

GRADUATE COUNCIL (GC)
January 12, 2017
10:30-12:00 PM KL 362
Documents available at: [UCM BOX](#)

Pursuant to call, the Graduate Council met at 10:33 AM on January 12, 2017 in Room 362 of the Kolligian Library, Chair Ramesh Balasubramaniam presiding.

I. Consultation with Becky Mirza, International Affairs

- a. With concerns about statements coming from the new federal administration, Becky Mirza was invited to discuss what international graduate students may encounter when attempting entry into the United States on visa. The primary advice provided was that it is very difficult to predict what will change, and any changes may take time. Students from Iran have historically encountered challenges, and they are our second highest international student population, after China, and with India third. UC Merced currently has 160 graduate students, with 30 that are in post-completion [Optional Practical Training \(OPT\)](#). There is an expectation that this number will continue to grow, as it has each year. The International Affairs office is recommending that students from Iran start as early as April to meet the timelines for approval, and that all international students have their documents in order when they travel. Becky would be welcome to return to a future GC meeting after the admissions deadline, to compare student numbers and review any changes.

II. Chair's Report – Ramesh Balasubramaniam

- a. Division Council meeting – December 15, 2016
- b. CCGA Meeting – January 4, 2017
 - i. Public Health and MIST are going through review.
- c. Status update on Course Proposal & Management Information System (CPMIS)
 - i. A software solution has been identified by the CPMIS committee. GC will follow the continuing work of the committee, as it pertains to CRFs and curriculum management.

III. Vice Chair's Report – Teamrat Ghezzehei

- a. The Vice Chair had nothing to report.

IV. Consent Calendar

- a. The December 8, 2016 minutes were approved as presented.
- b. The January 12, 2017 agenda was approved as presented.
- c. [Grad Group Policies & Procedures](#)
- d. [Graduate Advisor's Handbook](#) – approval of the handbook, including the renaming to “Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook”, sent to VPDGE Zatz on January 11.

V. [Posthumous Degree Awarding \(GradDiv\)](#)

- a. The policies on posthumous degree awards by other UCs were shared with GC. VPDGE Zatz asked if our current policy language is too strict, when compared to other campuses. After some discussion among the committee, an agreement was made to allow a posthumous degree to be awarded in the instance of the student having been

advanced to candidacy, and with approval by the student's dissertation committee. Any exceptions to the policy would require written consent by the Dean of the Graduate Division. GC will approve the revised policy language via email consent, and then sent to UGC for their review. Once UGC has provided any comments, the policy will then be presented to DivCo, with the policy going into effect upon their approval.

VI. [Best Practices regarding Senior PhD Students to Teach Upper Level Courses](#)

- a. Members discussed the circumstances where graduate students would be placed in instructor roles for undergraduate courses, with appropriate supervision, based on the policy language change made in December to the current policy on [graduate students teaching graduate students](#). Concerns were discussed about first time grad students teaching a course generally face challenges, and could lower the reputation of the campus. A member noted that local community colleges offer teaching opportunities, and the Chair responded that the prestige of teaching at the UC would always be sought. A member pointed out that the different schools handle graduate students teaching undergraduates different, and from this standpoint, best practices would be appropriate, as a general policy may not be applicable across campus. Members requested that UGC weigh in on this subject, as it affects undergraduate education. GC would like to see a clearer policy on the role of graduate students teaching undergraduates, and address the imbalance of policies between upper and lower division courses, as well as the differences between the different schools. Graduate Division asked that mentorship should also be addressed: how mentorship is currently implemented, what type of mentorship is available, etc.

VII. [Extension Course Approval Process](#)

- a. The committee discussed the request to develop a policy covering the assessment and evaluation of Extension courses and programs. Chair Balasubramaniam noted that, from a meeting with the Extension staff, UCLA is After some discussion, members agreed that GC would review a document or policy already created for UC Merced, but did not think GC should be responsible for drafting such a policy, instead keeping GC's input as advisory. A representative from Extension would be invited to a future GC meeting to discuss the program, and documents from other campuses would be shared for review and discussion.

VIII. [SOE EC Memo to GC Concerning Graduate Admissions Policies](#)

- a. The committee reviewed the requests made by the SoE EC, including statistics that were requested from the Grad Division showing the average GRE scores for 2015 and 2016 for all programs including those in Engineering, and admissions by exception for TOEFL and GRE in 2015 and 2016. Based on this information, GC did not expect to make any changes to the current graduate admissions policies. A memo will be circulated for GC comment and approval via email consent.

IX. [Campus Review Items](#)

- a. [UC Merced Policy for Access to Student Data](#)
 - i. GC had no comments on this draft policy.
- b. [Revised Report from the Task Force on University Honors](#)
 - i. GC had no comments on this revised report.

- c. New WSCUC Policy
 - i. This item will be added to the next GC agenda.

- X. **Systemwide Review Items**
 - a. Proposed Revised G-28 Travel Regulations
 - i. GC had no comments on these revisions.

 - b. Proposed Revisions to Senate Regulation 630.D
 - i. This review item will be added to the next GC agenda.

- XI. **Consultation with VPDGE Zatz**

- XII. **Upcoming Business**

- XIII. **Other Business**

- XIV. **Executive Session (Voting members only)**

There was no Executive Session during this meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:01 PM.

Attest:

Ramesh Balasubramaniam, Chair