Hello Mara,

Welcome to UC Merced, we are excited you will be joining the Bobcat community this fall! Please review the important information below as you prepare to begin graduate studies at UC Merced. Please note that all future communications will be sent to your UC Merced email address.

**Graduate Orientation Week**

Graduate Orientation Week (GROW) encompasses a number of workshops, programs, and events held at the beginning of each academic year. GROW sessions are hosted by the Graduate Division, campus partners, and your graduate program. These sessions allow incoming students to take care of important pre-enrollment tasks while learning more about UC Merced and the Merced community. All incoming UC Merced graduate students are expected to participate in GROW, and all workshops and sessions are required unless otherwise noted in the official schedule.

**GROW will begin on Tuesday, August 15, and in-person attendance is required for students.**

[REGISTER HERE for GROW!](#)

**The deadline to register for GROW is Friday, July 28, 2023.**

We encourage you to check the [GROW website](#) for the most up-to-date information, including the updated schedule (available soon). Many of the sessions during GROW will be held both synchronously and asynchronously. In addition to your in-person training, we will use CatCourses, UC Merced's virtual training system for teaching, research, and...
collaboration. Each student will be assigned specific virtual trainings that are required of all UC Merced graduate students, including Teaching Assistant training, Sexual Harassment and Prevention training, Office of Research training, and more. Additional graduate group or school-specific sessions may also be required. Please be sure to read the schedule carefully and reach out to your school representatives with specific questions.

**Teaching Commons Orientation**

*Note: This event is mandatory for all incoming graduate students, regardless of whether or not you will be a TA.*

As part of GROW, Teaching Commons conducts a campuswide Teaching Assistant (TA) Orientation. The orientation will touch on important policies and procedures related to teaching at UC Merced, give insight into how to prepare for your first day of teaching, provide an opportunity to ask questions about how to teach and share with pedagogical methods. The Fall 2023 sessions will be a blend of live and pre-recorded sessions in formats that invite communication with other new graduate students and active participation.

**PreGROW Series**

PreGROW is a webinar series designed to provide important information on navigating the transition to graduate studies. Below are the dates and sessions that will be held in the months leading up to your arrival on campus. We encourage you to attend as many sessions as possible to ensure that all of your questions are answered. PreGROW registration links will be provided in future email communications. Recordings will also be available if you are unable to attend the live sessions.

**PreGROW Sessions**

- Wednesday, June 21 - Welcome to UC Merced Office Hour with Grad Div Staff
- Wednesday, June 28 - Office of International Affairs (OIA) Office Hours
- Wednesday, July 12 - New Hire Paperwork/Graduate Student Funding Workshop
- Wednesday, July 19 - Health Services Workshop
- Wednesday, July 26 - Navigating Advisor/Advisee Relationships
- Wednesday, August 2 - Graduate Division Office Hours

**Payroll Processing**

Please watch your UC Merced email for updates and information on completing payroll paperwork. Much of the information is time sensitive, so please pay close attention to dates and deadlines to ensure that you complete the necessary paperwork and get paid in a timely matter.

**Graduate Student Housing**

We encourage you to please start thinking and planning for housing. Several apartments and living spaces may have waiting lists, so please plan accordingly. Listed below are several websites to help guide you in finding off-campus housing:

- The UC Merced Off-Campus Housing Website - A database where local property owners can list rental units and students can search for roommates and sublease options. Information on the Off-Campus Housing (OCH) listings and other off-campus resources such as apartment contacts can be found here: [https://och.ucmerced.edu/](https://och.ucmerced.edu/)
- UC Merced Classified Facebook Page (not maintained by the university): [https://www.facebook.com/groups/UCMCClassifieds/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/UCMCClassifieds/)
• Merced Social Graduate Students (not maintained by the university): [https://www.facebook.com/groups/1452249318380902](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1452249318380902)
• UC Merced Students: Off-Campus Housing (not maintained by the university): [https://www.facebook.com/groups/140045992743363](https://www.facebook.com/groups/140045992743363)
• Merced Station Apartments is the newest community located close to campus on Yosemite Ave and Lake Road

To learn more about off-campus housing options, UC Merced campus resources, and answers to frequently asked questions, you can:

• Email och@ucmerced.edu with your questions or schedule a meeting with a member of the Off-Campus Housing Consultant team to assist with your rental search process.
• Call 209-325-6529 or 209-325-6650

**Register for Classes and Prepare for Your Student Bill**
Registering for classes is the first step toward preparing for your arrival. If you have not been in touch with your faculty advisor regarding course registration, please contact your graduate program staff for information on which courses you should register for.

Engineering: [soe-grstaff@ucmerced.edu](mailto:soe-grstaff@ucmerced.edu)
Natural Sciences: [snsgrads@ucmerced.edu](mailto:snsgrads@ucmerced.edu)
Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts: [ssha.grad@ucmerced.edu](mailto:ssha.grad@ucmerced.edu)

You can also find additional resources about the registration process on the Office of the Registrar’s [website](https://www.registrar.ucmerced.edu).

If you are not an ASE or GSR, you are responsible for paying campus-based fees by August 16. You must enroll in at least one course before you will be able to pay those fees. Your bill will include additional fees if you have been awarded an appointment as a teaching assistant or graduate student researcher, or if you have been awarded a fellowship. Your other fees will be paid by that financial support. Additional fees include mandatory health insurance (SHIP), tuition, and a student services fee. If you do not have financial support, you should check your student account balance owed by the August 16 deadline.

**A special note for financial aid recipients:** The money you receive before your academic appointment has not yet been applied to your bill, so your bill will appear to be for a larger amount than you are actually required to pay.

Watch this video to learn how to register for classes.
Get (or Waive) Health Insurance
All students are automatically enrolled in and charged for the campus-based Anthem Blue Cross medical plan when they register for classes. If you carry your own medical insurance, you may file a Medical Health Insurance Waiver. The electronic insurance waiver application can be submitted [HERE](#). Waiver applications for 2023-2024 must be completed by no later than 11:59 p.m. on **August 1, 2023**. For more information, please contact the [Health Services Office](#).

Stay in Touch
Be sure to check your UC Merced email regularly as we will be sending information on housing, transportation, funding opportunities, and GROW.

Additional information for incoming students can be found on our [website](#) or in the [Admitted Graduate Student Guide](#).

Please don't hesitate to contact the [UC Merced Graduate Resource Center](#) with any questions. We look forward to welcoming you to campus this fall!

Sincerely,

UC Merced Graduate Division and the GROW Committee

2023 Grow Committee
Graduate Division
English Language Institute (ELI)
Office of International Affairs (OIA)
Office of Research and Economic Development
Payroll Services
School of Engineering
School of Natural Sciences
School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts