



University of California, Merced
5200 N. Lake Road | Merced, CA 95343
209-228-4723

GRADUATE DIVISION

August 10, 2020

Subject: Summary of graduate-related COVID-19 updates and resources

Dear UC Merced graduate community,

Over the summer, the university has been planning for the fall and adjusting in response to changes in COVID-19 conditions and changes in regulations from county, state, and federal officials. The Graduate Division and the campus have sent email communications with updates along the way and will continue to do so throughout the academic year. With the start of fall just around the corner, now is a good time to summarize the current state of affairs for our graduate community.

Fall instruction will begin on Wednesday, August 26 with classroom instruction being fully remote. A small number of courses may have some in-person instruction as the semester progresses, depending on local public health conditions. Research activity began returning to campus over the summer, with lower density and social distancing practices in place. We anticipate that additional buildings will reopen for research in the coming weeks, including graduate student research for course credit or employment. Faculty and research directors must submit operational plans that include procedures for scheduling and conducting research activities while mitigating COVID-19 risks for graduate students and other personnel. Each operational plan must be approved by the school dean, Vice Chancellor for Research, and Provost before the corresponding research space can reopen.

Graduate students should register for the fall semester by August 17, and they should be in contact with their instructors, advisors, and school support staff for information about specific courses, research activities, and teaching and research assistantships. For help with registration and other program-specific needs, contact individual school support staff (Engineering: soe-grstaff@ucmerced.edu; Natural Sciences: snsgrads@ucmerced.edu; Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts: ssha.grad@ucmerced.edu; Management Program: mist@ucmerced.edu).

Students, faculty, and staff can visit the [Graduate Division COVID-19 Resources](#) webpage for additional information about fall instruction and research relaunch, as well as COVID-based updates to graduate policies and procedures, international student regulations, public health measures and requirements, and student resources and support services.

The Graduate Division has been holding well-attended office hours throughout the summer, and Zoom has proven to be an effective platform for this mode of communication and interaction. We will continue to hold office hours throughout the fall, with the next one scheduled for 1 p.m. August 18 using the following link: <https://ucmerced.zoom.us/j/94170406660>. Students are also welcome to send suggestions to the Graduate Division through an [online submission form](#). General questions about graduate admissions can be emailed to

gradadmissions@ucmerced.edu, and general questions about graduate funding can be emailed to gradfunding@ucmerced.edu.

I hope that the summer has been safe and healthy for you and your friends and family, and I look forward to welcoming everyone to the start of the fall semester.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Kello". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher Kello
Interim Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education
Professor of Cognitive and Information Sciences