UNVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA **ACADEMIC SENATE – Merced Division**

UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL (UGC)

PROCEDURES AND POLICIES FOR APPROVAL OF NEW UNDERGRADUATE COURSES AND UNDERGRADUATE COURSE CHANGES

Revised by UGC – May 2009

I. General Policy:

According to the UCM Bylaws, Undergraduate Council (UGC) is charged on behalf of the Division to review and approve all new undergraduate courses and modifications to existing undergraduate courses, including withdrawal, conduct, credit valuation, description, and classification of existing courses. After an undergraduate course is approved by UGC, it is transmitted to the Registrar for inclusion in the electronic course system and the UCM Catalog. No undergraduate course can be offered for enrollment and no official change to an existing course can be made by the Registrar without UGC approval.

Approval of new undergraduate courses and course modifications are transmitted to UGC via the existing web-based system (http://crf.ucmerced.edu).

II. Procedure for CRF Submission:

1. Submission of CRFs to UGC for approval should adhere to the deadlines in the annual calendar prepared by UGC. Note that UGC will not consider CRFs for approval during winter break or during summer.

2. All CRFs must be approved by the Curriculum Committee (CC) of the School (or other faculty committee designated to review curricular matters) submitting the CRF, and be approved by the Dean of the School (or designee), before the CRF is submitted for UGC approval. It is the responsibility of the School CC to review course content, programmatic contribution, overlap with other courses, and resource implications within the context of the specific program in the School.

3. *New courses* should be indicated on the CRF and should be accompanied by a 1 to 2-page course outline (*not* a full course syllabus) summarizing the course content and purpose, goals for student learning outcomes, how such goals connect to the program or degree objectives, and, for courses satisfying General Education, how the course addresses three or more of the Guiding Principles for General Education at UC Merced. The content of the course outline should also aid reviewers in understanding whether proper learning assessment tools are part of the course and include sufficient information on format, topics, and the types of readings (e.g., textbooks, novels, essays, journal articles, etc.) to adequately assess student workload and potential

overlap with other existing or proposed courses. The course outline is intended to give reviewers information about the general nature and subject of the course - actual details of the course (e.g., specific lecture topics or emphasis, readings, or student assignments) may vary with course delivery and instructor.

4. *Modifications to an existing course* should be indicated on the CRF. Instructors should indicate briefly in the explanation box the reason for the proposed change(s) (e.g., change in prerequisite, update of course description, reason for change in units, etc.).

5. *Cross-listed courses* are those undergraduate courses (numbered 1 to 199) that have different prefixes, names, and/or course numbers but are intended to be offered as the same course (i.e., same meeting time, requirements, units, and course description). Each course that is cross-listed with another course must have its own CRF that indicates the corresponding cross-listed course. Cross-listed courses must have the same course requirements, number of units, prerequisite courses, course description, and anticipated resources. If cross-listed courses originate within different Schools, each School CC must approve the course and the Dean of each School must approve the CRF.

6. *Conjoined courses* are those courses that are taught concurrently as both an advanced upper division undergraduate and an introductory graduate course. As per SR 762, undergraduate and graduate versions of conjoined courses "must have clearly differentiated and unique performance criteria, requirements, and goals." Each course that is conjoined with another course must have its own CRF that indicates the corresponding conjoined course. The graduate version of the course must be reviewed and approved by GRC.

7. Questions regarding the electronic system submittal should be addressed to support@eng.ucmerced.edu

8. Complete CRFs will be transmitted to UGC for review. The following criteria will be used by UGC in its review:
    - Are the standards of the proposed course consistent with the standards for other courses taught at UCM?
    - Is the level appropriate (lower division, upper division)? Are the prerequisites for the course consistent with the level?
    - Is the instructional format justified (lecture, lab, etc.)? Is the unit value for the course justified? Is there an appropriate workload for the number of units offered (governed by SR 760[1])?

[1] **SR 760**: The value of a course in units shall be reckoned at the rate of one unit for three hours' work per week per term on the part of a student, or the equivalent.

- If a course is listed for variable units, does the description specify how unit value will be assigned? Are requirements clearly delineated for unit value?
- Does the course appear to fit within the major or minor curriculum or subject area? If an interdisciplinary or cross-listed course, are the subject areas and/or content described?
- Does the course overlap with another course? Some units may offer courses with similar subject matter, but with different disciplinary perspectives; however, potential overlap with another course should be explained in the CRF or attached course outline.
- Is the course description for the Catalog correct and consistent with the information given in the CRF?
- Are the anticipated resources consistent with the course format and description?

Additional review criteria for cross-listed courses are:

- Do cross-listed courses have identical requirements, units, descriptions, prerequisites, and resource requirements?
- Cross-listed courses must be approved by all of the participating Schools and approved by the Dean of each participating School.

Additional review criteria for conjoined courses are:

- Do conjoined courses have sufficient overlap in course structure to facilitate concurrent instruction of both advanced undergraduates and graduate students?
- Are performance criteria, requirements, and goals of the undergraduate and graduate versions of the course clear and distinct?
- Conjoined courses must also be approved by the Graduate and Research Council.

9. If UGC requires further information or indicates that modification of the CRF is needed, the Senate Analyst, on behalf of UGC, will notify the School of the request. It is the responsibility of the School and/or the instructor responsible for the CRF to provide the requested information or modification to the CRF in a timely fashion.

Once a course is approved by UGC, the Senate Analyst will notify the Registrar. The Registrar will notify the originating School of approval and the course will be entered into the Catalog.

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GRADUATE COURSE APPROVAL AND CRF PROCESS

Requests for new graduate courses and course modifications are transmitted to GRC using the existing Course Request Form (CRF) in Excel spreadsheet format. Transition to a web-based format is foreseen in the near future.

Procedure for CRF submission for graduate courses:

Note: Throughout this document, the term ”Graduate Group“ refers to either a stand-alone graduate group or a graduate emphasis area within the Interim Individual Graduate Program. Our interpretation of UCM and system-wide bylaws is that GRC has no jurisdiction over courses offered by approved graduate programs; that authority is granted to the faculty in the program. For consistency and bookkeeping purposes, however, we are requesting that all graduate course requests follow the procedure given below. Course requests from groups that have been granted full graduate program status require approval only from the Registrar’s office and not from GRC.

1. All CRFs must be approved by a vote of the faculty of the submitting Graduate Group or by a committee to which that authority has been delegated. Documentation of approval by the Graduate Group, usually in the form of a cover letter from the group chair, must accompany submission of the CRF. All CRFs must also be signed by the faculty member proposing the course or course change and by the lead Dean for the submitting graduate group. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Group faculty to review course content, programmatic contribution, overlap with other courses, resource implications within the context of the relevant graduate program(s), WASC compliance, and need for submission of a Substantive Change Proposal to WASC. The campus WASC Academic Liaison Officer (ALO) and the WASC Substantive Change Specialist will assist faculty in determining if a Substantive Change Proposal to WASC is necessary. Program modifications that require a Substantive Change Proposal include introduction of a new degree, new modalities, introduction of a new off-campus site, or change in duration of a program (see February 5, 2009 WASC Steering Committee Memo for more information on triggers for substantive change).

2. New courses should be indicated as such on the CRF and should have attached a WASC compliant syllabus providing the course goals/objectives, student learning outcomes, contact information, class policies, academic integrity policy, disability services information, course schedule/assignments/resources, and assessment/grading policy. Beginning in Fall 2009, the syllabus should also explain what the course contributes to the student's overall education (its relationship to the Program Learning Outcomes) and how it enriches (rather than duplicates, for example) the existing curriculum (i.e. the course's relationship to extant courses). Resources for formulating a WASC compliant syllabus are available through the Center for Research on Teaching Excellence at http://crte.ucmerced.edu.