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.

3. Modifications to an existing course should be indicated as such on the CRF. The explanation box should explain briefly the reason for the proposed change and should have an accompanying WASC compliant syllabus.

4. Cross-listed courses are courses that have different prefixes, names, and/or course numbers but are intended to be offered as the same course with the same meeting time, requirements, and units. Cross-listed courses must have identical course descriptions and prerequisites. Each course that is cross-listed with another course must have its own CRF that indicates the corresponding cross-listed course.

5. Co-listed courses are graduate courses that share one or more elements (*e.g*. lecture, lab, fieldwork) with an undergraduate course. If a graduate course is to be co-listed, details must be provided about what parts of the course will be shared and how the requirements of Senate Regulation 762 will be met.
(http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/manual/rpart3.html#r762)

6. Completed CRFs should be submitted by the Graduate Group to the Registrar's Office (to RegistrarSecure@ucmerced.edu). Upon receipt of the CRF, the Registrar will check the form for completeness, dean's signature, and Graduate Group approval, check for consistency between cross-listed courses if relevant, and assign a preliminary course number if a new course. Forms submitted without required authorizations and incomplete forms will be returned to the originating Graduate Group.

7. Completed CRFs will be transmitted to GRC for review. The following criteria will be used by GRC in its review:

- Are the standards and prerequisites of the proposed course consistent with those of related courses taught at UCM and similar courses taught at other UC campuses?
- Is the instructional format justified (*e.g*. lecture, lab)? Is the unit value for the course consistent with SR 760 (each unit should correspond to three hours of student effort per week)?
- Does the course appear to fit within the graduate group's subject area?
- Is the syllabus WASC compliant?
- Does the subject matter of the course substantially overlap with that of another course? If so, the CRF or course outline should explain why the new course is needed.
- If the course is to be co-listed with an undergraduate course, are the subject matter and proposed format consistent with SR 762 which requires that graduate and undergraduate courses "must have clearly differentiated and unique performance criteria, requirements, and goals."

8. If GRC requires further information or indicates that modification of the CRF is needed, the Senate Analyst on behalf of GRC will notify the Graduate Group of the request. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Group and/or submitting instructor to provide the requested information or modification to GRC in a timely fashion via the Senate analyst.

9. Once a course is approved by GRC, the CRF in its final form will be transmitted to the Registrar. The Registrar will notify the originating Graduate Group of approval and the course will be entered into the catalog.

Rev. March 2009