

## Graduate Group Chairs Meeting

Thursday, May 12, 2022

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

### MEETING MINUTES

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Graduate Group Chairs Present: John Abatzoglou, Irene Beattie, YangQuan Chen, Chih-Chun Chien, Kevin Dawson, Sidra Goldman-Mellor, Rowena Gray, Christine Isborn, Brad LeVeck, Changqing Li, Martin Hagger, Christine Isborn, Sarah Kurtz, Roummel Marcia  
Monica Garcia (Graduate Group Coordinators)

Graduate Division Staff Present: Eric Cannon, Jesus Cisneros, Ashley Eagleson-Renteria, Cassie Gunter, Chris Kello, Tania Macias, Maria Nishanian, Jennifer Quiralte, Jessica Ventura, Tsu Ya  
Jenny Xiang (Assessment Coordinator)

### AGENDA

#### 1. Assessment Agenda (Jenny Xiang)

- Assessment Coordinator, Jenny Xiang, reported on the annual assessment agenda, which included a review of the results from the graduate student systemwide survey.
  - For questions or concerns related to assessment and the integration of survey data into your program's student reports, feel free to email Jenny, [jxiang3@ucmerced.edu](mailto:jxiang3@ucmerced.edu) or Michael Gonzalez, [mgonzalez348@ucmerced.edu](mailto:mgonzalez348@ucmerced.edu).
    - **ACTION: Research Analyst, Michael Gonzalez will sort the survey results by graduate program and share them with the Graduate Group Chairs and Graduate Division team.**

#### 2. Dean's Updates & Discussion Items (Chris Kello, Asmeret Asefaw Berhe, Jesus Cisneros)

- We have secured 15 SIRs as a result of the R1 Fellowships that were disbursed this year. Roughly \$400K will roll over to next year's fellowship budget.
  - If you didn't receive a commitment letter, you will not receive the fellowship funding. If you did receive a commitment letter, but the student failed to SIR, the fellowship funds that were awarded will carryover.
- Bargaining for GSRs and ASEs is still underway; however, many GSRs and Fellows are now represented.
- Graduate defenses and exams will no longer be held remotely. Starting Fall 2022, graduates are expected to return to campus for all oral portions of exams and defenses.
- Professor Asmeret Asefaw Berhe was officially confirmed today by the U.S. Senate to be the new director of the Office of Science in the federal Department of Energy. The Department of Energy's Office of Science is the lead federal agency supporting fundamental scientific research for energy, and the nation's largest supporter of basic research in the physical sciences. We will communicate plans for a new Associate Dean in the coming weeks.

#### 3. Annual Student Progress Reports (Heath Jackson)

- This item is in progress and should be completed within the next 2 weeks. Due to staffing shortages and fiscal close, Graduate Division is experiencing delays. If something urgent comes up, please email Heath and Cc: Jesus Cisneros, [jcisneros@ucmerced.edu](mailto:jcisneros@ucmerced.edu).

- Intermediate Solution: Have the students use the template, and submit to the Box folder later. Heath will provide instruction on file naming.

#### 4. Mentorship Training Update (Maria Nishanian)

- The CIMER Faculty Mentorship Training that took place in April was a success, with 23 faculty participating in the program. Following the training, several faculty met with the Dean to debrief on the workshop and brainstorm ideas for future implementation of the training on campus for faculty and postdocs.
  - CIMER will offer an in-person training, August 15-16 to those faculty who are interested in becoming a trainer, and the Graduate Division will gladly help cover the costs. Please email Maria Nishanian, [mnishanian@ucmerced.edu](mailto:mnishanian@ucmerced.edu) if you're interested in registering.

#### 5. Graduate Resources (Cassie Gunter)

- There are currently 16 students confirmed and 2 pending for Summer Bridge. We hope to have a complete cohort by the end of next week. Summer Bridge will be held from July 6-August 12.
- We are preparing for our first and largest ever Spring Commencement ceremonies since 2019, which will span across three days from Friday, May 13 to Sunday, May 15. We ask that anyone who can offer their time and talent to one, two, or all ceremonies, to assist with graduate student line up and hooding, please lend your support.
  - Questions about commencement and/or any last minute additions, can be referred to [gradresources@ucmerced.edu](mailto:gradresources@ucmerced.edu).
    - **ACTION: Cassie will share the final Ph.D. hooding list with the Graduate Group Chairs later today.**

#### 6. Graduate Programming & Events (Jen Quiralte)

- Graduate Division will host graduating master's and PhD students and their families on Thursday, May 12<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 – 7pm at Five Ten Bistro. Staff are encouraged to come out and help us celebrate the accomplishments of our students. Drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Registration is still open.
- Dissertation Bootcamp will take place on-campus, Monday, May 23 through Thursday, May 26. Of the 37 applications received, 22 will be admitted to the program. Acceptance letters have gone out and we are currently waiting on responses.
- GROW Save the Dates have gone out to students and faculty, and the GROW committee is now working on a communication plan. Please reference the UCM Graduate Division website for all Pre-GROW information, <https://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/node/10461> and feel free to contact Jen, [jquiralte@ucmerced.edu](mailto:jquiralte@ucmerced.edu) if you have any additional questions or concerns.
  - Currently there are 25-30 students registered.
  - GROW will begin on Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, and all students are expected to arrive on the first day to complete new hire paperwork. Any students arriving late will need to get approval from the Graduate Dean or they will be asked to defer to Spring.

#### 7. Admissions & Academic Services (Tsu Ya)

- Applications & Admissions Update:
  - 175 SIRs (148 Ph.D., 27 Masters, 9 Pending)
  - 64 applications for Spring graduation are expected to be cleared (38 Ph.D., 17 Masters, 9 Terminal Masters)
- Graduate Division will say farewell to Tsu Ya on Tuesday, May 31, 2022. Tsu will immediately begin in his new position of Assistant Dean at Hult International Business School.

- Graduate Division will soon post the position of Admissions & Academic Services Director for review of applications. soon.
- Please feel free to forward any pending items for Tsu onto Jesus/Tania/Angel or email [gradservices@ucmerced.edu](mailto:gradservices@ucmerced.edu).

#### 8. Financial Services (Eric Cannon)

- The Financial Services unit is gearing up for the processing of summer fellowship awards and hopes to get disbursements out to students as soon as possible.
  - If you have been contacted by a student declining their offer, please work with your school staff or the Graduate Division to determine next steps.
  - We are still working with Financial Aid on HEERF disbursements. Some will go out as soon as tomorrow, and others by no later than June 1.
- All chairs should have received an email from Eric Cannon about the continuing fellowships and recruitment fellowships. Any remaining funds from the \$1M disbursement will be added to your AY 2022-23 fellowship budgets.
  - Operating budgets will not be carried over from year to year.
  - Operational funds cannot be used for fellowships, but you may use any remaining funds to purchase gift cards in the amount of \$75 or less. Please work with your school staff on this. If purchasing equipment for student use, that is considered UCM property, and will need to be tracked and collected from the student prior to their leaving UCM.
- End of Year OTA and Shadish fellowship awards have been announced and an awards' gathering that will be held next week.

#### 9. Graduate Council Vice Chair's Report (Chris Kello)

- Graduate Council has been working with the Graduate Division to make handbook revisions related to the following two items;
  - Full-time Enrollment Status: At UC Merced, 8 units define full-time status; however, academic appointments such as TAs, GSRs, and fellowships, require 12 units for full-time status. UCOP calculates full-time status as 12 units for 1 FTE. In order to align with UCOP's policy, we are revising our handbook to define full-time status as 12 credits rather than 8.
  - Qualifying exam and defense modality (for master's and PhD students): Committee members (including Chair) who are in-residence are required to attend the exam/defense in person. Those not in residence are encouraged to join in person but may participate remotely with approval of Committee Chair, who is required to be in person. Exceptions for students and in-residence committee members must be approved by the Graduate Dean.
- GSA has been working on a document that outlines their Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities. It has been a long process given changes in GSA leadership, but they presented a well-written document in the last Graduate Council meeting on 5/9/2022. The document was developed in close consultation with GC and its members, and is in alignment with ongoing discussions. Given the limited time for discussion during our last meeting, GC will continue to work with GSA over the summer to finalize the document.
- Graduate Council and Graduate Division, with consultation from stakeholders (e.g., Deans, Chairs, COR, our Counselor Maria Nishanian, etc.), developed a Faculty/Grad Conflict Guidelines & Resolution document that serves as a guideline to help graduate students, postdocs, and faculty navigate the system should a conflict arise. The goal is to resolve the conflict before it takes an unnecessary course. Endorsed by GC on 4/25/2022, the document contains a flowchart that describes a recommended process and accompanying text with more details.