



# Academic Senate

May 2021 Newsletter | [senate.ucmerced.edu](http://senate.ucmerced.edu)

## From the Senate Chair:

Dear Colleagues,

As the semester winds down, I wish you a very smooth landing and a peaceful transition to summer. This is the Senate's last Newsletter of the academic year. It is with much gratitude and appreciation that we recognize the many contributions you have made, and the adaptations you endured, as our campus continues to navigate through this turbulence. Rest assured, the Senate will continue to work diligently on your behalf to advance academic goals and advocate for the wellbeing of faculty and our campus. Do not hesitate to let us know about your concerns or how we can be of assistance.

Allow me to share the following highlights.

Congratulations to Professor Asmeret Asefaw Berhe on her nomination as the new Director of the Office of Science in the Federal Department of Energy! On Earth Day, President Joe Biden nominated Professor Asmeret Asefaw to serve and further the Biden Administration's commitment to a modern sustainable infrastructure and clean energy future. Her research is at the intersection of soil science, global change science, and political ecology. More information about Professor Berhe's accomplishments is available on the White House [website](#).

Please join me in congratulating this year's recipients of the Distinguished Senate Awards for Senate and Non-Senate Faculty. Award recipients were announced at the May 4, 2021 Meeting of the Division. Their names are published on the Senate website [here](#).

At the Spring Meeting of the Division, the Academic Senate endorsed:

- Proposed amendments to Divisional Senate Bylaws
- Proposed amendments to Divisional Senate Regulations Part IV.3.A. (Master's Degree Requirement)
- Proposed amendments to Divisional Senate Regulations Parts V.3.A and V.4. (Doctor of Philosophy Requirements)
- Proposed amendments to Divisional Senate Regulations Part IV.1 (Residency Requirement)

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The proposed Presidential Policy on the SARS- COVID-19 Vaccination Program has been distributed to all Senate and School Executive Committees for review. The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and safety of the University community. Comments on this proposed [policy](#) are highly encouraged. The deadline for comments is May 17, 2021.

The Assembly of the [Academic Senate has approved](#) BOARS' recommendation to implement a new model and minimum thresholds for the Statewide Eligibility Index. Changes to the index are needed to conform with the UC Regents decision in May of 2020 to phase out standardized testing in admissions decisions at the University of California. The new model is expected to help identify competitive students. BOARS and the Academic Senate will be studying campus application, admission, and enrollment results in the coming years to obtain a deeper understanding of how changes to standardized testing policy are affecting access, equity, and inclusion.

On May 3, 2021, Systemwide Senate Chair Gauvain and Vice Chair Horwitz issued Systemwide Guidelines and Recommendations for Fall Campus Re-Opening, which are divided in four areas of Process, Mode of Instruction, Research and Creative Activity, and Operations, and emphasizes the importance of shared governance. President Drake has stated his agreement with and support of these [Guidelines and Recommendations](#).

On May 5, 2021, Systemwide Senate Chair Gauvain and Vice Chair Horwitz invited all UC instructors to share their experiences with remote instruction during the pandemic, and their thoughts about returning to in-person instruction in Fall 2021 via a survey. **Please complete this important survey.** Responses will inform the Senate responses to policy initiatives from the Regents and the Legislature. **The survey closes at midnight on May 23, 2021.**

- Robin DeLugan

## Committee Highlights

[The Admissions and Financial Aid Committee](#) (AFAC) The committee commented on the proposed revisions to the Bylaws and requested a change to the term of service of the AFAC Chair from two years to one. The committee issued its comments on the Proposal for a Minor in Materials Science and Engineering; the Proposal for a Master of Public Health; the proposal to change the name of the Literature and Languages Department to Literatures, Languages, and Cultures; and the Draft Strategic Plan. Lastly, the committee asked Divisional Council to share a memo regarding a UC Debt Free Pilot Proposal with the UC Board of Regents in anticipation of their meeting on May 12-13.

[The Committee on Academic Personnel](#) (CAP) The committee continues to conduct business as usual.

[The Committee on Academic Planning and Resource Allocation](#) (CAPRA) The committee is discussing with EVC/Provost Camfield and Interim CFO Schnier CAPRA's advisory role in the future campus budget call process. CAPRA is reviewing or has completed its review of the following: proposed MSE minor, draft campus Strategic Plan, proposed name change of the Literature and Languages department, proposed COVID vaccination program policy, and the proposed Presidential Policy for Fee Policy for Graduate Student *In Absentia* Registration.

[The Committee on Research](#) (COR) The committee submitted its recommendations to Interim VCORED Zatz on the instrumentation grant proposals. Per the request of Divisional Council, CoR will discuss the funding of existing and future ORUs with the Interim VCORED and the administration. CoR is also reviewing or has completed its review of the following: proposed MSE minor, draft campus Strategic Plan, proposed name change of the Literature and Languages department, revised MAPP 500, proposed MAPP 016, proposed COVID vaccination program policy, and the proposed Presidential Policy for Fee Policy for Graduate Student *In Absentia* Registration.

[The Committee on Rules and Elections](#) (CRE) The committee submitted its comments on the proposed amendments to systemwide Senate Bylaw 336.F.3. (Disciplinary Cases) and on the

proposed revisions to the UC Merced Grade Appeals policy, put forth by the University Ombudsperson. CRE endorsed GC's proposed amendment to Divisional Senate Regulation Part IV. Section 1 (Master's Degree Requirements, Residency Requirement). This Regulation amendment will be considered at the May 4 Meeting of the Division. CRE will respond to the following proposals:

- I. Request to include Teaching Professors on CAP
- II. Proposed New MAPP 016-Discipline

[The Committee for Diversity and Equity](#) (D&E) D&E reviewed the campus's Draft Strategic Plan (2021-2031) and the proposed new MAPP 2016-Discipline, and consulted with AVPF Valdez on the consideration of EDI work in promotion, FEA Call for Nominations, the use of diversity statement in the first round of faculty searches, and conflict resolution flowchart that incorporates faculty perspective.

[The Committee on Faculty Welfare and Academic Freedom](#) (FWAF) At its April 28 meeting, FWAF discussed the guidelines drafted by the Senate-Administration task force on Covid Impacts in Academic Personnel Review, ECEC governance, and, in consultation with AVPF Valdez, faculty-graduate student conflict resolution flowchart and accompanying text. FWAF also reviewed the Draft Strategic Plan (2021-2031) and the proposed revisions to the Presidential Policy for UC Health Participation in Activities under End of Life Option Act.

[The Graduate Council](#) (GC) At its April 14 and 28 meetings, GC discussed instructional planning for Fall 2021, Extension Non-Degree Program Policy, support for undocumented students, and Faculty-Graduate Student Conflict Resolution Infrastructure. GC unanimously endorsed the new Faculty-initiated Drop feature in CatCourses proposed by the Registrar, and reviewed the Draft Strategic Plan (2021-2031). GC also consulted with the Graduate Division on fellowships for continuing graduate students, the new TA training model, and Academic Planning, and issued a memo on the proposed revised MAPP 500.

[The Committee on Library and Scholarly Communication](#) (LASC) At its April 19th meeting, LASC reviewed the Minor in Materials Science and Engineering proposal and discussed the importance of consulting the library for future program proposals. LASC also reviewed the Draft Strategic Plan and recommends including consideration for library services in addition to collections. The University Librarian discussed potential impacts of the FY-22 budget cuts to the UC Merced Library, which has been historically under resourced. Chair DePrano agreed to write a memo supporting the library budget and stating how important the Library is for faculty and graduate student research and how crucial the library is for students, both as workers and members of the university.

[The Undergraduate Council](#) (UGC) Council issued its comments on the Proposal for a Master of Public Health; the Draft Strategic Plan; and the proposal to change the name of the Literature and Languages Department to Literatures, Languages, and Cultures. The committee will issue its recommendations regarding the Proposal for a Writing Studies Major and the Proposal for a Minor in Materials Science and Engineering and will discuss these items at its May 10 meeting.

[Divisional Council](#) (DivCo) Council endorsed the proposed revisions to [Senate Regulation 610 \(Residency\)](#). DivCo also issued its comments and recommendations on the proposed [Presidential Policy on Classification of Gifts and Sponsored Awards](#). Relevant correspondence will be included in the Senate Digest.

### **May Meeting Schedules**

**AFAC** – MAY 14  
**CAP** – MAY 7, 14, 21, 28  
**CAPRA** – MAY 10  
**CoC** – MAY 6

### **Contact the Chair**

Questions, concerns, or issues you would like to see addressed? Contact Senate Chair DeLugan at [senatechair@ucmerced.edu](mailto:senatechair@ucmerced.edu).

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**CoR** – MAY 13  
**D&E** – MAY 3  
**DIVCO** – MAY 14  
**FWAF** – MAY 12  
**GC** – MAY 13  
**UGC** – MAY 10

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**ACSCOLI** – MAY 17  
**BOARS** – MAY 7  
**CCGA** – MAY 5  
**COUNCIL** – MAY 26  
**EDIT** – MAY 14  
**UCAP** – MAY 19  
**UCEP** – MAY 3  
**UCFW** – MAY 14  
**UCIE** – MAY 21  
**UCOLASC** – MAY 19  
**UCPB** – MAY 4  
**UCORP** – MAY 10  
**UCP&T** – MAY 28



### **Review Items:**

A 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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