Senate Item for Review: Interim Policy for Visiting Graduate Students

Response Due Date: Tuesday, May 3, 2011

Return to: Jaime Balboa, CAO, jbalboa@senate.ucla.edu

Relevant Links: Please see attached

On behalf of the UCLA Academic Senate Chair Ann Karagozian, please review the above referenced proposed policy changes. This is specifically requested of the following committees and councils:

Graduate Council
Council on Planning and Budget
Executive Board

All other committees and councils are free to opine if they wish to.

Responses to the above would be most useful if they were to include one of the following responses: 1. The committee endorses the policy revisions as written; 2. The committee endorses contingent upon the following revisions (please specify); 3. The committee opposes the proposal. Minority reports are welcome and should be submitted with the response of the committee.

Background Information:

This proposed INTERIM policy consists of rules and regulations pertaining to graduate students from other universities who come to UCLA for a short period of time, less than or equal to one year, to engage in scholarly research with a UCLA faculty member and/or to use UCLA research facilities. As you may be aware, in the past few years, due to the absence of formal policies for such visitors, several sets of fees and policies have been enacted separately by different entities, including the International Education Office and Graduate Division. A number of complaints by faculty have arisen pertaining to these fees. Over the past few months, Senate Chair Ann Karagozian and Interim Vice Provost & Graduate Dean Michael Goldstein have worked to address this issue, and an interim policy for such visitors has been formulated for review and implementation.

A draft version of this document was first reviewed by the Senate Executive Board at its January 27 meeting (see http://www.senate.ucla.edu/committees/executiveboard/documents/01-27-11ExecBoardMinutes.pdf). The Executive Board provided input for modification of that draft. These modifications, in addition to financial and programmatic vetting by Associate Vice Chancellor Glyn Davies, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Marcia Smith, Director Bob Ericksen of the Dashew Center, and David Beckstrom of financial services, have resulted in the present document.
This interim policy is proposed to be in effect from Fall, 2011 through Fall, 2012, and comments and suggestions for improvements will be received during that time. At present, comments on the overall structure of the policy are requested of the above-named Councils so that the Senate Executive Board may provide input before the interim policy is sent to the campus via the EVC.
Proposed UCLA Interim Policy for Visiting Graduate Student Researchers:

CONFIDENTIAL DRAFT: April 5, 2011

Introduction and Background

This Interim Policy for Visiting Graduate Student Researchers consists of rules and regulations pertaining to graduate students from other universities who come as visitors to UCLA for a brief period of time, (less than or approximately equal to one year) to engage in scholarly research with a UCLA faculty member and/or to use UCLA research facilities. At present there are multiple policies governing the presence of such visitors that have been put into place by different UCLA agencies over the past several years. This interim policy is designed to provide a uniform framework under which such graduate student visitors may engage in research at UCLA, while establishing appropriate rules and regulations to protect the visitor, the faculty advisor(s), UCLA students, and the campus as a whole.

The interim policy will apply for the period Fall, 2011 through at least the end of Fall, 2012. During this period comments and suggestions pertaining to the policy will be received by the Office of the Executive Vice-Chancellor. Based on these comments, a final policy proposal will be presented for review by the Senate and Administration with enactment expected no later than the Spring of 2012.

Visiting graduate students who come for a short period of time to UCLA to engage in research generally fall into one of several categories. As each of these classes of visitors places a distinct set of obligations and responsibilities upon the student, the University and the faculty, policies pertaining to each are different. All visiting graduate students are expected to familiarize themselves with the standards set forth in the Student Code of Conduct, Research Misconduct Policy, and all applicable policies related to the conduct of research, including all training requirements for the research activities to be undertaken and UCLA policies regarding the ownership and transfer of intellectual property. (See
The research performed by a visiting graduate student researcher is frequently used for the student’s thesis or dissertation at his/her home institution. In no case can such research or the products arising from such research be applied to fulfill requirements for a subsequent degree that may be pursued at UCLA.

It should be noted that UCLA has separate, formal student exchange or reciprocity agreements with partner institutions around the world, including direct relationships with other UC campuses. These agreements enable UCLA students and students at reciprocal institutions to keep up with the latest academic trends and research innovations and to stimulate scholarly collaborations. Those exchange or reciprocity agreements govern student exchange between UCLA and those institutions. This Interim Policy for Visiting Graduate Student Researchers governs only students from institutions for which no formal exchange agreement exists.

Definitions and General Policies

VISITING STUDENT RESEARCHER (VSR): A VSR is an advanced graduate student at another university who wishes primarily or exclusively to pursue research with a UCLA faculty member and/or to use UCLA research facilities. A VSR is limited to one year’s residency at UCLA. He or she is eligible to take UCLA courses for credit applied at their home institution only, and enrollment in and fees for these classes will be paid at the prevailing rate for non-resident students on the basis of course load through the UCLA Registrar’s Office. Prospective VSRs must: (a) submit transcripts from their current university and at least one letter of recommendation from a faculty member at that university to the relevant UCLA department, (b) be deemed suitable for this program by a UCLA faculty member, who agrees to advise the student, and by his or her department chair, and (c) must purchase the UCLA Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan (GSHIP) and pay Ashe Center and Counseling and Psychological Services fees, or provide proof of comparable health care coverage. 

A UCLA faculty member can
sponsor no more than three VSRs at one time. With respect to research, VSRs can fall into several alternative sub-categories:

1. **A VSR with his or her own financial support, where the support is not paid through UCLA’s payroll system, Graduate Division, or the UCLA Financial Aid Office.** While this “Self-Supporting” VSR (VSR/SS) is not paid via UCLA, he or she can receive reimbursement for research-related expenses incurred under a faculty sponsor’s direction (e.g., travel or per diem for conferences, etc.) from the UCLA faculty member’s research grant to the extent legally allowed. The VSR/SSs is required to have a UCLA ID card, may have access to UCLA’s information technology facilities, may have paperwork for visas and other documentation processed by UCLA offices, must sign appropriate Intellectual Property documents (UPAY 585), and will be eligible for use of university recreational and library facilities. The VSR/SS with his or her own support must pay a set fee to cover the costs incurred by UCLA for visa processing, use of university recreational and library facilities, coverage of the technology infrastructure fee (TIF), liability coverage, etc. Specific fees will be set annually by the University. See [WEBSITE](#) for a breakdown of current VSR/SS fees.

Visa processing services for non-immigrant international VSRs are provided by the Dashew Center for International Students and Scholars via recharge. The J-1 “non-degree student” category is the usual choice of visa type for VSRs. It carries a host of limits and restrictions. A VSR/SS is eligible for this category of visa only if 1) they are invited to UCLA through an MOU/Reciprocity agreement with a foreign institution (which meets US Department of State’s requirements for reciprocity) or, 2) 51% or more of their financial support is provided by non-personal funds (UCLA, home-country university, grant, etc.)

2. **A VSR with his or her own financial support, deriving from a special fellowship or award, where the support is paid through UCLA’s Graduate Division or the UCLA Financial Aid Office.** This VSR/fellow (VSR/F) is required to have a UCLA ID card, may have access to UCLA’s information
technology facilities, may have paperwork for visas and other documentation processed by UCLA offices, must sign appropriate Intellectual Property documents (UPAY585), and will be eligible for use of university recreational and library facilities. The VSR/F is required to pay a set fee to cover the costs incurred by UCLA for processing visas and stipend payments, use of university recreational and library facilities, coverage of the technology infrastructure fee (TIF), liability coverage, etc. Specific fees will be set annually by the University. See [WEBSITE2](#) for a breakdown of current VSR/F fees. Such fees can be paid from the award itself if allowable.

3. **A VSR whose financial support comes from a UCLA research grant or contract, and thus who must be paid as a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) or is appointed as a Staff Research Associate (SRA) or a Laboratory Assistant and receives compensation through UCLA’s payroll system.** This VSR/PS (Paid Staff) is funded by sources available to the UCLA advisor including research grants or contracts to the extent approved by the Principal Investigator and allowed by the terms and conditions of the award. This type of visiting student is functioning as a regular UCLA student who has passed the candidacy exam and is working as a GSR paid by a research grant or contract. Thus, the VSR/PS must be compensated at the same rate as GSRs and must pay fees equivalent to the regular in-state tuition and fees paid by GSRs. Such fees can be paid from the UCLA faculty member’s research grant or contract, if allowed by the terms and conditions of the award. The amount of the VSR/PS fee is based on both the need to reimburse the University for the costs associated by such visitors and a desire to eliminate any disincentives for faculty to support UCLA graduate students. VSR/PS are required to have a UCLA ID card, may have access to UCLA’s information technology facilities, may have paperwork for visas and other documentation processed by UCLA offices, must sign appropriate Intellectual Property documents, and will be eligible for use of university recreational and library facilities.