the B.S. in Civil Engineering degree, so the new degree can now be implemented.

Finally, I hope you mark the annual spring Meeting of the Division on your calendar. It will take place on **Thursday, May 7, 2020 from 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. via Zoom**. At this meeting, next academic year's Senate Chair and Vice Chair and the recipients of the Senate Awards will be announced. We hope you will participate in this final Meeting of the Division for AY 2019-20.

- Tom Hansford

Committee Highlights

[The Committee on Academic Personnel](#) (CAP) issued a memo to all Senate faculty about the impacts of COVID-19 on research productivity. The memo alerted departmental personnel committees, chairs, and deans of the need to take impacts of the required adjustments into account when reviewing future personnel cases that include the activities of the Spring 2020 semester or possibly beyond, depending upon the duration of significant virus-related disruptions.

[The Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation](#) (CAPRA) consulted with the Office of Financial Planning & Analysis on the campus budget, and regularly consults with APAPB Schnier on phases I and II of academic planning.

[The Committee on Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom](#) (FWAF) consulted with Chief Campus Counsel Gunther on the definitions of Academic Freedom and of Free Speech, in preparation for drafting a campus statement on Academic Freedom, which will be submitted for Divisional Council's review. FWAF also submitted its proposed bylaw revision to Committee on Rules and Elections.

[The Committee on Research](#) (COR) drafted a two-part initiative for restructuring and enriching campus-wide research support. The draft is under review by members of academic leadership and will be submitted to Divisional Council for discussion.

[The Graduate Council](#) (GC) consulted with the Undergraduate Council on Emergency Course Continuity Policy and the proposed addendum to the policy. GC also continued its discussions on CRF policy and Curriculog and further plans for policy revisions, and has issued, as per request from the Graduate Division, a [statement](#) on the utmost importance of health and safety of graduate students, and, per CRE's invitation, reviewed and suggested revisions to the UCM Bylaws pertaining to the Council.

[The Committee on Rules and Elections](#) (CRE) has received comments from Senate committees on their respective Bylaws and is reviewing the feedback via email.

[The Committee on Diversity and Equity](#) (D&E) next meets on April 6, 2020. Since its March 2 meeting, D&E has commented on the Report and Recommendations of the Academic Council Standardized Testing Task Force (STTF), the proposal from the Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools to eliminate the ACT/SAT Essay Writing Test requirement for undergraduate admission, and the proposed Presidential Policy on Gender Recognition and Lived Name. D&E reviewed and recommended revisions to the UCM Bylaws pertaining to the committee, including the recommendation to change the committee name to Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

[The Committee on Committees](#) (CoC) will convene in early April to continue its work on next year's Senate slate.

[The Committee on Library and Scholarly Communications](#) (LASC) collaborated with CoR on a response to the OSTP RFI regarding public access of publicly-funded peer-reviewed research. In the joint March 18 response, the two committees affirmed that the public should have free and immediate access to peer-reviewed findings and publicly-funded research. LASC will next meet on April 22, 2020.

[The Undergraduate Council](#) (UGC) has recently approved Emergency Course Continuity policies. They are available [here](#). Members have approved several requests from the schools via email, including an ELWR petition, CRFs, and petitions to appoint graduate students as Instructors of Record for summer. UGC is currently reviewing school Catalog updates and Senate Awards nominations.

[Divisional Council](#) (DivCo) recently discussed UGC's proposal for a Reading/Review/Recitation Week. The Senate and School Executive Committees, the Office of Undergraduate Education, Student Affairs, and the Registrar have been invited to review it. DivCo opined on two systemwide Senate proposals: the BOARS proposal to eliminate the ACT/SAT Essay Writing Test Requirement and the Report of the Academic Council's Standardized Testing Task Force (STTF).

April Meeting Schedules

DIVCO - APR 15, 27
CAP - APR 3, 10, 17, 24
CAPRA - APR 14, 28
CoR - APR 1, 15, 29
CoC - APR 9
CRE - APR 27
GC - APR 14, 28
UGC - APR 10, 24
FWAF - APR 7
AFAS - APR 10
D&E - APR 6

Contact the Chair

Questions, concerns, or issues you would like to see addressed? Contact Senate Chair Hansford at senatechair@ucmerced.edu.

ASSEMBLY - APR 15
COUNCIL - APR 29
BOARS - APR 3
CCGA - APR 8
UCACC- APR 28
UCEP - APR 6
UCFW - APR 10
UCOC - APR 14
UCOPE - APR 24
UCORP - APR 13
UCPB - APR 7



Review Items:

A new webpage on the UCM Senate website is now available and will be updated regularly. Please click [here](#) to view the items that are currently discussed and reviewed locally and at the systemwide level.



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