

**GRADUATE COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
AY 2023-2024**

During the academic year 2023-2024, the Graduate Council (GC) held a total of 12 regularly scheduled meetings in person and 3 via zoom and conducted some business via email with respect to its duties as outlined in UC Merced's [Senate Bylaw II.IV.6](#). The Chair of GC attended Divisional Council meetings and provided regular updates at each GC meeting.

University Registrar Erin Webb and Director of UC Merced Center for Data Services Derek Devnich participated in meetings as consultants to the committee.

Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education Hrant Hrachian regularly attended the GC meetings to provide updates on matters related to graduate education, admissions, fellowship and scholarship programs, etc.

The structure of GC and the issues that the Council considered this year are described below.

GRADUATE COUNCIL ORGANIZATION AND REPRESENTATION ON SYSTEMWIDE COMMITTEES

GC operated with four standing subcommittees that met primarily via email throughout the year.

CRF Subcommittee: Rebeca Arevalo (SNS, Subcommittee Chair), Chair; Roberto Andresen Eguiluz (SoE); Christina Baker (SSHA)

Policy Subcommittee: GC Chair Michael Scheibner (SNS, Subcommittee Chair); Vice-Chair John Abatzoglou (SoE); Karl Ryavec (SSHA); and Min Hwan Lee (SoE)

Fellowship Subcommittee: Roberto Andresen Eguiluz (SoE, Subcommittee Chair); Marilia Palumbo Gaiarsa (SNS); Jennifer Howell (SSHA)

Awards Subcommittee: Min Hwan Lee (SoE; Subcommittee Chair), Marilia Palumbo Gaiarsa (SNS), and Jennifer Howell (SSHA)

The Awards subcommittee reviewed the nominations for the Graduate Student Supplemental Travel Awards and for the Distinguished Graduate Teaching/Mentorship Award. The names of the Awards recipients are available here: https://senate.ucmerced.edu/senate_awards.

CAMPUS AND SYSTEM REVIEW ITEMS

GC offered comments or otherwise took action on the following review items.

- Presidential Policy on Affiliations with Certain Health Care Organizations (10/11)*
- Amendments to Senate Bylaw 55-Departmental Voting Rights (10/18)*
- Proposed New APM 672 – Negotiated Salary Program (11/1)*
- Proposal for an Aerospace B.S. Degree Program (11/16)
- Interim Report of the Academic Planning Council Working Group on the Future of Doctoral Education at the UC (1/23)*
- Proposed Revisions to APM 285 (LSOEs) (1/31)*

- Proposed Bylaws for the Division of Undergraduate Education Executive Committee (2/5)
- Proposal for the Establishment of a Department of Medical Education (2/12)
- Presidential Policy BFB-BUS-50: Controlled Substances Use in Research and Teaching (2/26)*
- Policy on Transmission of Documents to the University Archive (2/26)*
- Interim Implementing Procedures for Abusive Conduct in the Workplace (3/1)*
- SoE Proposal for MIST B.A. Degree Program (3/1)
- SSHA Proposal for a Science, Technology, and Ethics B.S. Degree Program (3/1)
- Report of the University of California Systemwide Advisory Work Group on Students with Disabilities (4/5)*
- Proposed Academic Senate Statement on UC Quality (4/11)*
- SSHA Proposal for a Neuroscience Degree Program (4/11)
- Proposal to Change the Name of the Materials Science & Engineering Department to Chemical & Materials Engineering (5/3)
- Five-Year Planning Perspectives 2024-2029 (5/3)

*Systemwide review items

Other

- GC provided the Cognitive and Information Sciences Department with an exception to their Bylaws and Policies and Procedures for a faculty member to remain as the Primary Advisor and Dissertation Committee Chair for a 6th-year CIS PhD student, even after the faculty member left the CIS Graduate Group (9/8).
- GC invited graduate groups to consider collecting research course syllabi from their faculty to build a repository of templates (9/12).
- GC consulted with Associate Dean of Graduate Education Sayantani Ghosh to further discuss the results from the graduate student and postdoctoral scholar surveys that were conducted in Spring 2023 to identify 3-4 areas that GC should address: Advisor Mentoring, Resource Portal, and Graduate Group Chair/Student Relationship (9/29).
- GC offered recommendations to the BioE Graduate Group regarding their membership status (11/16).
- GC developed a policy for the Establishment of Undergraduate/Graduate Hybrid Degree Programs (12/23).
- GC transmitted two memos to DivCo: 1) *Recommendations for Mitigating Graduate Students' and Postdoctoral Researchers' Delays on Research and Time to Degree*, and 2) *SJV Prime+: Analysis and Recommendations for Vetting as a Degree Program* (1/10).
- GC offered comments on the draft Academic Senate Handbook on University Extension (2/13).
- GC conducted a preliminary review of the new Anthropology and Heritage Studies Graduate Degree Program (2/27).
- GC approved proposed revisions to Environmental Systems Concentrations (2/27).
- GC reviewed and approved the Academic Senate Handbook on University Extension (3/14).
- GC transmitted to DivCo proposed amendments to Senate Regulation I.1.E (Passed/Not Passed) and Senate Regulation III.3.A.d (Satisfactory Progress-P/NP) in light of former VPDUE Frey's proposal to offer more opportunities to students struggling in their first year and per Senate Executive Director Paul's and UGC Chair Viney's recommendation (3/15).
- GC proposed amendments to the Policy for Graduate Students Teaching Graduate Students (4/11).

GRADUATE COURSE REQUESTS

- GC approved 46 courses (new and revised) in Curriculum.
- GC approved one request for revisions to course delivery.

- GC approved 6 requests for an extension to the deadline to submit 31 course proposals.

GRADUATE STUDENT APPOINTMENTS AS INSTRUCTOR FOR UPPER DIVISION COURSES

- GC considered and approved 15 requests to appoint graduate students as instructors for upper division courses. GC also approved 2 reappointments.

GRADUATE GROUP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

GC approved, effective Fall 2024, revisions to the Policies and Procedures of the following program:

- Applied Math (AM)
- Interdisciplinary Humanities (IH)¹
- Materials and Biomaterials Science and Engineering (MBSE)
- Mechanical Engineering (ME)
- Physics
- Public Health (PH)

GC offered provisional approval to the following graduate group Policies and Procedures, provided that the graduate group address GC and the Graduate Division comments.

- Environmental Systems (ES)

On November 22, 2023, GC approved, effective immediately, an off-cycle request to make a minor correction to the PLO's in the Policies and Procedures of the following program:

- Bioengineering (BioE)

GC Approved, effective October 18, 2023, revisions to the Bylaws of the following program:

- Environmental Systems (ES)
- Interdisciplinary Humanities (IH)

GUEST CONSULTATIONS

- On January 18, 2024, GC was joined by Dean of University Extension Annette Roberts Webb, Director of University Extension Michael Pierick, and Associate Dean of University Extension Fanis Tsoulouhas to discuss the draft Academic Senate Handbook on University Extension.
- On February 29, 2024, GC was joined by SNS Dean Dumont, Director of Medical Education Vener, and Interim EVC/Provost Zatz to discuss the SJV Prime + B.S. to M.D. Pathway.
- On February 29, 2024, GC was joined by Associate Dean of Graduate Studies Sayantani Ghosh to discuss conflicts of interest on graduate student committees.

¹ [The Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs \(CCGA\)](#) reviewed the proposed revisions to the IH P&Ps and Bylaws at their July 3, 2024 meeting and determined that a new proposal and program review by CCGA is not required.

Respectfully submitted,

GC Members

Michael Scheibner, Chair (SNS), CCGA Representative, DivCo Representative, Temporary Academic Staffing (TAS) Work Group “Size of the Pie” Representative, Graduate Student and Research Support (GSRS) Work Group Representative

John Abatzoglou, Vice Chair (SoE), PROC Representative, Graduate Group Chairs’ Meetings Representative, Graduate Student and Research Support (GSRS) Work Group Representative

Roberto Andresen Eguiluz (SoE)

Rebeca Arevalo (SNS)

Christina Baker (SSHA)

Marilia Gaiarsa (SNS)

Jennifer Howell (SSHA), Temporary Academic Staffing (TAS) Work Group “Division of the Pie” Representative

Min Hwan Lee (SoE)

Karl Ryavec (SSHA)

Ex-Officio

Hrant Hratchian, Interim Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education

Senate Staff

Melanie Snyder, Senate Senior Analyst