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Steven W. Cheung  
Chair, Assembly of the  
Academic Senate  
Faculty Representative,  
UC Board of Regents

Academic Senate

Office of the President  
1111 Franklin Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

[senate.universityofcalifornia.edu](http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu)

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June 26, 2025

Katherine S. Newman  
Provost and Executive Vice President  
University of California

Re: Approval of Master of Global Public Affairs with PDST at UCLA

Dear Provost Newman:

In accordance with the Universitywide Review Processes For Academic Programs, Units, and Research Units (the "Compendium"), and on the recommendation of the Coordinating Committee on Graduate Affairs (CCGA), the Academic Council has approved UC Los Angeles' proposal to establish a Master of Global Public Affairs with Professional Degree Supplemental Tuition (PDST).

Because this is a new degree title, and the Assembly of the Academic Senate is not meeting within 30 days of CCGA's approval, Council must approve the program per [Senate Bylaw 125.B.7](#).

I am enclosing CCGA's report on its review of the new program, and respectfully request that your office complete the process of obtaining the President's approval.

Thank you for the opportunity to opine. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Steven W. Cheung  
Chair, Academic Council

cc: Academic Council  
Institutional Research and Academic Planning Analyst Procello  
UCLA Senate Executive Director de Stefano  
Executive Director Lin



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COORDINATING COMMITTEE ON GRADUATE AFFAIRS

James Bisley, Chair

[jbisley@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:jbisley@mednet.ucla.edu)

June 9, 2025

Steven W. Cheung

Chair, Academic Senate

Dear Chair Cheung,

On June 4, CCGA met and reviewed the proposal from the Los Angeles division for a Master of Global Public Affairs with PDST. After discussion, the proposal was approved 10-0-2.

UCLA proposes a new master's degree as an inter-departmental degree program (IDP) that focuses on the three core areas of the Luskin School of Public Affairs: Social Welfare, Public Policy and Urban Planning. The new program will be committed to training globalists and practitioners who are committed to justice, equity, and advancing values of human freedom and human rights. The proposal emphasizes a specific "front line" perspective on how global professionals can combat human vulnerability and injustice in all their forms, and can participate in reshaping the nature of the global system to better embody fundamental commitments and values.

UCLA is endowed with many excellent programs that engage with the globalization environment, and the proposed new master degree will generate new synergies on campus with these programs. The program will offer a rigorous and cross-subject core in professional Global Public Affairs theory and practice. It grounds its approach in the three disciplines of the Luskin School – public policy, social welfare, and urban planning – aiming to create an intellectual and practice-oriented core that draws on policy formulation and evaluation tools.

CCGA obtained feedback from four reviewers. All acknowledged the potentially innovative (even "exciting" according to one reviewer) nature of the program and the high-quality faculty expertise. However, two reviewers found the market analysis to be optimistic, and a risky move at this time. All reviewers provide suggestions for strengthening the program. These

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concerns were shared with the proposers, who addressed them adequately (please see the Lead Reviewer's reports, attached).

As you know, CCGA's approval is the last stop of the Academic Senate side of the systemwide review and approval process except when the new degree title must be approved by the Academic Council. I submit this for your review; please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions regarding the proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bisley', with a stylized, flowing script.

James Bisley  
Chair, CCGA

cc: Academic Senate Vice Chair Palazoglu  
Academic Senate Executive Director Lin  
Academic Senate Assistant Director LaBriola  
CCGA Members  
Academic Planning and Research Analyst Procello  
UCLA Dean of Graduate Education Kite  
UCLA Senate Executive Director de Stefano  
UCLA Senate Associate Director Le

## **Summary of reviews for the Master in Global Public Affairs (MGPA), UCLA**

The proposed MGPA program leverages faculty expertise in the 3 departments of the Luskin School of Public Affairs at UCLA (Social Welfare, Public Policy and Urban Planning) to deliver a new 2-year professional degree program. Luskin has a certificate program in GPA currently. CCGA obtained feedback from 4 reviewers (R1-R4). All acknowledged the potentially innovative (even “exciting” according to one reviewer) nature of the program and the high-quality faculty expertise. However, one reviewer (R2) found the market analysis to be optimistic (a concern shared by R1) and a risky move at this time. All reviewers provide suggestions for strengthening the program. A summary of referee feedback follows.

### **Program strengths**

#### **1. Quality and academic rigor:**

- Strong emphasis on methods and quantitative analysis
- Multidisciplinary coursework, capstone projects and practice-oriented offerings
- Orientation towards global social challenges

#### **2. Faculty expertise:**

- Broad, interdisciplinary expertise that is reflected in the variety of course offerings.
- Includes world-renowned faculty in the constituent departments
- Recognized research expertise in the inter-relationship between local and global issues

#### **3. Application pool and placement prospects:**

- Breadth in both pool and placement prospects that derives from the complementary strengths of the three Luskin School departments
- Diverse placement opportunities that include NGOs, public sector organizations and international organizations

### **Potential program weaknesses**

#### **1. Application pool:**

- The enrollment objective to go from 25 to 50 per year (100 total) enrolled students in 5 years is optimistic based on experiences at UCSB and UCSD (R2). Enrollments have been stagnant or declining at various top programs (R1)
- The applicant pool on the West Coast may be smaller than in the East Coast cities owing to lower supply of internships, employers, professors of practice
- The applicant pool may shrink overall because of job market uncertainty

#### **2. Placement prospects:**

- US job market in internationalist or globalist positions is unfortunately under significant stress due to current events.

#### **3. Program rigor:**

- All the core courses are to be taught by faculty from one department – urban planning, including 2 adjuncts

### **Areas for improvement and recommendations**

## **1. Curriculum:**

- Economics and political science appear to be light
- There is an opportunity to create synergy with Economics, Law and the Business School at UCLA
- Some courses could be taught by Professors of Practice or 1 of the new faculty lines could be used to recruit an individual with strong professional experience
- Training for not only NGOs but also higher up practitioners is recommended
- A course on modern data analytics
- Capstone project for the entire 2<sup>nd</sup> year rather than waiting until the final 2 quarters was recommended by R3. However, R4 noted the cost (faculty time and program coordination) of 2 capstone projects and advocated for one capstone project.
- The internship program was deemed to be positive and R3 recommends it be a core requirement for all students for several enumerated reasons.
- Questions were raised as to the specifics of how would “globalists” and “problem solvers” be trained in connection with the core expertise in the 3 constituent departments.
- The lack of a language requirement for a global oriented master attracted comments.
- A remote learning component to control costs was advocated
- R1 noted that UCSB started with a narrow practice-oriented training for a civil society job. But, the mixed experience led to a change towards increased program rigor so that their graduates are now getting jobs in public and private sectors and many also go on to Law degrees or PhD programs

## **2. Application pool:**

- R3 recommends that a minimum threshold of professional experience be required and notes that this would align the proposed program with leading peer programs
- Will the MGPA program siphon off students from the mother urban planning program?

## **Updated CCGA Lead Review for the Master in Global Public Affairs (MGPA), UCLA**

The proposers have provided a written response to the 4 external reviews and Professor Loukaitou-Sideris, Interim Dean of the Luskin School, discussed the response with the lead reviewer during a zoom call. The response is comprehensive and adequately addresses reviewer concerns and potential program weaknesses that were identified based on reviewer letters (see itemized summary that was provided to the proposers by the lead reviewer).

In response to reviewer concerns about MGPA enrollment projections, the proposers expressed confidence in attracting an initial cohort of 25 students based on the high student interest in the three contributing UCLA departments (Urban Planning, Social Welfare and Public Policy) with 500 or more applicants to each.

Regarding adequacy of program resources, the proposers stated that the UCLA provost has committed to provide 3 faculty FTE, a 0.5 staff FTE and \$700K in startup funds. In the zoom call, the Dean mentioned that these hires are expected to go through in the upcoming years despite UC budgetary challenges. Each of the three participating departments is to receive one faculty line.

The proposers affirm the UCLA program distinctiveness from the UCSD School for Global Policy and Strategy (GPS) based on the MGPA faculty expertise being drawn from 3 separate departments and the intended avoidance of overlaps in area concentrations with those at UCSD School of GPS.

Regarding placement of MGPA applicants, especially based on current political events, the proposers note reasonable offsetting factors. These factors include preparing the students for not only government jobs but also other professional areas such as private foundations, NGOs and global community-based and multilateral organizations.

There was a reviewer concern about the core MGPA courses being taught by only Urban Planning faculty. This concern is dispelled by the proposers who note that one of the faculty was inadvertently listed as an Urban Planning faculty and the two core Methods courses are to be taught by faculty from Social Welfare and Public Policy.