

**DIVISIONAL COUNCIL
MERCED DIVISION OF THE ACADEMIC SENATE
ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

The Divisional Council (DivCo) held a total of 16 meetings with respect to its duties as outlined in the [Merced Division Bylaw I.IV.3](#). The AY 23-24 DivCo membership is available [here](#).

Over the course of the year, committee guests included the following:

- Chancellor Muñoz
- Interim EVC/Provost Zatz
- EVC/Provost Dumont
- VPDUE Frey
- FACS Chair Dawson
- AVC for Interdisciplinary Research & Strategic Initiatives Viers
- SSHA Dean Gilger
- LASC Chair Ojeda
- David Dunham, Executive Director of Recreation and Athletics
- ASUCM President Craven
- Ed Klozbier, Vice Chancellor, External Relations
- Christopher Abrescy, UCM Creative Director

Many of Divisional Council's agenda items were delegated for preliminary review by the appropriate Senate committees, followed by full Divisional Council review. The issues that Division Council considered this year are described briefly below.

SSHA Faculty and Instructor Losses

Divisional Council reviewed and discussed a memo from SSHA Department Chairs regarding faculty and instructor losses within the school. At a subsequent meeting, Divisional Council members consulted CAPRA Chair Mitchell on the same issue as he outlined CAPRA's response to Divisional Council members.

Faculty Advisory Committee on Sustainability (FACS)

Instead of selecting a Divisional Council member to serve on FACS, members decided that a representative from FACS would be invited to a Divisional Council meeting to provide updates. FACS Chair Dawson then joined a Divisional Council meeting and summarized FACS' function, goals for the year, and updated PLOs.

Graduate Council's Policy for the Establishment of Hybrid Undergraduate/Graduate Programs

GC Chair Scheibner summarized GC's proposed policy and the input received from AFAC, UGC, the VPDGE and the VPDUE. Divisional Council provided feedback on the policy which was then revised and presented again at a subsequent meeting. Divisional Council then endorsed the proposed policy, however noted concerns regarding the double counting of courses.

Divisional Council Process for Addressing Conflicts of Interest (COI)

The proposal for a Divisional Council COI process was discussed last year by members. CRE approved the process and proposed that it be appended to the existing Divisional Council COI policy. CAPRA Chair Mitchell suggested that the document should be revised to state that the procedure is

not a substitute for a recusal if a member has a conflict of interest. Divisional Council members agreed with this suggestion and unanimously approved the policy with the inclusion of the additional language suggested by the CAPRA Chair.

Temporary Academic Staffing (TAS) Work Groups

Senate Vice Chair Mitchell kept Divisional Council members abreast on the membership of the two TAS Work Groups as well as the group's goals and progress.

Financial Management and Reporting Task Force

Divisional Council discussed the campus' financial issues and was informed that campus leadership was assembling a Task Force to address the financial system concerns. Task Force Co-Chair Khatri provided Task Force updates to Divisional Council members on multiple occasions. Updates included the division of the Task Force into three working groups, goals of each working group, plans of each working group, and the progress made. Task Force Co-Chair Khatri also solicited input from Divisional Council members on how they would like to be involved moving forward.

Centers Policy

CoR Chair Ye shared CoR's recent revisions to the Centers Policy. One of the main revisions pertained to the review of Centers. Divisional Council members proposed edits to the policy and reviewed the revised policy at a subsequent meeting. Following the revisions, Divisional Council members endorsed the proposed Centers Policy.

Area H Ethnic Studies Admission Requirement

AFAC Chair Eaton gave a summary of the issue to Divisional Council members and shared AFAC's memo dated November 22 expressing its continuous support of making Area H Ethnic Studies an admission requirement rather than a recommendation. Divisional Council members voted to endorse AFAC's November 22 memo to BOARS.

Requests from the Graduate Council

GC Chair Scheibner summarized GC's memo containing recommendations for mitigating graduate students' and Postdoctoral Researchers' delays on research and time to degree. Divisional Council endorsed GC's memo with a request that GC include language about mental health. GC Chair Scheibner then summarized GC's memo regarding the SJV PRIME+: Analysis and Recommendations for Vetting as a Degree Program and Divisional Council endorsed GC's memo.

Proposals for New Programs

Divisional Council reviewed, discussed, and took action on the following proposals:

- Endorsed the proposal for the establishment of a B.A. Degree in Biology.
- Endorsed the proposal for the establishment of an Aerospace Engineering B.S. Degree Program.
- Endorsed the proposal for the establishment of a Biochemistry B.S. Degree Program.
- Endorsed the proposal for the establishment of a B.A. Degree Program in Management, Innovation, Sustainability and Technology (MIST).
- Endorsed the proposed amendments to the B.A. in Psychology and noted the approval of the proposal for the establishment of a Psychology B.S. Degree Program is pending until the Department secures the necessary resources for the delivery of the major.
- Endorsed the establishment of a Science, Technology, and Ethics (STE) B.S. Degree

Program and Minor.

- Endorsed the establishment of an Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation Biology (EECB) B.S. Degree Program.
- Endorsed the proposal to change the name of the Materials Science Engineering Department to Chemical and Materials Engineering.
- Endorsed the establishment of a Communication and Media B.A. Degree Program.
- Endorsed the establishment of a Neuroscience B.A., B.S. Degree Programs and Minor.

Proposed Bylaws for the Division of Undergraduate Education Executive Committee (DUEEC)

Divisional Council consulted with VPDUE Frey regarding the proposed Bylaws which aimed to provide faculty governance for both the General Education Program and the UCM Honors Program. Divisional Council endorsed the proposed Bylaws and provided recommendations for minor revisions to the proposal.

Proposal to Establish a Medical Education Department

Divisional Council reviewed and discussed the proposal and requested additional information from the proposers. The proposers responded with additional information and clarification. Following the proposer's response, Divisional Council unanimously endorsed the proposal to establish a Department of Medical Education.

Proposed Political Science Minor: Data Science and Policy Analysis

Divisional Council reviewed the proposal and agreed to postpone their vote on UGC's approval of the proposal for the new minor and to send the proposal back to UGC for further discussion in consultation with the School of Natural Sciences Executive Committee (NSEC) and the proposal's authors to address NSEC's concerns regarding the minor's name. Following UGC's response, Divisional Council endorsed the establishment of a Political Science Minor in Data Science and Policy Analysis.

UGC and GC Proposed Amendments to UCM Senate Regulations

Divisional Council members voted to endorse the proposed amendments to Senate Regulation I.1.E (Passed/Not Passed) and Senate Regulation III.1.A.d (Satisfactory Progress - P/NP). Members agreed to send the proposed amendments to Senate Regulation I.2.B (Dropping a Course) back to UGC and CRE for edits and further consultation with the Registrar and other campus stakeholders.

Five-Year Planning Perspectives 2024-2029

Divisional Council reviewed and discussed the Planning Perspectives and associated Senate Committees' comments and supported their various points and recommendations.

Divisional Council took action on the following items:

- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed revisions to the Presidential Policy on Affiliations with Certain Health Care Organizations (10/18).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed amendments to Senate Bylaw 55 (Departmental Voting Rights) (11/3).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments the proposed revisions to the Presidential Policy on Vaccination Programs (11/3).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on proposed APM 672 – Negotiated Salary Program (12/1).

- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments the Interim Report of the Academic Planning Council Workgroup on the Future of Doctoral Education at the UC (3/6).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed Regents Policy on the Use of Administrative Websites (3/6).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed amendments to APM 285- Lecturer with Security of Employment Series. (3/19).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed revisions to Presidential Policy BFB-BUS-50: Controlled Substances Use in Research and Teaching (3/20).
- Voted to endorse UGC's proposed Policy for Conflict of Interest with Course Material when Instructor is the Author (3/25).
- Voted to endorse the proposed amendments to Senate Bylaw II.III.2.A (CAP Membership) and the proposed amendments to Senate Bylaw II.III.3.A (RCAP Membership) (3/25).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed Regents Policy on Public and Discretionary Statements by Academic Units (4/22).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed amendments to APM 710, Leaves of Absence/Sick Leave/Medical Leave (4/22).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the Final Report of the UC Systemwide Advisory Workgroup on Students with Disabilities (5/2).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed Academic Senate Statement on UC Quality (5/2).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed amendments to Senate Regulation 424.A.3 (Area H) (5/10).
- Voted to endorse amendments to Senate Bylaw II.IV.2.A (AFAC Membership) (4/29).
- Voted to endorse amendments to Senate Regulation II.3.B (Academic Dismissal) (4/29).
- Endorsed PROC's proposal to include Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in UC Merced's Principles of Assessment (5/13).
- Transmitted to Academic Council, the Senate's comments on the proposed amendments to APM 016, Faculty Conduct and the Administration of Discipline (5/21).