Undergraduate Council (UGC)

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, August 30, 2018
10:30am – 12:00pm

I. Chair's Report – Jay Sharping

A. Welcome and Introductions
Chair Sharping welcomed members and consultants. Members introduced themselves.

Chair Sharping summarized the duties of UGC, also available here.

Undergraduate Council (UGC) establishes policy for undergraduate education on the Merced campus and advises the Chancellor or Chancellor's designee on all matters pertaining to undergraduate education. UGC reviews, coordinates, and takes final action on all matters relating to courses of undergraduate instruction and approves or declines to approve, the establishment, discontinuation, or modification of undergraduate programs, majors, minors, courses, and certificates. UGC maintains liaison with several systemwide committees.

He encouraged members and guests to share their ideas and opinions and reported that as chair, he aims to follow three rules:
1. Do his best
2. Do the right thing
3. Treat others as one would wish to be treated

He also makes a basic assumption about those around him. The basic assumption is that members also subscribe to the above mentioned rules. If someone says something the chair find astonishing or cannot understand in the framework of these three rules, he finds that he needs to listen more and asks them "why" they have that opinion.

As a committee, members will not always agree but the hope is that they can come to consensus.

B. UGC's Work, Structure, and Representatives on local and systemwide committees.
When members are to review complex proposals, first and second readers will be assigned to such proposals.

C. UGC Resources
Members are encouraged to read the following resources:
a. Bylaws
b. Membership and Meeting Schedules
c. Policies
d. Box site
e. Senate website
f. UGC Handbook
g. UGC Annual Report AY 17-18
h. Consultation guidelines and procedure
i. Guide to Committee Membership
j. Conflict of Interest Policy
k. Confidentiality
Chair Sharping referenced the agenda footnote about confidentiality and shared the following basic principles:
- We should try to refrain from attributing specific opinions to specific people in external discussions.
- We desire a free and comfortable exchange of ideas.
- Refrain from prematurely disclosing decisions.

- There will be a written response from the committee for any formal consultation.
- For many topics it is acceptable to discuss matters with non-members on general terms. For example, "…the UGC is considering a review week proposal … what do you think?"
- For other matters it is not okay. For example, during program reviews "…the external review team told the physics program to get it together …"

Members are welcome and encouraged to reach out to the chair, the vice chair and AD F. Paul if they have questions about a particular issue.

There are no guidelines for grey areas with regards to confidentiality. Members are encouraged to use their own judgment.

D. August 13-14 Governance Retreat
    a. Academic Planning Work Group
By the conclusion of AY 2017-18, deans and school executive committees had submitted to the work group co-chairs, initial school-level analyses of the academic plans submitted by programs in December 2017. As per the charge to the work group, next steps would involve joint institutional-level evaluation of the plans by CAPRA, the schools and divisional deans. Planning for the resumption of the work group's work during AY 2018-19 is in process.
    b. Budget Work Group
In spring 2018, the Budget Work Group released an update on the group's progress.
    c. Academic Restructuring Work Group
In spring 2018, the Academic Restructuring Work Group released its report for review by the Academic Senate. The transition to the new organization structure is anticipated to be an incremental process over several years. The work will be directed and monitored by the Transition Committee, chaired by Dean Betsy Dumont.

E. Update on the August 28 Divisional Council (DivCo) Meeting
    - The main topic was a discussion of the roles and goals of the various committees this academic year.
    - DivCo also held a preliminary discussion of the Gallo School of Management. DivCo will seek guidance from UCOP regarding the policies for establishing a new school.
    - The Library and Scholarly Communication committee (LASC) has submitted a proposal requesting an increase in its membership.
    - EVC Camfield attended DivCo to discuss his goals vis-a-vis enrollment management.

F. UGC Goals and Priorities for AY 18-19
    Members discussed the Council's goals for this academic year.
    a. General Education
    b. Enrollment management plan
    c. Review Week Proposal
    d. Living and Learning Communities.
        UGC will monitor this initiative and it is hoped that a review system that transcends into the undergraduate curriculum will be created.
    e. Improve the program reviews' processes and fill the existing gaps between program review recommendations and implementation of action plans.
    f. Students' mental well-being and health resources.
    g. Students' and campus community safety.

G. Carry-over and Upcoming UGC Business
    a. Revised CRFs Policy – will be reviewed by the CRFs subcommittee.
        The following items were assigned to UGC reviewers.
    b. Earth System Science Program Review – a memo will be drafted in response to PROC
    c. Clarification of Expectations for Program Reviews – a memo will be drafted in response to PROC

      d. Resolution to Improve Conditions for UCM Undocumented Students – Nies will provide an update at a future meeting.

      e. Students Mental Health – Discussion will continue this semester.

II.   **Consent Calendar**
    A. The agenda was approved as presented.

III.   **UGC representation on subcommittees, PROC, systemwide committees, and the Budget Working Group**
A member inquired about the status of CoC's appointments of additional UGC members. AD Paul reported that CoC will meet after Labor Day.

- Courses/Policies: Members: Jay Sharping and James Palko
- [Admissions and Financial Aid Subcommittee](#) (AFAS): Jesus Sandoval-Hernandez, SSHA/UGC Faculty Representative
- [Periodic Review Oversight Committee](#) (PROC): Susan Amussen
- [Library and Scholarly Communications](#) (LASC): Justin Cook
- [University Committee on Educational Policy](#) (UCEP): UGC chair Jay Sharping
- [Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools](#) (BOARS): UGC vice chair Catherine Keske
- [University Committee on International Education](#) (UCIE): Michelle Leslie
- [University Committee on Preparatory Education](#) (UCOPE): Jesus Sandoval-Hernandez
- [Budget Working Group](#) (BWG): Catherine Keske and Sholeh Quinn

IV.   **Campus Updates**

    A. General Education – Chair Sharping, Vice Chair Keske, and VPDUE Whitt
        a. UGC's role vis-à-vis General Education
        [Endorsement of GE Interim Governance Structure](#)

        GE required considerable resources from UGC, the GESC, the Senate office, and the Registrar. An interim GE governance structure was created this summer. The proposed structure was endorsed by UGC on August 2. The goal was to shift responsibilities to the newly-established GE Executive Committee (GEEC). The Chair of the GEEC will be tasked with implementing the GE program and identifying (and addressing) issues related to its implementation. It is anticipated that UGC's role will include making recommendations related to GE curriculum and considering proposals from the GE Executive Committee.

        There was a discussion about the status of UGC's memo related to the spark variable units (available in the "spark" folder on UGC's Box site). It was advised that the proposal go to the GEEC for evaluation. The GEEC will subsequently seek UGC's input. The GEEC will function like any typical academic program and any revisions to the GE program will be subject to the same policy.

        Chair Sharping recommended that any recommendations/requests from the GEEC be done in reasonable collaboration with UGC. Consultation can be effective when done mindfully. He also recommended that the Senate Newsletter include regular communication with stakeholders about the GE program implementation.

        There were differing understandings among the membership regarding the consultation routes, flows and responsibilities. For instance, some noted that the GEEC creates a separation between UGC and the curriculum planning and that any GE-related proposals would be referred to the GEEC. It would be helpful to have some clarification.

        It is not clear how carry-over UGC business (e.g. [5/14/18 UGC memo](#)) will be addressed during the transition to the GEEC. GE CRFs will be handled by the UGC CRF subcommittee.

A member recommended that any carry-over business from AY 17-18 be addressed by the GEEC.

The VPDUE will provide regular updates on GE at UGC meetings.

Chair Sharping concluded by reporting that UGC will not:
- Usurp the authority of the GEEC to implement the approved GE program
- Proactively redesign the GE program.

It was agreed that clarification will be provided by the UGC chair, the VPDUE and the Registrar.

B. VC Nies's Report:
    a. Enrollment:
        i. The following data is **preliminary and should not to be disseminated until census (9/12/18)**:
- Our target was 21105 for incoming students and we currently have 2215 students enrolled
- Transfer students: Target was 155 and we have 192 students
- Continuing students: Target was about 5515 and we are about 100 students shy of our target. First and second year retention rates have been hovering around 85%. Our goal was 87%. We brought in more first-year students than transfer students which helped us balance our overall undergraduate enrollment targets. The number of undergraduates currently is 7869.

    b. Combined graduate and undergraduate targets were 8505 and we are currently at 8529.

    c. Every year the Federal Department of Education selects a handful of undergraduate students for verification of their financial aid documents. The campus is tasked with comparing federal tax returns and financial aid data. About 20% of our students get selected for verification each year. This year, there was a glitch: the FDE selected over 57% of our undergraduates for verification which dramatically increased the workload of our financial aid office. As a result, a large number of students have not been able to verify their information (e.g. no tax returns were filed by parents; situations where FAFSA filing was done when parents were still married but subsequently divorced. Students had to provide divorce records).

    d. Drops for non-payments (payments are due on Wednesday before classes start) - This year, we dropped 294 students for non-payment (an increase from 180 historically). The bulk of the students had financial-aid related issues. Staff works very hard trying to reach out to those 294 students. About 60% of the cases have been resolved with students back in classes. However, some students leave campus, never return, and do not cancel their classes. This increases the workload of and adds stress to the financial aid office, advising, and the registrar. We will provide recommendations on best practices for drops in November. The goal is to implement best practices by January, 2019.

    e. We are looking at a significant number of students registered full time who have less than15 units. In order to be on track for graduation, students need at least 15-16 units. Several of those students are in SOE with a recommended workload of 14 units for fall in their first year. Student Affairs communicates regularly with the Engineering students who fall under different unit requirements.

    f. VC Nies will send AD Paul information about the type of mental health resources are available to students.

    g. The Basic Needs program was implemented last year in partnership with the Blum center. This initiative provides food security for our students. We now have a food pantry on campus that will be open on weekdays from 1:30-4:30pm and it is located next to the Dining Commons. VC Nies will send AD Paul some information about this program, for distribution to UGC and the faculty. About 5000 students of our students get Cal grant and are eligible for Cal Fresh. Students on Cal Fresh can use their EBT at the campus marketplace. We will also be launching a career closet that provides professional attire for students who are going to a conference or an interview.

C. VPDUE Whitt's Report
A. Centralized Advising

The Bobcat Advising Center was implemented this summer. The office is responsible for providing advising for all first year students regardless of major. The Center is also the academic advising home for all undeclared students in any class year. The staff includes one director and eight academic advisors. The school deans are working with the VPDUE to identify ways to make sure we can evaluate the effectiveness of centralized advising. This has been a trend around the nation.

We are exploring implementing potential two year requirement for residence on campus. Research with the higher education research institute shows that having students living on campus increases retention rates.

B. General Education

Searches are underway for the GE program chair and the GE coordinator. We hope that both positions will be filled by the end of September. VPDUE will be filling in on the program chair's role in the meantime.

V.   Campus Review Items
A. Committee on Rules and Elections Revised Recommended Voting Policies in Academic Personnel Cases
The document has been substantially revised in response to [feedback received from Senate committees](#) in spring 2018. The revised proposal is available here: https://ucmerced.box.com/s/m8izsf24vhqgp1fzw7aiq17sm9r9vrea
Reviewers: Susan Amussen and Michelle Leslie.

B. Proposed Model Systemwide Policy for Posthumous Degrees
The University Committee on Educational Policy (UCEP) is requesting that each UC campus adopt a policy to regulate the awarding of posthumous baccalaureate degrees, [within the model systemwide framework provided by UCEP.](#) UGC will review and, as determined necessary, revise the [campus's policy](#) for the awarding of posthumous baccalaureate degrees in light of the model provided by UCEP.
Reviewers: Sholeh Quinn and James Palko