

Graduate Group Chairs Meeting
Tuesday, March 23, 2021
9:00 A.M. – 10:00 A.M. | Zoom

Meeting Minutes

Graduate Group Chairs Present: John Abatzoglou, Chris Amemiya, Irene Beattie, YangQuan Chen, Chih-Chun Chien, Courtenay Conrad, Justin Cook, Kevin Dawson, Christine Isborn, Sarah Kurtz, Roummel Marcia, Shawn Newsam, Victor Munoz, Jan Wallander
Monica Garcia, Paul Roberts (Graduate Group Coordinators)
Erin Hestir (Graduate Council Vice-Chair)

Graduate Division Staff Present: Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, Eric Cannon, Jesus Cisneros, Ashley Eagleson, Cassie Gunter, Heath Jackson, Chris Kello, Jennifer Quiralte, Will Suh, Tsu Ya

1. Dean's Updates & Discussion Items (Interim Dean, Chris Kello, Assistant Dean Cisneros)

- Fall Planning
 - UC Merced is planning for fully in-person instruction this fall, with strict adherence to health and safety standards. Exceptions will be allowed for special/medical cases in need of accommodation.
 - Grad policies affected by COVID, which include educational continuity can be found online at, <https://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/current-students/campus-resources/covid-resources>.
 - **ACTION: Interim Dean Kello will request that further guidance be sent out re: Emergency Educational Continuity.**
- Tier 2 Access
 - A message went out on Friday, March 19, suggesting that we start to revive the Tier 2 protocol for allowing academic personnel to submit requests to return to campus for scholarly activity. To clarify, UC Merced is not yet in Tier 2, but the expectation is that we'll be there very soon.
- Conflict Management Guidelines
 - The most recent versions of the CRI guidelines can be reviewed below. Please send any comments/feedback to Maria Nishanian, mnishanian@ucmerced.edu. We will further discuss this topic during our May meeting.
 - <https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/1kNm2GyQJYiwinq5gAxAiWewiaWDCPO0xZ7dMMkcUGvw/edit?usp=sharing>
 - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UBNDIetlA9cJ3uUbucpVIQ98mshbc4B-unSGRFP95Cc/edit?usp=sharing>
- Upcoming Opportunity: On April 15, we will be launching the application for the Bakersfield College Future Faculty Fellowship. This program is designed for UC Merced PhD students nearing completion, postdocs and recent PhD and master's alumni.
 - It is a one-year paid residency (virtual this year) that provides mentorship and hands on training for individuals who want to become tenure track community college faculty. The disciplines they are recruiting for are Chemistry, Bio, Applied Math, Physics, Geology and Public Health.
 - **ACTION: Jesus will send out additional information via email.**

2. Admissions & Academic Services (Tsu Ya)

- Admissions Update
 - Admissions numbers as of May 22;
 - 1,104 applications

- 263 admits
 - 92 SIRs.
 - Compared to last year, our admit and SIR yields are down, but our application numbers are up by 27%.
 - **ACTION: Tsu will email the Admissions & Graduation report out to the group at the end of the call.**
- Dispositioning Denied Applicants
 - For those groups who have already made their admissions decisions, but have not notified their students yet, please disposition them as soon as possible. Once processed, we will send out the letters.
 - Reminder: the national SIR deadline for students to notify universities of their intent to register is Thursday, April 15.
- Course Registration for Incoming Graduates
 - The Registrar's Office currently sends out registration notifications to current graduate students (around April) and would like to send something similar for incoming students. A question was posed to the Graduate Group Chairs re: when do we want newly admitted students to register for classes, and do we want the Registrar to send out the notifications to graduate students? If so, when?
 - It was suggested that Graduate Division work with the schools/support staff to make sure that students are being registered before TA assignments are done.
 - **ACTION: Tsu will take this item to the May 25 Graduate Group Support Staff meeting for feedback.**

3. Events (Jennifer Quiralte)

- We will host a Grad Slam Finals Viewing Party from noon - 1:30 p.m. on April 20 via Zoom. Pre-recordings will take place on Monday, April 5.
 - Our 10 finalists will each compete for a chance to win \$5,000 and the title of UCM Campus Champion.
 - The champion will be announced following the Viewing Party and go on to represent UC Merced in the UCOP systemwide competition on May 7 for a chance to win additional monies and bragging rights for our campus.
 - Please help us by sharing the information with your students and faculty once the announcement goes out.
- Virtual Graduate Visitation Days—Chair Feedback
 - We conducted a post event survey and received the following feedback;
 - It was great; it was better than UCB.
 - Appreciated the candidness of faculty, staff, and students.
 - The event helped me get all my questions answer and determine that UC Merced is a good fit for me. Thank you for this opportunity!
 - It was great and just made my decision harder! I had written Merced out based on the offer I received but I just love the campus. culture/community/people/attitude.
 - Some of the area's students were interested in learning more about were;
 - COVID protocols and graduate student research
 - Housing/cost of living/moving stipends
 - Funding opportunities
 - After reading more about the common concerns with COVID and research, the Graduate Division will be hosting a webinar for admitted students to discuss more in detail how COVID has impacted research at UC Merced and the protocols and safety the campus is taking. We will keep you all posted when we have a date so that you can share this information with your prospective students.
 - All Graduate Division hosted sessions were recorded and can be accessed on Box, <https://ucmerced.box.com/s/chb1sn942ssqvqd0f9foxbzmsjwsku2f>.

4. Annual Student Progress Report (Heath Jackson)

- Templates for each graduate group have been posted to Box and can be accessed online at, <https://ucmerced.box.com/s/t0ywrfdk7s64sy5ggoisbd5d9cxf74hy>.
- To date, all requested changes from the Graduate Group Chairs have been made to the forms. Though we are still piloting this new process, we plan to have it fully implemented by next year.
 - Please take a moment to complete the survey re: Graduate Student Review Forms, https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe2Xf6kXWzwmmZ_LqcmK9es1FtAlApirg_MK6whh-BIPMw16xg/viewform.
- For questions regarding the GRIP Funding call, please email Heath Jackson, hjackson2@ucmerced.edu.

5. Summer Bridge (Cassie Gunter)

- 18 nominations were received from the call for Summer Bridge. All nominations will be reviewed on Wednesday, March 24. Selected student will receive an invitation to participate shortly after. After these students have had some time to accept/decline their invitation, we will send a second call out for any remaining spots.
- We are still waiting for final approvals from Andy Boyd and Cindy Zimmerman in respect to the safety of running the program on campus (solely dependent on the campus moving into the red tier).
 - In order to effectively social distance, we have reserved two large classrooms in Granite Pass (100+ capacity), and will place no more than 15 people in each room at any given time.
 - We will meet 3 days/week (Tues, Wed, Thurs) from July 6- August 12.

6. Financial Services (Eric Cannon)

- COVID Relief Funds
 - We are looking at round two of stimulus relief funds being dispersed to the university for student aid. There is a proposal to have graduate students complete an affidavit explaining that they have extreme need for these funds, with disbursements occurring late spring/early summer in the amount of \$750-\$1,000.
 - Tiering will only be done with respect to childcare (e.g., last year we dispersed \$1,250 for students' w/children and w/need, \$750 for students' w/o children and w/need, \$500 for those w/o need).
 - Please do NOT call this COVID relief when speaking to your students. This is a separate process/form of funding.
 - Funds will be allocated to domestic and undocumented students only. If graduate groups would like to pool USAP funds to create funding for international students, that is an option to be further discussed.
- Continuing Fellowships Update
 - *This item was tabled for discussion due to time constraints.*

7. Graduate Council Vice Chair's Report (Erin Hestir)

- Graduate Council is working with the Registrar's Office to modify Curriculog to allow for proposing classes that have a variable title option.
- Graduate Council is in the process of looking at inconsistencies in the map in the APM around supervision of TAs and graduate student teaching fellows and postdocs.
- Graduate Council is the lead review committee for the presidential policy on the classification of gifts and sponsored rewards, as well as the systemwide senate regulation 610 regarding residence and a proposed amendment clarifying that residency is not necessarily linked to physical presence on campus.

The meeting adjourned at 10:01 A.M