

Wed Sep 12, 2018

GSA Retreat Notes

Presentation by

- De Acker (pronounced “Dee”), director of Campus Climate
- Val Villanueva, Assistant Ombuds

On behalf of the Campus Climate and Diversity Committee as well as Ombuds

Overall vision: to create a community here at UC Merced

Community guidelines

- Be open to perspectives of others
- Be brave, take risks, lean into discomfort
- Each person’s story is unique and has value
- Our time together is precious

Bobcat Connect - principles of community video

- UC Merced’s mission is to serve
- Create community that nurtures lifelong growth
- Recognize and celebrate identities of every member of the community
- Civility in all interactions

Why show this video to the GSA?

- Help GSA be productive in the midst of disagreements
- Have GSA understand these principles as it guides the Grad student body

Vision and Change Alignment Map (“campus vision” image)

- Guidelines for project priorities

Strange and Banning’s model for environmental purpose and design:

- Level 1: Safety and Inclusion (sense of security and belonging)
- Level 2: Involvement (Participation, engagement, role taking)
- Level 3: Community (sense of full membership)

Students feel imposter syndrome: What can we do for them? We can make them feel safe and included. We want them to feel involved.

Draft of UC Merced’s new Diversity Statement. Partially written by “teeny matlock”. Goal is to complete this by the end of the Fall 2018 semester. The Chancellor has final say. But it will be open to comments by GSA, UC Senate Faculty, etc.

Equality, Equity, and Justice (people looking over a fence) ← Cool!

Social Justice: GSA can provide, equality, equity, and justice for all grad students. What can GSA do?

Example: lots of students are failing a class. What can be done to fix this? Change curriculum, provide tutoring, allow students to give feedback, etc

Social justice: individual, interpersonal, institutional

Ideas for GSA to pursue:

- Temporary parking
- Shuttles from parking lot to campus
- More frequent bus schedule
- Bus going later at night

Discussion topic:

- time you felt included, important, valued, and connected to others?
- What does our culture of care look like with those WE SERVE in our roles on campus?

How to make a GSA Forum:

- Public comment.
- Digital forum – provide more opportunity for people to participate in GSA politics
- To make inviting community, allow for anonymous comments
- Facebook.

Empathy vs Sympathy

- Video by Brene Brown
- Does the GSA have a responsibility to make grad students have common base so they can empathize?
- Create awareness and understanding
- Treat people with respect and dignity

Courage, compassion, connection

- Ask to sit with someone you don't know at lunch, etc

Ombuds

- Don't do mental health
- Can direct student to an Advocate for instances of sexual abuse or harassment
- Can send students there if they need resources. – they can ask any question
- Guided by 4 principles: confidential, neutral/impartial, informal, independent
- They advocate for fairness

- Provide informal mediation
- Provide “shuttled diplomacy” that all parties feel a fair decision is reached
- Helps parties communicate via an informal channel
- Can ask what formal and informal channels are available
- They don’t keep records
- Can provide feedback on improving institutional community culture?
- They have a lending library- books on conflict resolution, dealing with difficult bosses, interpersonal working relationships, etc

Dean Marjorie Zatz

- Chris Kello is the PI, and it is given/controlled by Grad Div. In conjunction with UC Santa Barbara. AGAP grant was received – will fund 5 students, will be asking for nominations from the graduate groups (working also with Fresno (CSU?)). Those funded by the fellowship will spend 1 semester working with and being mentored by a faculty member at Fresno. Each campus will contribute to the learning of this grant recipient student.
- Jull Robins was awarded a 2 year grant to fund 8 graduate students a year for 2 summers (total of 16 students). \$7000 a student For ethnographic, humanities research (embedded sociology) working with community partners.
- Got a new grant from the Melon Foundation. Marjorie is PI, along with Jill Robins and Teeny Matlock. To increase faculty diversity. To support 6 humanities and sociology grad students in summer bridge program (incoming grad students). (grant will be available for a minimum of 4 years) (What is the Summer bridge program). Need a way to evaluate effectiveness of this.
- Marjories Zatz applied for an “Alliance grant”, “Computational alliance for HSIs” working on it with Fesno, Stanislaus, SF State. To get computer Sciences from middle school through college (mostly undergrad stuff)
- All UCs are part of a council of grad students grant. Are we preparing grad students for the actual jobs they are receiving
- 3rd year of computational stuff (for 1st and 2nd year grad students), networking with national labs, and industry. They will prioritize students who don’t know much programming/computer science, but want to learn more.

Want more computer science classes: interface with online classes or other campuses?

Make a road map for Grad students in what courses they can take to develop the computational skills they need for their field of research.

Goal of Grad Div: increase retention and graduation rate for all grad students. Prepare them for jobs within industry, when they graduate. Also provide social support: get to know other grad students and faculty so they have a community of support.

Every student who has gone through Summer Bridge has decided to stay in it year over year.

Annual grad student review: need at minimum a Satisfactory. An occasion to sit down and talk about what they need to do to improve.

What are the things Grad Div are working on?

Last year, Grad Div + GSA were working on:

- Grad Student Rights and Responsibilities. Once it is finished, it needs to be approved by the Graduate Council/Graduate Student Association. (Daniel, Ashley, and Zatz worked on it). BUT some members of GSA wanted a different document that went further. Look in GSA email. Put on Agenda for GSA meeting. MAY need Delegate assembly approval.

Marjorie WANTS to get to meet the Delegate Assembly

- Wants to know what the issues are that grad students are concerned about (can tell her during monthly meeting with Zatz)
- Also wants to be invited to DA meetings OR be able to meet with DA personally

Grad Support Staff – can ask for list of all Grad students and which grad group they're part of.

SSB 217 – a Physical grad student resource center:

- Grant proposals, real dissertations, etc. You can come to look at them. This is where the writing and Stats tutors/consultants will be.
- Counseling and Psychological Services will also be hosted here.

Pay issues:

- Grad Div has 2 staff members working on this. Make sure that Grad students are in the correct pay system: UC PATH.
- A few issues with mail services. (5400 N lake vs 5200 N lake) the students weren't getting their mail. The first check of the year has to be by mail (for some reason)
- About 200 grad students that had retirement funds taken out of paycheck (~\$80 error) will be repaid in the October paycheck
- If there are pay issues, then come to Grad Div ASAP. They want to encourage coming and talking to grad div.
- Zatz wants us to make sure all Grad Students contact Grad Div if there is a payment issue. (It is not your error. It is the UC institution error). First, look in UC Path portal, and make sure your address and banking info are correct.

Nies

4 general cultures

- “Collegial” – debates, revisions, wisdom, tends to take a long time, focused on vision
- “Developmental” – student affairs culture, integration, forum talk, holistic discussions, intentional, wants to build a good culture
- “Managerial” culture – looks at the bottom line, makes sure we are fiscally responsible, often at-odds with the collegial culture because its so slow, often wants to avoid beurocracy, wants to get things done asap.
- “Negotiating” culture – develops beurocracy. Advocacy roll. Makes UC-wide policy to protect people. Creates policies that cretes beurocracy that drives “managerial” culture nuts.

Each committee may exhibit each of these 4 behaviors:

- One may have fun talking and never make a decision (collegial)
- One may focus on making a decision and making it now (managerial)
- One may just want everyone to feel good (developmental)
- etc

Which culture should GSA be a part of?

GSA

- Research support
- Travel grants
- Help students be successful in their academic pursuits
- Academic senate committee representation – communicate their decisions to all Grad students, and what it means to them.
- Lots of doctoral students are thinking of academic careers.

People/committees/offices:

- VCR – vice chancellor of Research
- Provost
- EVC
- Deans
- VCSA
- UCOP
- VCBAS
- VCP&B
- VCDAR
- UCSA
- GSA
- ASUCM

What is “student success”? Student affairs:

- Our mission: We try to help you accomplish your academic, career, and personal goals.
- Programs and initiatives for grad students: all help with this
- Food, rent, out-of-pocket expenses take forever to be reimbursed, emergency funds (basic needs) so you have the resources you need to be successful. Don't have money to pay for rent, b/c not reimbursed yet.
- Work with financial aid office. "emergency grant" no expectation you will pay it back.
- Immediate food need: can give SaveMart gift cards
- Vouchers for "produce on the go" – want to get support from local farmers. Buy their ugly fruit/vegs.
- Also bringing "county human services" to campus. – CalFresh - \$160 food allocation, EBT card?

Counseling center

- Continuing to hire psychologists
- Have a ½ time psychiatrist
- Have drop-in consultation (bring therapist outside of counseling center)
- Students are waiting until they are in crisis before visiting the counseling center
- Want to promote mentally healthy behaviors – there are important things grad students should be doing so they don't get a mental illness

Career center, working with dean Chris Kello, and Hector

- Exploring options for grad students outside of academia
- Help grad students explore career path
- Industry partners that will come to campus throughout the fall semester, looking for grad students to be part of what they are doing. Mostly looking for grad students who are graduating. But also might be willing to do internships for current grad students.
- Idea: grad student internship fair. List of internships students from each grad group can apply to. Have company reps come and explain what it would be like
- Even on a personal basis: they will place individual grad students if possible.

Student affairs:

- Help connect grad students with local community (volunteer outreach at high schools, etc)
- Opportunities for graduate students.- giving back to the community

Center for educational partnership:

- K-12 outreach work from Bakersfield to Sacramento to promote a college-going culture in those schools.
- Have ~\$10 million to make it happen (Gear-up, AVID, talent search, funding etc)

Grad-student, undergrad relationship

- Grad student panel undergrads can ask questions from
- Mentoring