WELCOME TO UC MERCED

It is a pleasure and an honor to welcome you to the University of California, Merced. We hope that you find your time as a Bobcat intellectually stimulating and personally rewarding. The process of earning a graduate degree is filled with significant academic, professional, and personal challenges. For most students, graduate school is a period of intense learning and scholarly achievement. It can also be a period of continued personal growth and maturation.

Together, the Graduate Division, the Office of Student Affairs, and the Graduate Student Association are committed to making your experience at UC Merced as productive, healthy and fulfilling as possible. This guide is designed to provide you with valuable information that you will need in the next few years. It will also help connect you with the wide range of offices and professionals around the campus dedicated to supporting graduate students. In this guide you will find a summary of the regulations and guidelines governing graduate study at UC Merced as well as descriptions of the many non-academic resources available to UC Merced graduate students and their families. Each phone number, e-mail address, link, and name in this guide represents a knowledgeable person or office with the information that can help you on your journey toward your degree. We strongly urge you to take advantage of these resources whenever possible.

This guide is only a starting point. We cannot emphasize enough how important it is for you to develop strong relationships with your peers, your major professor, the graduate adviser for your program, the rest of the faculty and staff of your graduate program, and other members of the community outside of your academic discipline. Many of the professional and personal connections you make here will continue to be important to you for years after you earn your degree and leave Merced. To help graduate students make these vital connections, the Graduate Student Association, the Graduate Division, and the Office of Student Affairs each sponsor activities, workshops, and community-building receptions throughout the year. We hope to have the opportunity to meet you in person at some of these events.

In closing, welcome and thank you for choosing UC Merced. Best wishes as you begin this next phase of your educational journey!

QuickTime™ and a decompressor are needed to see this picture.

Samuel J Traina, Vice Chancellor
for Research and Graduate Dean

QuickTime™ and a decompressor are needed to see this picture.

Jane Lawrence Vice Chancellor
for Student Affairs

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Part 1 of the guide gives you information about ***What to Expect When You're Getting Started*** as a new graduate student or, in the case of continuing students, refreshes your memory about important details. This section deals with **orientation, registration, health insurance, and residency, with some extra information for international students**. These are all matters that you should keep in mind during your career as a graduate student.

Part 2 gives the basics on ***Fees and Finances***, from understanding your university bill and the complexity of graduate student financial support, to tips on how to pay for your graduate education. This section clarifies the rules and regulations surrounding your **employment status as a working graduate student, gives tips for finding jobs, and provides information on fellowships and graduate scholarships, as well as valuable warnings and possible solutions to financial problems**.

Part 3 summarizes requirements for ***Getting the Degree***, and what to expect from your graduate education. Included is all the essential information – d**egree requirements, special information about your rights to privacy, choosing your committees, authorship, grades, and filing your thesis/dissertation.**

Part 4, ***Campus Resources***, introduces you to the campus services available to you including the **Graduate Student Association, the Counseling Center, the Student Health Center, and the Campus Writing Center**, just to name a few. This section also details many of the services available to help you in your education and professional development, **including advocacy resources** you may need when things aren't going as you had expected.

Part 5 is titled ***Life and Balance in Merced***, and it gives you inside information on the resources for living in Merced – **housing, childcare, schools, social life, creative outlets, recreational activities, and more!**

There are many policies and procedures that this guide does not address in detail. University policies are subject to frequent change. For information on current university policies, please see the *Graduate Faculty Adviser's Handbook*, available online at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*. If there is any discrepancy between this guide and the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook*, the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook* prevails.

It is our hope that the information in this guide will make your search for the answers easier, and thus keep the weeds of frustration away from your path to success. If you have additional questions, please call the Graduate Division at (209) 228-4723.

PART 1: WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE GETTING STARTED

There are many new requirements and opportunities that you'll encounter as you begin graduate study at UC Merced. This section describes orientation, registration, and health insurance requirements. It also includes some extra information regarding requirements and resources for international students.

ORIENTATIONS

There are a number of orientations that may be helpful to you as you start your graduate school career at UC Merced. These include: the Week of Orientation and Welcome (WOW) for all new and continuing graduate students, the Teaching Assistant (TA) Orientation for all graduate students who will eventually become TAs, and the Graduate Program Orientations put on by your graduate program faculty and staff or by your fellow graduate students.

WEEK OF ORIENTATION AND WELCOME

Week of Orientation and Welcome (otherwise known as WOW) is a week of social and academic orientation activities for new and continuing graduate students sponsored by the Offices of Graduate Studies and Student Affairs. It is held at the end of summer, usually during the week just before the fall semester officially starts. WOW comprises a series of workshops, panel discussions, and social activities designed to introduce you to the campus, prepare you for some of the expected and unexpected side effects of graduate school, and familiarize you with the various university services available to graduate students.

GRADUATE PROGRAM ORIENTATION

Almost every graduate program has its own orientation program for new students. Some are elaborate, multi-day affairs that include tours of field sites around the state, while others are a simple, half-day of lectures and discussion. Regardless of its scope, your graduate program's orientation is a chance to meet your graduate student peers, as well as faculty and staff members in your program. It is important that you know who they are and equally important that they know you. Check with your graduate program staff or your Graduate Adviser for more information about the dates and times of your program's orientation.

TEACHING ASSISTANT ORIENTATION

The Orientation for New Teaching Assistants is an introduction to the Teaching Assistant (TA) role and its value in graduate student professional development. All new TAs are required to attend this orientation, and many experienced TAs return to take advantage of sessions they missed in previous years. If you will not be a TA until winter or spring semester, you should still attend this orientation program. Everyone is welcome!

During the orientation, experienced TAs will share their insights and provide tips on the essential skills of being a TA: leading discussions, explaining clearly, and grading and recording student work. You will consider what to do at the first class meeting, and you will discuss strategies for successfully interacting with your students. This is also an opportunity for you to become familiar with the many programs, resources and services available for graduate student instructors.

KEY PEOPLE

Each graduate program has one or more faculty appointed as **Graduate Adviser(s)**. In addition, each program has a designated staff person who provides administrative and programmatic support. The Graduate Adviser is probably the most important person for you to know and with whom to stay in touch. Graduate Advisers are responsible for reviewing and approving each program of study for every graduate student each semester, acting on all petitions, and making recommendations for the composition of exam and thesis committees. Seek out your adviser ahead of time – if you don't know this person, allow some time for you and your adviser to get to know each other. Help yourself by asking your adviser's advice and help your adviser by reading all forms and anticipating necessary signatures. (If an adviser's signature is necessary, a notation is always printed on the form).

The graduate program staff provides information, assists in processing applications, and maintains your files while you are an enrolled student. Program staff are experts in keeping up with which form has to be filed with which office, in order to keep you in good standing. They also know the right sources and solutions to whatever problem you may have.

As a team, the advisers and staff are an invaluable source of information. They are excellent problem solvers – and the wise graduate student knows who they are and consults them frequently. Graduate Division maintains a complete list of these important people, so if you are unsure who your adviser or program support staff is, go to http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/ or contact 228-4723 (CAT-GRAD)

REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT

To be considered a registered student, you must be enrolled in coursework or 299 (research) units and pay fees for the semester. You are considered a non-registered student if you have not enrolled and have not paid fees. Non-registered students include those on PELP (Planned Educational Leave Program) or Filing Fee status. This category also includes students who have withdrawn from the university.

REGISTRATION

YOU MUST REGISTER EVERY SEMESTER IF YOU ARE A REGULAR OR PART-TIME STUDENT. University policy requires continuous registration for students from the first semester of enrollment in a program until completion of the degree, unless the student is: (1) on an approved leave of absence (Planned Educational Leave Program) or (2) qualifies for approved Filing Fee status. If you fail to register, you will be regarded as having withdrawn from the university, unless you are in PELP or Filing Fee status.

You must be registered to be eligible to:

1. Be employed as a Teaching Assistant, or Graduate Student Researcher. Regardless of employment, students holding these titles must be enrolled in 12 units. The units can be a combination of research units, apprentice units and academic coursework, with the approval of the Graduate Adviser.
2. Hold graduate fellowships or scholarships.
3. Take the Master's Comprehensive Examination or the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination.
4. Use university facilities or faculty time for research or other studies except for final reading of your thesis or dissertation.

HOW TO REGISTER

Registration should all be done online. However, the university computer system (must first recognize you as a student. So, the first thing to do is obtain your UCMNet ID. You must create your UCMNetID before you can access any student services (admission, registration, financial aid, etc). In order to do so, please visit https://my.ucmerced.edu and click on the "First Time Users (applicants)" link to establish your UCMNetID. If you encounter a technical issue you can contact the IT Help Desk via e-mail at helpdesk@ucmerced.edu or call (209) 228-HELP (4357). You will also need your student photo ID or Cat Card. The Cat Card Office is located in the first floor of the Kolligian Library.

LATE REGISTRATION

It is important to enroll, register, and pay fees in a timely manner to avoid late fees and financial support hang-ups. There are two fees that you may incur by registering late:

1. Students who have not registered prior to the first day of instruction are considered late enrollments. Late enrollment begins after the first day of instruction and extends through the 10th day of instruction. Students are assessed a late enrollment fee. Approval from the Graduate Division is required to register late.
2. Students are also required to pay their fees in full approximately seven days prior to the first day of instruction. If the fees are not paid in full by the published deadline, a $50 late registration/payment fee may be assessed.

Failure to register on time may also disqualify you for appointment as a TA or GSR.

If your late registration is caused through no fault of your own, the late fee will be waived during the two-week "grace period" at the beginning of each semester. After registration is officially closed, you must petition with the Dean of Graduate Studies for permission to register. The forms for the petition are located in the Registrar's Office (*Registrar forms*).

HOW MANY UNITS SHOULD I TAKE?

To be considered a full-time graduate student, you must enroll in 8 units each semester. To hold an appointment as a TA or GSR, you must enroll in 12 units each semester. These units can be any combination of upper division (100 level) or graduate course units (200 level), group study (298), or research (299) units as permitted by your graduate program. Exceptions to the 8-unit minimum are part-time students and students with special circumstances

You cannot enroll in more than 16 units of upper division and graduate level courses combined, or for more than 12 units of graduate level coursework, without approval of the Graduate Dean.

PART-TIME STATUS

Graduate students who meet eligibility criteria may apply for part-time status to the Graduate Division.

ADDING A COURSE

During the first week of instruction, students may add a course or courses if space is available. During the second and third weeks of instruction, a student may add courses only with the permission of the instructor. After the third week of instruction, students may add a course only with the permission of both the instructor and the Graduate Dean. A fee will be assessed for adding a course after the third week.

- 1st week students may add if space available
- 2nd - 3rd week students may add with instructor's approval
- After the 3rd week a fee assessed and students may add only with instructor's and Graduate Dean's approval

DROPPING A COURSE

During the first four weeks of instruction, students may drop a course or courses without paying a fee and without further approval. After the fourth week of instruction and until the end of the tenth week of instruction (close of business on the Friday of that week), a student may drop with the signed approval of the instructor of record and confirmed by the Graduate Dean, provided, (1) the student is not on special probation (i.e. students who have successfully appealed disqualification), (2) dropping the course would be to the educational benefit of the student (in the judgment of the instructor and dean) and (3) the student is not being investigated for academic dishonesty in that course. Dropping between the 4th and 10th weeks will be approved only provided the student submits a written description of the special circumstances warranting this action; therefore students should continue to attend the course until their drop request is approved. Any request to drop beginning in the eleventh week of instruction will only be considered under exceptional circumstances (illness or injury substantiated by a doctor's note, recent death in the immediate family or other circumstances of equal gravity) and will only be considered following submission of a petition that is approved by the dean of the School with which the student is affiliated. The Office of the Registrar must receive all drops by the deadlines specified. For students dropping after the fourth week of instruction, a fee will be assessed and a "W" notation will appear under the course grade on the student's transcript.

INTERCAMPUS EXCHANGE

If you are in good standing and have completed at least one semester in residence at Merced and you wish to study temporarily at another UC campus, you may apply through the Intercampus Exchange Program by obtaining the approvals of the Graduate Adviser, the chairperson of the department or group in which you wish to study on the host campus, and the Graduate Dean on both the home and host campus. Applications for Intercampus Exchange may be obtained from the Graduate Division and should be filed at least 4 weeks prior to the beginning of the academic term in which you wish to participate in the program. (Please note: each campus follows its own academic calendar.) A separate application is required for each semester you wish to attend another campus. Fees must be paid at your home campus, Merced.

The Intercampus Exchange Program is only intended to provide a student on one campus of the university the opportunity to enroll in occasional courses not available on her/his home campus. It is not intended to allow students to take all or most of their coursework at other UC campuses. If you wish to transfer to another UC campus and complete degree requirements there, you must submit a regular application for admission at the new campus along with a set of official transcripts.

TAKING A BREAK

At any point in your graduate education, you may find that you need to take a break in your course of study. This might include withdrawal from the university through PELP (Planned Educational Leave Program), going on Filing Fee status in the last stages of your degree, or doing an exchange program with another university. This section gives you basic information on each of these options.

WARNING: If you withdraw or break registration without filing for PELP you are not guaranteed readmission – an application for readmission will be subject to the same review as a new application. If readmitted, you must fulfill all programmatic requirements in existence at the semester of readmission.

WITHDRAWAL

Leaving the university during a semester entails obtaining a withdrawal petition from the Registrar’s Office, having it approved as directed, and filing it with the Registrar’s Office. Failure to follow this

procedure may result in an "F" grade for each course in which you are enrolled.

READMISSION

If for any reason you drop out of your graduate program but wish to return, you must formally reapply to the program. You will once again be responsible for the application fee. Your application will be considered along side those of first time applicants.

You must obtain the endorsement of your Graduate Adviser, which indicates to the Dean that you are guaranteed a place in the program. Official transcripts covering all work completed (including those from UC Merced Extension or concurrent enrollment) since last attending UC Merced as a graduate student must also be provided before the application will be processed. At your request, Graduate Division will forward your application to your Graduate Adviser to review copies of your transcripts already on file. It is your responsibility to provide any supporting documents that may be required by the program (e.g., new statement of purpose, letters of recommendation, GRE scores, etc.).

International students who are on or who will need an F-1 visa must also submit a certification of finances showing that they have the required amount of funds to cover fees and living expenses for their first year before an I-20 can be issued. More information is available at http://iss.ucmerced.edu/.

After the Graduate Adviser has made a recommendation, the application will be returned to Graduate Division recommending acceptance or denial. The Dean of Graduate Division will make a decision based on these materials.

PLANNED EDUCATIONAL LEAVE PROGRAM (PELP)

Planned Educational Leave Program (PELP) status is available to graduate students who need to take a leave from their academic program for various reasons, including health related issues, family crises, to clarify educational goals, military service, and to conduct research (provided that research is not taking place on university property, using university resources, or working at a university-funded site). PELP may be approved for a maximum of two semesters over the entire time a graduate student is at UC Merced. An extension can be requested, pending approval from the Dean.

International students must have their PELP status approved by the International Programs Office prior to submission of the PELP application to the Graduate Division.

PELP applications must be submitted to Graduate Division no later than the first day of the semester in which the PELP status is to begin. Students who have begun the registration process and then withdraw from registration after the first day of the semester may be billed for fees owed or have to repay funding, including federal financial aid.

Graduate students who are appealing disqualification from graduate study due to failing the Candidacy Examination may request to be placed on PELP status while the Graduate Dean is considering their appeal. The student should contact the Graduate Division and request to be placed on PELP status pending the outcome of the appeal of the fail decision on her/his Candidacy Examination.

The approval of your Graduate Adviser on the PELP advising form guarantees you readmission for the semester specified. In giving approval for the leave, advisers are certifying that there will be space available for you when you return. For more information on PELP, contact your graduate program coordinator who will help you initiate the application process.

FILING FEE

Filing Fee is a non-registered status available to graduate students who have advanced to candidacy for their degree. Filing Fee status maintains your eligibility to complete your degree while not registered, and within your approved time limitations. You can use this option for one semester when all of your courses and research have been completed; your thesis or dissertation is in final draft form or you are ready to take the Master's Comprehensive Examination; and you no longer need to use campus facilities. Forms are available online at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

Graduate Studies may approve a maximum of two semesters of Filing Fee status (for students in graduate programs that allow more than one semester of Filing Fee status). Requests for extension will be considered, for one semester only, on a case-by-case basis.

YOUR HEALTH

GRADUATE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN (GSHIP)

The University of California requires that all registered students have health insurance. The Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan (GSHIP) is designed specifically for UC Merced students, offering both Merced-area and worldwide coverage. The GSHIP plan includes medical and dental benefits for graduate students.

Registered students are automatically enrolled in GSHIP. Students with comparable health insurance who want to waive participation in GSHIP may complete the waiver application online by going to UCM Health Center. Students must file a waiver application each year.

The services at the H. RAJENDER REDDY HEALTH CENTER are supported by student fees to provide low student rates for primary healthcare services. All registered students may use H. RAJENDER REDDY HEALTH CENTER healthcare services whether or not they are enrolled in GSHIP. GSHIP members receive some primary care services at the H. RAJENDER REDDY HEALTH CENTER and are covered by GSHIP for referral care when referred by a H. RAJENDER REDDY HEALTH CENTER provider.

UC Merced does not offer health insurance for the dependents of students; however, graduate students may purchase dependent health insurance coverage through the GSHIP program. For more information about the GSHIP please see: *health.ucmerced.edu*.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

If you are an international student at UC Merced, we extend a warm welcome to you and hope your experience here will be positive and productive. There are some special rules and regulations that apply to you with regard to enrollment, finances, visas, employment, travel, and other academic and personal matters.

The first place you should go upon arriving at UC Merced is International Programs Office located in Suite 122 Kolligian Library. There you can find answers to almost any question you might have regarding your status as a member of the international community on campus and in the city of Merced. The staff is very knowledgeable and can put you in touch with other students and scholars from your home country.

They are available to help you as you adjust to graduate life at UC Merced. Please go the International Students and Scholars Web site at: *http://iss.ucmerced.edu/*.

PART 2: FEES AND FINANCES

When graduate students were asked, "What information would have been helpful for you to have earlier in your graduate career?" their number one answer was funding and student aid. So, here it is: all the resources we could pull together to help you with all things financial – from understanding the basic graduate student living expenses, to funding your research, and dealing with financial emergencies. As a starting point, it is helpful to understand the difference between need-based financial aid and merit-based graduate student support. Need-based aid includes loans, grants, work-study and some fellowship funds. Merit-based financial support includes Teaching Assistant (TA) and Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) positions and most fellowships from internal (UC Merced) and extramural sources. Your recent financial circumstances and the UC Merced Graduate Student Budget determine your eligibility for need-based aid.

THE GRADUATE STUDENT BUDGET

Every year, the Financial Aid Office determines the Graduate Student Budget based on current estimates of living expenses, as well as university fees and other educational expenses. The amount of need-based student aid for which you are eligible (whether it comes as grants, work-study or loans) is based on that budget. For the current Graduate Student Budget, please go to the Student Financial Aid Office Web site at *http://financialaid.ucmerced.edu/*.

If you find that the annual budget allotted is insufficient to cover your costs, AND you can document your additional expenses, you can actually have your own budget increased, thus increasing the amount of need-based aid for which you are eligible. For more information go to *http://financialaid.ucmerced.edu/*.

BEWARE of August: The Graduate Student Budget is based upon the 12-month calendar year. However, unless otherwise specified, all of your student aid will be given to you over the nine months of the traditional academic year. So, if you want to make your budget stretch through the summer months, you'll have to save or find other income between June and August. Beware of August becoming a very lean month.

BEWARE of August: Because the university must verify that students are attending the university before they can release financial support checks, most checks for first-year students are not released until September 1. This means that without another income source, you will not have any income until September 1 in your first year of graduate study. Be sure to plan accordingly.
If you have employment as a TA or GSR, those checks are released monthly.

THE UNIVERSITY BILL

GETTING THE BILL

After enrolling in courses, you can view your outstanding account balance using MyBill (*mybill.ucmerced.edu*). Electronic statements are uploaded to MyBill during the 1st week of every month. The statement will include registration fees, educational fees, health insurance fees, campus based fees, nonresident tuition (if applicable), as well as any other charges you have accrued at the university (for example, library charges). For more information, please go to the Registrar's website (*http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/*).

PAYING THE BILL

For up-to-date information on fees, fee payment options, deadlines, late fees, etc., you can visit the Student Business Services website at *http://sbs.ucmerced.edu/*. If you have any questions about items on the university bill, contact Student Business Services at (209) 228-4114 or visit them in the Kolligian Library through the Student First Center.

GRADUATE FEES

This section describes both the semester and one-time fees that graduate students typically pay. Some of these fees may never apply to you, so this section describes the purpose or circumstances of the fees. The "Financing Your Graduate Education" section will address ways to get these fees paid. All fees are subject to change without notice.

REGISTRATION AND EDUCATIONAL FEES

Each semester, graduate students pay various fees, from the Graduate Student Association (GSA) fee, to fees for campus improvement, safety and, of course, your education. You also pay for health insurance as part of those fees, unless you've opted out. Fee amounts are not dependent upon of the number of units in which you're enrolled, unless you're enrolled as an approved part-time student.

Approved part-time students pay the same registration fees as full-time students but receive a 50% reduction of the educational fee. Approved part-time nonresident students also receive a 50% reduction of nonresident tuition.

Registration in Absentia. The registration fee is reduced by 50% for graduate students whose research or study requires them to remain outside California throughout the entire semester. Applications for waiver of one-half of the registration fee are obtainable from Graduate Studies.

An employee fee reduction plan is available to certain full-time career university employees. For further details, consult the Human Resources Office.

GRADUATE STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE PLAN (GSHIP)

All students are required to have medical insurance, and are automatically enrolled in the Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan (GSHIP) in order to meet this requirement. The GSHIP enrollment fee is included in the university bill. Students may waive GSHIP enrollment and have the fee removed by providing proof of comparable medical insurance. A waiver application is available through the MyUCMerced portal at *https://my.ucmerced.edu*. You may be asked to submit proof of insurance for verification purposes. Each semester, graduate students pay various fees, including the Graduate Student Association (GSA) fees to fees for campus improvement, safety and, of course, your education. You also pay a health center fee, unless you've opted out. Fee amounts are not dependent upon the number of units in which you're enrolled, unless you're enrolled as an approved part-time student. More information is available on the Student Health Services website (*http://health.ucmerced.edu*). Please note that you must complete a new waiver application annually and submit it by the deadline specified deadline specified on the student Health Services website.

Student Health Services does not refund the GSHIP fee to students who withdraw, apply for PELP or apply for Filing Fee status on or after the first day of the semester. Students who withdraw on or after the first day of the semester may be billed for the full GSHIP fee. Students who resign from or are terminated from an academic appointment (TA or GSR) on or after the first day of the semester will be billed for

their GSHIP.

For complete information on the GSHIP plan, coverage, fees and policies, visit the Student Health Services Web site at *http://health.ucmerced.edu/*.

NONRESIDENT TUITION

Nonresidents (those not able to establish California residency) must pay nonresident tuition each semester. The good news is: nonresident doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy by the first day of the term will receive 100% nonresident tuition remission. A Ph.D. candidate may receive the reduced nonresident tuition rate for a maximum of three years beginning with the first academic term following advancement to candidacy and ending three calendar years later. Any such student who continues to be enrolled or who re-enrolls after receiving the reduced charge for three years will be charged the full nonresident tuition rate that is in effect at that time. Please note that any semesters on PELP count toward the three-year time limit.

APPLICATION FEE

Individuals seeking admission as new graduate students must pay an application fee of $70 (U.S.) or $90 (International). Applicants are required to pay the application fee to every campus of the university to which they apply. Applicants to UC Merced who have been registered graduate students on another UC campus must pay the regular application fee.

READMISSION FEE

A readmission fee is required of all students who apply for readmission after one year.

PLANNED EDUCATIONAL LEAVE PROGRAM (PELP)

Students applying for Planned Educational Leave are required to pay a processing fee. Please refer to the Registrar's Office website for the current amount (*http://registrar.ucmerced.edu*).

CANDIDACY FEE

A processing fee will be charged to each applicant for advancement to candidacy for the Doctor of Philosophy and the master's degree. No student will be formally advanced to candidacy for any degree without payment of fee. You must pay this fee, before you file your advancement paperwork, by going to the Student First Center, where your advancement paperwork will be stamped. Then, bring the paperwork to the Graduate Division, located in 227 Koligian. Please refer to the Advancement to Candidacy form for current processing fees at http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications.

FILING FEE

A one-time fee is assessed to students who apply for Filing Fee status. This fee is paid at the Cashier's Office in the Kolligian Library prior to submitting the paperwork to the Graduate Division. Filing Fee forms (which include the current charge) are available at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

CALIFORNIA RESIDENCY FOR TUITION PURPOSES

As a resident of California for tuition purposes, you will not have to pay the nonresident tuition charge. Therefore, it is to your advantage that you investigate the steps necessary to becoming a legal resident. The following are some of the things you should know and do:

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ESTABLISH RESIDENCE?

Adult citizens (18 years or older), permanent residents of the United States (green card holders), refugees, asylees and asylee applicants, and some students with visas of type A, E, G, I, K, or L may establish legal residence.

DO I HAVE TO HAVE FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE?

Not necessarily. A student who is financially dependent in the current and preceding calendar year shall be found to be a California resident for reclassification purposes only if no factors exist to support the student's continuing residence in another state.

HOW DO I ESTABLISH RESIDENCE?

You must take steps to establish California residence at least one full year before the start of the semester in which you wish to be classified as a resident and THE SOONER THE BETTER! For tuition purposes, physical presence and intent must be demonstrated for more than one year. Intent includes, but is not limited to, having a California driver's license or ID card, registering to vote and voting, using a California permanent address on all records, and paying state income tax as a resident. Vehicles must be registered in California within 20 days of arrival.

Pick up a petition from the Registrar's Office, during the semester preceding the one for which you seek reclassification. Return the completed petition at least two weeks before the start of the semester.

FINANCING YOUR GRADUATE EDUCATION

Graduate student financial support is a particularly complicated process with many players involved. The amounts and types of support available to graduate students vary by graduate program. The amount and type available to you may also vary each year, depending on what your program can offer, and the sources of funding for which you apply. This section details sources of student financial support, funding your research, some helpful warnings for anticipating the tough times, and resources to help you in a financial emergency.

FAFSA

Annually, all graduate students who are U.S. citizens, permanent residents or immigrants are required to file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Although the FAFSA can be filed at any time, it is strongly suggested that you file by the priority filing date of March 2. This form, submitted directly to the U.S. Department of Education, is used to determine financial need. The FAFSA is used in consideration of fellowships, block grants, stipends, and loans. The FAFSA is available online at *http://www.fafsa.ed.gov*. Include the UC Merced School Code (041271) on the FAFSA.

FELLOWSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Fellowships and graduate scholarships are awarded once a year for the following year, beginning in the fall semester. Unless otherwise specified, awards are for one academic year. You must apply in subsequent competitions for fellowships in succeeding years.

The deadline to apply for fellowships is January 15. If a program has an earlier admissions deadline, fellowship applications share that deadline. Awards are generally offered beginning March 1 and must be accepted or refused, in writing, by April 15 or by the date that is stated on the offer letter, whichever is later. Awards not accepted by the response date may be withdrawn. NOTE: Letters of admission to graduate study and fellowship award letters will be mailed separately. Fellowship award procedures may vary by program.

CRITERIA FOR INTERNAL FELLOWSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Awards are made as a mark of honor, on the basis of your record of scholarship and promise of outstanding academic contributions. Evaluation will include quality of your previous undergraduate and graduate work, evidence of ability in research or other creative accomplishments, evidence of promise of productive scholarship, Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, statement of purpose, letters of recommendation, and other documentation, such as publications and awards. A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 in undergraduate or any graduate work already completed is required for consideration. Financial need or the availability of other sources of support to you is generally not relevant to the evaluation of academic merit. However, some awards have financial need as a criterion.
Graduate programs and committees must ensure that no applicant is discriminated against because of race, color, religion, national origin, marital and family status, handicap, sex, sexual orientation, or age. It is inappropriate or illegal for review and selection committees to ask personal questions of applicants about their financial need, the number of children they have, etc.

If you need to take the GRE, you must do so by the December test date for the scores to be received in time for the fellowship competition. Fellowship applications submitted without GRE scores will not be considered.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Working as a Graduate Student Researcher, Teaching Assistant, or Associate In is a good way to gain professional experience and advance your career, as well as earn a paycheck and obtain fee remissions.
As a graduate student you may work a total of 12 semesters as a Teaching Assistant. Each school administers its Teaching Assistant positions, which you should apply for annually if you are interested in a TA position. To obtain research jobs, the best way to start is to inquire within your own graduate group or school.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS FOR STUDENTS: DEFINITIONS

READER

The title Reader is given to a student employed for the ability to render diverse services as a course assistant, which normally includes the grading of student papers and examinations. A Reader will not be given the responsibilities customarily accorded a Teaching Assistant.

TEACHING ASSISTANT

A Teaching Assistant is a registered graduate student in full-time residence, enrolled in 12 units, chosen for excellent scholarship and for promise as a teacher, and serving an apprenticeship under the active direction and supervision of a regular faculty member. A Teaching Assistant is responsible for the conduct of recitation, laboratory or quiz sections under the active direction and supervision of a regular member of the faculty to whom final responsibility for the course's entire instruction, including the performance of Teaching Assistants, has been assigned.

GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCHER

A Graduate Student Researcher is a graduate student enrolled in 12 units who performs research related to his or her degree program in an academic department or research unit under the direction of a faculty member or authorized Principal Investigator.

TUTOR

The Tutor works with individual students or small groups of students to assist them in their learning. Material covered may be topical in nature or related to a specific course. Tutors may keep regularly scheduled drop-in hours for student consultation and tutoring. Tutors do not grade tests, papers or other student assignments and do not work under the direct supervision of a faculty member.

FEE REMISSIONS FOR ACADEMIC TITLES

A graduate student working as a Graduate Student Researcher with an appointment of at least 25% time for the entire semester is eligible for a remission of all in-state and nonresident fees, excluding campus-based fees, registration, and educational fees. Teaching titles such as TA, Reader, and Tutor receive a full remission of their health insurance/student services health fee, registration, and educational fees. Campus-based fees, including GSA fee, facilities and campus enhancement fees, and student services fees, are not included in the fee remission. (For current fee information, go to *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/financial-support*.)

To avoid late fees, get your hiring paperwork done ASAP so that fee remissions can be properly credited to your fee statement before fees are due.

For more information on Student Academic Appointments, including salaries, fee remissions, eligibility, and exceptions, see the Graduate Adviser's Handbook, as well as:
http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications.

CAREER SERVICES

The Student Career Services Office coordinates employment opportunities, including community service jobs (on and off campus) for students and their spouses. Go to *Career Services*.

EXTERNAL GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

You are encouraged to seek external funding, both for your education and for your research. Applying for external fellowships and grants is a good professional development experience and receiving external grants and fellowships looks great on your vita. There are several resources around campus to help you search and apply for external funding.

ONLINE FUNDING RESOURCES

Community of Science (*http://www.cos. com*)
This is a very extensive database of funding opportunities for scientists of all kinds. COS can only be accessed without charge through a UC Merced computing account. Once you have set up your search criteria, you will receive weekly updates of any new or amended funding opportunities; however, to see your full list of applicable grants, you must visit the Web site.

The Foundation Center (*http://foundationcenter.org*)
This Web site offers a very good and extensive for-fee database and some great free resources.

DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC RESOURCES

Check the main associations and academic organizations for your discipline; most list funding opportunities in their monthly journals. Many also offer pamphlets or booklets with funding resources and discipline-specific proposal writing tips. Be sure to check for associations in your subfield – there are many smaller organizations that may offer information on funding applicable to your specific research interests. Also check into e-mail discussion groups or listserves that cater to your interests, these can be

great sources of funding information and also give you a chance to network with others who share your interests.

RESEARCH SITE RESOURCES

Are you going to be doing archival or library research? Check and see if they offer research grants. Many offer travel funds or research stipends.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

The Graduate Division Web page offers helpful links to funding resources at: *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/financial-support/external-funding*.

The Office of Research Web site through its Sponsored Projects Office offers additional sources of information on funding sources at: *Sponsored Projects Funding Opportunities*.

OTHER RESOURCES

Use your networking skills! Make sure other people know that you are interested in funding sources, and let them know your research interests. Even people outside your discipline or field can be very helpful in sending along items of interest to you. Do the same for other people – when you see announcements that may be of interest to someone you know, send them a copy!

Tips for External Funding Searches and Applications

1. Search, search, search! Check online databases, discipline-specific mailing lists and journals, campus resources, and network with people outside your discipline.

2. Make it manageable. Searching for funding can be time consuming, but it doesn't have to be overwhelming. Spending hours looking for funding one time and thinking you've seen it all is not the best approach. Do you have 15 minutes to spare a couple of times per week? Check a funding database, and keep a file of possible grants on your computer or in your filing cabinet.

3. Do your homework. When you have found a possible funding source, visit the organization's Web site and learn as much as you can about its mission and goals. If you have never written a grant before, read everything you can about how to do it right! Take courses, attend workshops, read articles or books.

4. Make contact. Once you have found a funding source that is a good fit, contact the funder and try to establish a relationship with the program director. Ask for a list of funded projects, ask if you may see successful proposals, and ask if someone there would be willing to preview your abstract or proposal for feedback BEFORE you apply.

5. Organize your applications. Mark due dates on your calendar – not just the date the application is due, but six weeks before to remind you to perfect your application, order transcripts, and ask for letters of recommendation. Use those multitasking skills that you've learned in graduate school to make sure everything gets done ahead of time.

6. Learn from your unsuccessful grants. If you have applied for a grant but were unsuccessful, first of all, know that you are in the majority. Agencies usually only fund about 10% of applicants. Second, contact the agency and see if you may have a copy of the evaluator's comments. Some agencies are happy to do this, and some are not. But if you don't ask, you won't get.

RESOURCES ON GRANT WRITING

The Foundation Center (*http:// foundationcenter.org*) has some great free resources, such as their "Proposal Writing Short Course" (*http:// foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/ shortcourse/index.html*).

The Social Sciences Research Council (*http://www.ssrc.org*) offers an article on "The Art of Writing Proposals: Some Candid Suggestions for Applicants to Social Science Research Council Competitions" (*http://www.ssrc.org/ fellowships/art_of_writing_proposals*).

The University of California, Berkeley offers an article on "The Making of a Successful Proposal" (*http://www.grad.berkeley.edu/publications/thegraduate/Reprints/proposal.pdf*) and a "Dissertation Proposal Workshop" (*http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop*).

APPLYING FOR NEED-BASED FINANCIAL AID

You must apply for need-based financial aid every year, which involves:

- Completing an application for various types of financial aid, available on the Graduate Division's Web site at http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu
- Submitting a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) by the March 2 deadline, available at *http://www.fafsa.ed.gov*.

For more information on applying for general financial aid, see either the Graduate Division Web page, *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/financial-support*.

LOANS

Loans are available to complement the other types of aid you receive in order to meet, but not exceed, the Graduate Student Budget. Applying for loans is done at the same time as applying for all other aid. For eligible students, the interest on your loans will be deferred until you are no longer enrolled in full-time study. But eventually, all loans must be paid back. First-time borrowers of any type of loan offered at UC Merced must complete Entrance Loan Counseling before money will be released. You can find more information at *UCM Financial Aid*.

TRAVEL GRANTS FOR PRESENTATIONS AND NETWORKING

Traveling to conferences is a great way to develop professionally, to network, and to get your research/work known to potential employers, whether university or private sector. There are a number of ways to fund travel to professional conferences.

YOUR MAJOR PROFESSOR

Professors are occasionally able to pay for the Graduate Student Researchers in their laboratory to go to conferences to present the work done in the lab.

YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM

Graduate programs are occasionally able to pay for their graduate students to travel to professional conferences out of a general pool of funds for graduate students.

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) also offers a limited number of travel awards. Contact a GSA representative for more information.

PART 3: GETTING THE DEGREE

Every graduate student is going to have a unique educational experience. However, there are certain things you should be able to expect from your graduate program and from your experience with graduate school in general. This section describes what you should expect from your graduate experience, the university requirements you are responsible to fulfill, and what to do if you run into obstacles in the process.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR GRADUATE EXPERIENCE

Graduate education provides advanced academic training and research specialization within a particular field of study to foster the development of scholars for careers in innovative research and teaching to benefit humankind. Toward these ends, the objective of graduate education at UC Merced is to develop individuals who are:

- Ethical citizens and scholars with knowledge and appreciation of the diversity of intellectual and creative activity.
- Independent, innovative researchers adept at creative and critical thought.
- Leaders in the creation of new knowledge and understanding of the world and our activities in it. Excellent communicators with outstanding teaching and mentoring skills.
- Achievers successful in collaborative and cooperative ventures.

Graduate students have explicit rights and responsibilities. These are listed in the **Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities** document posted at: *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE ADVANCED DEGREES

There are some standards and requirements that apply to all students seeking advanced degrees, and some that apply specifically to those pursuing the master's and Ph.D. degrees. In this section, general requirements are presented first, then the master's, followed by the Ph.D. requirements.

For more detailed information on any of these requirements, go to the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook* at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

There are a few different ways to complete both the master's degree and the Ph.D. degree. Your graduate program usually determines the options available to you. For information on the requirements of your program, consult your graduate program handbook or see your Graduate Adviser. For more detailed information on the policies surrounding courses, exams, and committees, see the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook* at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

RESPONSIBILITY OF GRADUATE STUDENTS TO MEET NEW DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

You are responsible for fulfilling the requirements of your degree program as they are when you enter the program. Changes in program requirements normally should not affect students already in the program.

You should be able to complete a degree under conditions in effect at the time of your admission or reentry. With that in mind, keep the graduate program requirement information you are given by your program when you enter and refer to it as needed.

PROGRAM FORMS

Most likely there will be forms within your graduate program you'll need to fill out at each step towards earning your graduate degree (such as completing a written examination, or getting program approval for your course plan). Be sure to keep copies of these forms for your own records.

MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

If you are working towards a master's degree, you must be registered in residence for at least two semesters. Usually, all work for the master's degree is done in residence on the Merced campus. With the consent of the Graduate Adviser and the Dean of the Graduate Division, however, some work taken elsewhere may be credited toward your degree. The normal limit for such transfer credit is six units from another institution, or up to half of the unit requirement if the courses were taken at a UC campus *in graduate status*, providing the units were not used to satisfy requirements for another degree.

A master's degree may be awarded upon completion of one of two basic plans in which either a thesis or a comprehensive examination is required. General requirements regarding advancement to candidacy, the comprehensive examination, master's thesis and transfer of credit can be found in full in the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook* at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Doctor of Philosophy degree, as granted by the University of California, signifies that the recipient possesses knowledge of a broad field of learning and has given evidence of distinguished attainment in that field. It is a warrant of critical ability and powers of imagination and synthesis. It means, too, that the candidate has presented a dissertation containing an original contribution to knowledge in the chosen field of study. If you are working towards a doctorate, you must be registered and in university residence for a minimum of four regular semesters. Experience indicates that it takes considerably longer than this to complete a degree program.

There is no university unit requirement for the doctoral degree. However, individual programs have course requirements that must be completed before admission to the qualifying examination.

After successful completion of the qualifying examination, you must file for advancement to candidacy for the degree. Graduate students in certain Ph.D. programs may participate in a designated emphasis, a specialization that might include a new method of inquiry or an important field of application that is related to two or more existing Ph.D. programs. Full details about these requirements are available in the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook* at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

NORMATIVE TIME

You'll hear a lot about something called "normative time." Normative time is the number of years considered to be reasonable for completion of a particular doctoral program by a well-prepared, full-time student. The time varies from five to six years and is measured from the time you begin graduate study at any level at UC Merced. Up to two semesters of any kind of non-registered status is allowed without penalty during your graduate study career, provided you meet all conditions for non-registered status. While additional periods of absence beyond two semesters may be approved for cause, this will not result in an extension of normative time.

Campus rules regarding time for completion of your graduate degree are flexible. While each doctoral program has prepared a schedule for normative time to degree, these schedules do not affect your academic standing. Rather, program requirements and individual student progress are the basis for determining whether you will remain in good standing. Individual programs may have specific requirements of progress, including time in which courses must be completed and minimum grades required in those courses, or they may require final completion of all degree requirements within a specific time. The Graduate Division does not have a specific time schedule for completion of degree requirements, provided you are making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree. For more information, review the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook* at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

FOR EVERY PROCESS THERE IS A FORM

Almost all stages of graduate study require some form to be filled out and turned in to your graduate program and to the Graduate Division. All of these forms, except those that are program-specific, can be accessed at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

GRADING, COURSES AND CREDIT

STANDARDS OF SCHOLARSHIP

Only courses in which A, or B, or Satisfactory are earned may be counted in satisfaction of degree or credential requirements. You must maintain an average of at least 3.0 grade points per unit in all upper division and graduate courses. A course in which you receive a C grade or lower does not count towards meeting the unit requirement for the master's degree (a grade of C+ may be approved by the Graduate Dean as and exception), but does count in computing the grade point average. Lower division courses are excluded in arriving at the graduate GPA. Some programs may require a higher average than 3.0 for the student to remain in graduate status.

REPEATED COURSES

Any student may, with the consent of the appropriate Graduate Adviser and the Dean of Graduate Studies, repeat a course in which s/he received a grade of C, D, F or Unsatisfactory up to a maximum of nine units. In such repeated courses, only the most recently received grade and corresponding grade points shall be used in calculating a student's grade point average, but all units attempted and grades received shall remain part of the student's permanent record. Any repeated course, except for one offered only on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis, must be taken for a letter grade (A, B, C, D, and F).

SATISFACTORY, UNSATISFACTORY (S/U) GRADING

With the approval of the Graduate Adviser and the Dean of Graduate Studies, you may elect to take one normally-graded course per semester on an S/U basis provided the course is used to explore an area unrelated to your academic discipline. It cannot be used to fulfill any of your graduate program course requirements. It may be used to fulfill unit requirements. This course would be in addition to any of those regularly graded on an S/U basis. To receive an S grade in lower or upper division work, you must achieve at least a C-. To receive an S grade in a graduate course, you must receive a B- or better. S/U petitions must be filed in the Graduate Division by the end of the fifth week of the semester.

INCOMPLETES

A grade of Incomplete is assigned when work is of passing quality but is incomplete. Before you request

an Incomplete, you should consider all the factors involved. If you are doing well in a course but are unable to complete the work because of illness, personal emergency, or other "good" cause, an Incomplete is appropriate. But if you are not doing well or you are simply in over your head, an Incomplete grade is inappropriate and will not be assigned. In this case you should consider dropping the course and taking it again later.

You must remove the Incomplete grade before the end of the third succeeding semester of academic residence. If the "I" is not removed by the end of the specified time, it will revert to an "F." You may request an extension by petitioning the Dean of Graduate Division. Under no circumstances should you formally re-enroll to make up an Incomplete. If part of the agreement between you and the instructor for removing the Incomplete involves participation in a subsequent section of the course, you should participate and complete the assignments but NOT formally enroll the second time. For more information on Incompletes, see the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook.*

PLEASE NOTE: Some programs have additional requirements that may affect your funding eligibility. Be sure to check with your Graduate Adviser.

ETHICS IN AUTHORSHIP

With respect to professional ethics, integrity, and fairness, the authorship of any scholarly work implies the following:

1. That each author has made a substantial intellectual contribution to the work.
2. That each author accepts responsibility for the contribution to the collaborative effort.
3. That each author accepts responsibility for the scholarly conclusions appearing in the publication.

"Substantial intellectual contribution" means input beyond that of: (1) only providing instruction, (2) granting use of laboratory space or equipment, 3) provision of financial support, or (4) dissertation guidance by a faculty member. It means a considerable degree of involvement with the development of the work, the generation and interpretation of data, the drawing of conclusions, and/or the actual writing of the manuscript.

"Responsibility" means that an author understands the methodology involved, the relationship to other research of a similar nature, and the significance and implications of that contribution to the publication. Responsibility implies the ability to defend the individual's contribution against academic challenge.

Authorship should not be taken by students or faculty if they do not understand these aspects of the work, are unwilling to accept responsibility for them, or do not agree with the conclusions made in the report.

WARNINGS, PROBATION AND DISQUALIFICATION

ACADEMIC PROBATION

Students whose academic performance is less than satisfactory or who are not meeting program requirements are placed on academic probation and given a timeline for removing their deficiencies and returning to good standing. Students on academic probation are subject to disqualification.

DISQUALIFICATION

Disqualification means that, for one or more of the academic reasons listed below, a student is no longer eligible to continue graduate study at the University of California, Merced. A student may be disqualified ONLY by the Dean of Graduate Division and in accord with the procedures outlined below. The term "disqualification" should NOT be confused with "dismissal." Dismissal is removal from graduate study based on behavior or conduct.

UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS/ PROBATION/DISQUALIFICATION

A student whose progress is judged unsatisfactory is regarded as a student on probation. This includes the student whose annual evaluation indicates unsatisfactory progress or the student who receives written notice from the Advisory/Guidance Committee or Graduate Adviser that progress is unsatisfactory. If the student fails to meet the requirements specified in the notices sent by the Dean of the Graduate Division or by the Advisory/Guidance Committee, the student will be subject to disqualification from further graduate study in the graduate program.

APPEALS

A student who is subject to disqualification, or who has been disqualified, may submit an appeal within 30 days for reconsideration for cause to the Graduate Division. Such appeals will be considered only if based upon appropriate cause such as (a) procedural error, (b) judgments based upon non-academic criteria, (c) verifiable evidence of personal bias, or (d) specific mitigating circumstances contributing to the student's performance. Questions of academic judgment or evaluation will not be considered as an appropriate basis for submission or consideration of a student's appeal of disqualification. The Graduate Division will make a recommendation to the Graduate Dean as to the disposition of the case and the Dean will make the decision. The Dean will review the appeal and a final decision rendered within 60 days. The outcome of the appeal is final. For appeal procedures, see the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook*.

MAKING CHANGES

Many students discover, at some point during graduate study, that their interests have changed. When this happens, there are procedures in place to help you change your program to fit your new objectives. For instructions about changes in major, degree objective, go to the Graduate Adviser's Handbook at *http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/forms-publications*.

COMMENCEMENT

You made it, and it's time to celebrate! If you receive your graduate degree in September, December, March or June, you are eligible and welcome to participate in the annual commencement ceremony. If you are close to completion and will not be in Merced the following June, you are also eligible to participate, with the approval of your Graduate Adviser or Major Professor. Graduate Division will send you information about commencement around April.

PART 4: CAMPUS RESOURCES

Because graduate student success is important to programs, faculty, and the university, there are numerous resources available to help you through all stages of your life as a student at UC Merced. The list below provides a good starting point. Identifying and finding the help you need early on is the best way to ensure your smooth progression through the various stages of your degree. Your faculty advisor is your primary advocate, but the Graduate Division (*http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/*) and the Office of Graduate Student Life (*http://gradlife.ucmerced.edu/*) are both committed to ensuring your success as a graduate student.

ADVOCACY RESOURCES

The university is committed to helping you succeed in your academic effort. Occasionally, however, you may experience academic or personal differences with faculty members that cannot be resolved amicably. If you are unable to solve the differences between yourselves, or with the help of a professional from the Counseling Services office (see *http://counseling.ucmerced.edu/*) the Lead Dean of your Graduate Group or Emphasis Area or the Graduate Dean, it is important that both you and the faculty member involved know there are procedures by which grievances may be handled. A good source of additional information is the *Graduate Adviser's Handbook*.

In general, a grievance should first be referred for resolution to the person alleged to have violated your rights. However, if you feel reluctant or fearful to speak directly with the person against whom you have a grievance, you may wish to turn elsewhere. For example, if the grievance is related to academics, you should speak to your Major Professor or Graduate Adviser, followed by the Program Chair, followed by the Lead Dean of your Graduate Group or Emphasis Area.

RESOURCES WITHIN YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM

Your Major Professor or Graduate Adviser

Your Major Professor and your Graduate Adviser are your first resources if you are having an academic problem. Even if the problem is with another faculty member, they can advocate for you.

Graduate Group Chair

In some cases, the issue may involve the Major Professor or Graduate Adviser, in which case, your first resource should be the Graduate Group Chair. If this person is involved in the problem, or if you feel that they may be biased in the issue, you should pursue resources outside of your program.

Graduate Program Staff

Though not an official link in the appeals process, graduate program staff are good resources for you. They know the programs intimately and may have insight into the issue at hand. They will also know how you should proceed with your complaint and will be able to put you in touch with the appropriate people.

RESOURCES OUTSIDE YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM

Graduate Division

The Assistant Dean of the Graduate Division is responsible to serve as a neutral sounding board for you, and is knowledgeable about the procedures you must take to resolve your issues. Go to the Graduate Division Web page (*http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/*) for a current list of staff in Graduate Division.

Union for Academic Student Employees
UAW Local 2865 is the union representing more than 11,000 academic student employees – TAs, tutors, readers, and others – at nine UC campuses, including Merced.

UAW represents these employees on issues such as wages, benefits, workload, grievance procedures, and fair hiring processes. For more information, go to *http://www.uaw2865.org*.

Student Judicial Affairs
Issues of academic and personal misconduct by undergraduate, graduate, students are referred to Student Judicial Affairs (SJA). For more information, go to the SJA Web site at *Judicial Affairs*.

Graduate and Research Council
Graduate and Research Council is responsible for hearing and making recommendations on academic appeals and grievances. It is not a source to go to for advocacy, but it is the body to which you can appeal a decision related to your academic career.

ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF
There are a number of ways you can advocate for yourself, as well as for other graduate students or your whole graduate student group:

Represent graduate students by serving on faculty committees. Many graduate programs have slots for graduate students on their faculty committees. If you don't know whether your graduate program has graduate student representation, ask your Graduate Group Chair for a copy of your graduate program bylaws. If there is no position available for graduate students, ask them to make one. Most graduate programs are happy to have graduate student input in committees.

Become a GSA representative. Every graduate program is entitled to representation in the Graduate Student Association (GSA). *Programs are entitled to one representative for every 30 registered students or fraction thereof.* Find out if your program has enough representatives by going to the GSA Web site at http://gradlife.ucmerced.edu/grad-student-association.

Serve on a campus or system-wide committee. There are a number of committees, on both the campus and system-wide levels, that review, revise and set policies and procedures impacting graduate students. By serving on a committee, you will benefit yourself and your fellow graduate students as you provide a student voice. It is also a great opportunity for professional development and networking connections. For more information, contact the GSA.

INFORMATION RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY

UC Merced offers a wide variety of information resources to its students. Below are descriptions of the basic resources you'll want to use on a regular basis:

KOLLIGIAN LIBRARY
Your CAT card acts as your library card. You can navigate the library databases online, beginning at a http://ucmercedlibrary.info/students/. You can also access the library databases from off campus if you

have Internet access. For more information, go to *http://ucmercedlibrary.info/*.

IT DEPARTMENT

IT Department is the university's service center for technology. It's the place you go to set up your computing and e-mail accounts, get help connecting to the university's servers, or just for troubleshooting your technology challenges. For a list of services, go to *http://it.ucmerced.edu/*.

COMMUNITY OF SCIENCE

Community of Science (*http://cos.com*) is a Web-based tool that UC Merced and many other institutions subscribe to. The service is free to you as a UC Merced student. You can create a professional vita online as a Web page, search for funding, and find other experts in your field who also use Community of Science.

LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS

Though most of your learning and professional development may take place through your graduate program and your relationship with your major professor, the university knows that there are some services graduate students need that cannot be provided through a graduate program. Here are a number of resources available to UC Merced students. For more information on each one, visit their Web sites or their offices.

DISABILITY SERVICES

UC Merced is committed to ensuring equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities. An integral part of that commitment is the coordination of specialized academic support services through the Disability Services Office (DSO). The DSO is staffed by professional disability specialists. These professionals each work with an assigned caseload of students, determining their eligibility for academic accommodations and ensuring the provision of accommodations necessary to allow the students to participate meaningfully in educational opportunities on campus. Go to http://disability.ucmerced.edu/.

CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON TEACHING EXCELLENCE

The Center for Research on Teaching Excellence offers a number of services for evaluation and improvement of teaching, professional development of graduate students and professors, test scoring, teaching technology, and Web-based course management. It also offers a collection of teaching resources available to instructors and teaching assistants. To find out more go to *http://crte.ucmerced.edu/*.

VETERANS SERVICES OFFICE

The Veterans Services Office assists veterans, reservists or dependents of a disabled or deceased veteran. The office certifies course attendance to the Department of Veterans Affairs and processes Cal-Vet Fee Waivers. It also provides information about benefit eligibility and tutorial assistance, as well as advice about the GI Bill and educational benefits. To initiate a benefit claim, contact the office and complete the necessary paperwork. The Veterans Affairs Office is online at *http://veteranservices.ucmerced.edu/*.

RESOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The International Students & Scholars office (ISS) seeks to promote the globalization of UC Merced and represents the interests and concerns of international students, faculty, and researchers – and their

accompanying family members – who come to UC Merced each year. ISS provides orientation, assistance, information, and referral to international students, faculty, and researchers regarding financial, personal, cultural, and academic concerns. ISS assists international students and scholars with maintaining their legal status while within the U.S. and can provide expert advice regarding U.S. immigration regulations and help with any problems that relate to visa status. ISS also assists academic departments that seek to invite and employ international faculty and researchers. For more information, go to *http://iss.ucmerced.edu/*.

PART 5: LIFE AND BALANCE IN MERCED

Can you have a life in graduate school? More research is needed before a conclusion can be drawn. However, we propose you try to answer it for yourself by finding ways to achieve some balance, keeping things in perspective, and having fun. This section presents a number of resources and programs available to you in Merced.

HOUSING

Housing in Merced can be hard to find. We suggest that you start your housing search early. Most leases are for a one-year term and turn over on September 1. The university offers housing resources at: Off *Campus Housing*.

TRANSPORTATION

There are numerous ways to get to campus and around Merced. By far the most popular and cost-effective are riding a bicycle and taking the CatTracks buses. Other options include buying yearly parking permits from TAPS (Transportation and Parking Services), or taking your chances and buying daily permits. Please TAPS on the Web at: *TAPS*.

BICYCLES

You may have thought your bike riding days were long gone. But as you've probably noticed, the bicycle is alive and well and a popular mode of transportation in town and on campus. It is fast, convenient, popular and economical – plus, the mild climate and flat surfaces allow year-round riding. The ease and convenience of using a bike goes without saying, and you will have safe and uncomplicated use if you take certain precautions and follow basic rules: always obey traffic laws, use lights for night travel, and wear a helmet.

LICENSE YOUR BIKE

All bicycles operated on campus are required to have a current California State Bicycle License. Licensing helps deter theft and increases your chance of recovering your bike if it is stolen. Licenses are available at the UC Merced Police Department. To obtain a license, first pay $3 to the UC Merced Cashier in the Students First Center, then go to the Police Department with the bicycle and a personal photo ID such as a driver's license, and the paid receipt. Please call ahead at (209) 228-8273 (CAT-UCPD) to make a appointment for your license.

LOCK UP YOUR BIKE

You should lock up both at home and on campus. And get a good, solid lock. Don't leave your bike on campus during weekends and holidays. Exercise common sense in the care and custody of your bike and you'll reduce your risks of loss. If your bike is stolen on campus, call the university police at (209) 228-2677 (CAT COPS). If it's stolen in the city, call the Merced police at (209) 385-6912.

PARK WITH CARE

With many bicycles on campus daily, it is important that you park only in designated areas. Bikes parked outside of established bike parking areas are subject to impound and fines. Bikes may only be locked to bike racks or other bike parking devices.

TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING SERVICES

Transportation and Parking Services facilitates the access and mobility needs of the campus community through coordination between TAPS units and other campus departments and non-university entities, and ensures that services are provided in a professional, efficient, and service-oriented manner. For information on parking services, including maps and rates, see the TAPS Web site at: *TAPS*.

FAMILY RESOURCES

Health Coverage

Dependent care may be purchased through the UC Merced GSHIP. Please see the student health service website at: *http://gradlife.ucmerced.edu/new-grads/health-services*.

CHILD CARE AND FAMILY SERVICES

UC Merced offers child care through the Early Childhood Education Center. Information on the Center's programs as well as other resources may be found at: *http://ecec.ucmerced.edu/welcome/*.

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers short-term, confidential individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, psychological and psychiatric assessment, and psychological testing for students with educational, career, emotional, personal, cross-cultural, and social concerns; conducts psycho-educational programs for psychological, multicultural, and interpersonal issues for members of the campus community; consults with faculty and staff on student needs, including students in crisis and disruptive students; assists in enhancing communication between individuals and groups; and trains peer counselors, pre-doctoral and postdoctoral psychology interns, psychology practicum students, and psychiatry residents. CAPS services are funded through student registration fees. Professional staff includes an ethnically diverse group of psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers. Go to *http://counseling.ucmerced.edu/* for more information.

H. RAJENDER REDDY HEALTH CENTER

The H. Rajender Reddy Health Center offers resources to help students stay healthy and successfully achieve their academic goals. This on-site clinical facility is available to all registered UC Merced students. Student registration fees subsidize the health center, which allows services to be provided to students at low rates. HRRH is available for preventative, self-care, primary care and specialty care services. Urgent care and same-day services are also available depending on the severity of the health problem. For student convenience, an in-house pharmacy, diagnostic laboratory, and insurance services are also available. For more information about H. Rajender Reddy Health Center, visit *http://health.ucmerced.edu/*.

INTRAMURAL SPORTS, CLUB SPORTS AND RECREATION

The UC Merced Campus Recreation program is the location for fun, fitness and friendship on campus. Through its five programming areas, Campus Recreation provides opportunities for recreational and competitive sports, group and individual fitness opportunities, great adventures in the outdoors, outdoor

education programs and open recreation. There's something for everyone in Campus Recreation; all of the programs and services offered are developed for all skill and ability levels, so you can find the right program for you!

Joseph Edward Gallo Recreation Center

The Joseph Edward Gallo Recreation and Wellness Center is the home to Campus Recreation and to the Student Health Center. In the Recreation Center, you'll find a group exercise room for activities such as aerobics, Pilates and yoga. There is also a large exercise room full of cardio equipment, free weights and circuit training equipment. Distributed cardio equipment around the facility allows you to enjoy the campus views as your work out, and the "cardio theatre" system allows you to enjoy television while you exercise. In the NCAA basketball-sized gymnasium, you can play basketball, volleyball and badminton. Lockers and showers are also available.

Memberships to the Gallo Recreation Center are available for spouses and family members of graduate students. For more information about memberships, contact the Campus Recreation office at recreation@ucmerced.edu or 209-CATS-REC (228-7732).

Intramural Sports

Intramural Sports offer a great way to have fun and meet new people. The intramural program has a wide variety of activities from the traditional teams such as flag football, volleyball, basketball and soccer; to some non-traditional sports such as dodegball, kickball and horseshoes.

Intramural Sports has options for people of all skill and competitive levels. If you just want to get together with friends and play flag football for fun, or if you and your buddies want to relieve your basketball championship season, we have a spot for you. Our leagues are structured into men's, women's , open and coed leagues, and in most sports we offer different leagues based upon competitive and skill levels.

Best of all, you don't have to spend all your time in practice! You can play intramural sports with as little as a one hour per week commitment.

Outdoor Adventures

The UC Merced Outdoor Adventures program offers trips for all skill levels year around. From leisure day trips to San Francisco to the heart pounding whitewater of the Merced River, Outdoor Adventures has something fun for you in the outdoors.

All activities in the Outdoor Adventure program are evaluated and rated so participants will have an idea of activities that are appropriate for them to attend. These ratings evaluate the level of physical demand, not prior skill. All activities are appropriate for the first time outdoor beginners unless noted.

Wilderness Center

Enjoy the outdoors? Want to go hiking in Yosemite but don't know where you should go? Stop by the Wilderness Center in the Joseph Edward Gallo Recreation Center to find out all you need about our regional National Parks, California State Parks and the outdoors.

The Wilderness Center is your portal to the parks. Trail maps, hiking guides, equipment rentals and advice from a Ranger can all be found at the Wilderness Desk. The Wilderness Desk is located in the Campus Recreation Offices inside the Gallo Recreation and Wellness Center.

Sport Clubs

Are you a serious sport competitor? Then maybe you should start or join a Sport Club. Every club is formed, developed and governed by its student membership in conjunction with the Sport Club Staff.

The goal of the Sport Club program is to develop and foster the leadership skills of UC Merced students through their participation in competitive activities. Sport Clubs are governed by the rules set forth by the Office of Student Life and the Recreation & Athletics Office.

Sport Clubs are formed primarily for competitive sports. These competitive clubs are for those who whish to compete locally, regionally and nationally against other club programs or individuals.

GET CONNECTED SOCIALLY

In some cases, graduate study can breed social isolation. Social connections are important to your mental health, as well as to your professional development. There are several ways to get connected with students and faculty within your own program, as well as connect with students from across the disciplines on campus.

The UC Merced Graduate Student Association (GSA) is a student-driven representative body linking students of diverse graduate programs. Funded by graduate student fees, GSA provides services to graduate students and protects and promotes their interests at all levels of university administration. For more information go to: *http://gradlife.ucmerced.edu/grad-student-association*.

DIALOGUE WITH THE DEAN

The Dean of Graduate Division hosts an open dialogue each semester. It is intended to facilitate a more focused discussion with Dean Traina and other university administrators. Each semester the event addresses a different topic of interest to graduate students, providing an opportunity for students to ask questions, express concerns and receive valuable information through informal discussions with the Dean. The conversations typically occur over a provided dinner. Faculty and staff are welcome, and graduate students from all programs are especially encouraged to attend these semesterly dialogues. Dates and locations are available on the Graduate Life website: *http://gradlife.ucmerced.edu/*.

DEAN'S SOCIAL

The Dean of the Graduate Division hosts a social three times a year. This is a good opportunity to meet other students as well as staff in the Graduate Division. Dates and locations are announced in *GradLink*.

FACEBOOK

UC Merced Graduate Division is on Facebook! We invite you to join our group and network with students, alumni, and staff. Join us at *http://www.facebook.com/ucmercedgradstudies*.

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY - UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED

Our founding principles of community guide both the individual and collective behaviors of students, faculty and staff. The university expects that all of its members will emulate these fundamental principles as individuals and as a community.

- We celebrate the spirit of academic excellence and strive to promote our University and its strengths through our daily interactions with students, staff, faculty and the community at large.

- We maintain a working and learning environment based on integrity, fairness, cooperation, professionalism and respect.

- We are a community comprised of individuals with multiple cultures, lifestyles and beliefs. We celebrate this diversity for the breadth of ideas and perspectives it brings.

- We value the creativity of our students, staff and faculty, and acknowledge both their individual and collaborative achievements.

- We encourage health and wellness and strive to develop a sense of environmental responsibility and stewardship among all the members of our community.

- We are committed to achieving tolerance in our community. All persons – faculty, staff and students – regardless of background or lifestyle should participate and work together in a collegial atmosphere that we strive to make free of any and all acts of discrimination or harassment.

- We respect, support and value the civil and respectful expression of individual beliefs and opinions.

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