

Graduate Group Chairs Meeting

Thursday, March 17, 2022

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

MEETING MINUTES

Graduate Group Chairs Present: John Abatzoglou, Irene Beattie, Alberto Cerpa, YangQuan Chen, Chih-Chun Chien, Martha Conklin, Kevin Dawson, Brad LeVeck, Changqing Li, Sidra Goldman-Mellor, Rowena Gray, Martin Hagger, Christine Isborn, Sarah Kurtz, Roummel Marcia, Paul Smaldino, Fred Wolf (QSB Representative)
Monica Garcia (Graduate Group Coordinators)
Sandie Ha (Graduate Council Vice-Chair)

Graduate Division Staff Present: Eric Cannon, Jesus Cisneros, Ashley Eagleson-Renteria, Cassie Gunter, Heath Jackson, Chris Kello, Maria Nishanian, Jennifer Quiralte, Jess Ventura, Tsu Ya

MINUTES

1. Dean's Updates & Discussion Items (Chris Kello)

- Grad Budget Overview: Interim Dean, Chris Kello provided the chairs with a brief overview of what grad and instructional budgets will look like for AY 2022-23. Due to COVID-19, units experienced a lot of cutbacks last year; however, this year we are heading towards a more sustainable and reasonable way for units to better manage their PhD admissions since we are a lot closer to hitting our target projections.
 - Moving forward, there will be an increase in the overall Graduate Division fellowship budget – went from \$5.7 to \$6.7 (\$7.7 including the temporary 2-year R1 fund) for 5 years. As a result, we expect program budgets to go up next year, per capita.
 - **ACTION: Chris will send a summary of this information that can be communicated with the faculty.**
- Chancellor's Postdoctoral Fellow Application: This year we plan to fund 1 Postdoc for 2 years and are currently in final negotiations. After speaking to the Provost, we have increased these fund amounts to be able to avoid complications with cost-overruns and having to cobble together funds from other areas to cover these students. A formal announcement will go out once finalized.
- Student Annual Reports (Jesus Cisneros/Heath Jackson): Heath went over the mechanics of how the Student Annual Report files are set-up in Box, and who is responsible for completing each part of the process.
 - For those chairs who have not yet reached out to Heath, he will send you a reminder email later today, that includes the link to your program's Box folder so that you can provide the necessary updates regarding your students' progress. For those chairs who have already reached out, Heath is working on it.
 - **Deadline to complete and upload the forms to Box is July 31, 2022.**

2. Graduate Programming & Events (Jen Quiralte)

- VGVD & In-person Visit Debrief: VGVD was a huge success! Moving forward, we would like to transition to this hybrid format indefinitely. We intend to continue to host the general/more broad outreach sessions virtually, and then we will work with the chairs to invite visitors to campus for the more targeted graduate group site visits.
 - Overall there were 4 no-shows.

- If you receive questions from prospective students regarding their reimbursements, please forward them to jquiralte@ucmerced.edu or jventura9@ucmerced.edu. An email will go out shortly with next steps.
- There was consensus from the chairs to continue hosting some components of Graduate Visitation virtually.

3. Graduate Resources (Cassie Gunter)

- Summer Bridge: Graduate Division will host Summer Bridge in-person this year, July 6-Aug 11. Faculty nominations for round are due tomorrow, March 18. We are looking to fund roughly 20 domestic students, and will follow-up with invitations to those selected students by the end of next week.

4. Admissions & Academic Services (Tsu Ya)

- Fall 2022 Admissions Numbers:
 - 254 admitted to-date
 - 79 SIRs
 - 452 pending review
 - Chairs are asked to please disposition any students that are no longer being considered for admission.
- Spring 2022 Graduation Numbers:
 - 74 (53 PhD)
- R1 Fellowships:
 - 23 submissions received out of 27
 - 6 have SIR'd, 2 declined, 1 has asked for deferral.

5. Financial Services (Eric Cannon)

- HEERF Solicitation: The final round of HEERF COVID-19 relief funds are now available and disbursement is set to take place at the end of the month. Students will be asked to submit their eligibility form by Friday, March 25th to meet the priority deadline.
 - HEERF funds are now open to all graduates, including undocumented and international students. This is now open to all students (undocumented and international).
 - All students will receive the same amount, and we will also do a second disbursement of any remaining funds.
- Carryforward of Grad Group Funds: If there are any graduate groups whose funds did not get processed on time, please email ecannon2@ucmerced.edu. Unfortunately, we cannot do a blanket carryforward of remaining funds, but we can still process those that were held up due to issues with the financial system.
- Recruitment Fellowships: To date, we have a total of 8 acceptances, 4 declines, and 20 pending offers. The deadline to accept is April 15.
- Continuing Fellowships: All nominations are currently in review and we have set a target date of April 1 to announce the recipients.

6. Graduate Counseling (Maria Nishanian)

- Mentorship Training Workshop Update: Graduate Division will host 2 presenters from UMass to provide a 2-day, hands-on, mentorship training for faculty, April 8-9, 2022 (4hrs/day). For more information, visit <https://cimerproject.org/>.
 - This initial training will be open to up to 35 faculty. If you would like to participate, please email Maria Nishanian, mnishanian@ucmerced.edu.

7. Recruitment (Jesus Cisneros, Jess Ventura)

- *This item was tabled for discussion due to time constraints.*

8. Graduate Council Vice Chair's Report (Sandie Ha)

- The Conflict Resolution Infrastructure document is still in progress as the committee is working on finalizing the documentation for implementation.
- Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Charles Nies was invited to a consultation re: recent concerns about housing, transportation, and the mental health of our students. Charles provided some of the following updates;
 - Housing: there is currently a housing system fund available, that aims to help students recover rent payments. If you have students who you think would qualify for this assistance program, please reach out to Sandie for the form link.
 - TAPS: due to the increase in gas prices, Student Affairs has purchased gas gift cards for students who may struggle with getting to campus.
 - Mental Health Services: data shows that over 20% of the appointments for counseling and psychological services are made by graduate students, yet they only make up 8% of our student population. As a result, the UC is working with the JET Foundation to come up with strategies for strategic planning related to mental health.
 - Currently there are group therapy sessions available for students on Tuesdays at 3pm and Wednesdays at 11am in SSB 217.
 - **ACTION: Cassie will follow-up with Charles Nies on how to access gas cards for graduate students and report back to the group.**
- There have been recent concerns about course materials being inappropriately posted online. GC is working with the Graduate Dean and the campus to share some strategies and languages approved by UCOP for instructors to use on their materials to prevent this from occurring.
 - Adding signals for filtering tools directly on the header/footer of the course materials:
 - ***"This content is protected and may not be shared, uploaded, or distributed."***
 - Having explicit language on the syllabus so that students are clear they should not share course materials without permission:
 - ***"My lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials I create. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own use. You may not and may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly whether or not a fee is charged without my express written consent. Similarly, you own copyright in your original papers and exam essays. If I am interested in posting your answers or papers on the course web site, I will ask for your written permission."***
 - **ACTION: Chris will check with James Zimmerman and Cathy Pohan to see if this information has been posted for faculty to access.**
- GC is aware of the fact that the campus library is chronically understaffed and closed on Saturdays as a result. GC has deemed this a student access issue and has requested data on impact be collected from library personnel. More to follow in the coming weeks.