

Colorado School of Mines – FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
 January 28, 2020, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, Hill Hall 300

Attendees:

Voting Members: 13 total (7 needed for quorum). Quorum was present

P	Marcelo Simoes (Chair)	P	Robin Bullock (EDS)	P	Sebnem Duzgun (MN)	P	Gus Greivel (AMS)
P	Alina Handorean (EDS)	P	Andy Herring (CBE)	P	Yvette Kuiper (GE)	P	Jon Leydens (HASS)
A	John McCray (CEE)	P	Lisa Nickum (LB)	P	Alexis Sitchler (GE)	P	Angie Sower (CH)
A	Neal Sullivan (ME)	P					

Other Regular Attendees and Guests

P	Linda Battalora (Trustee)	P	Rick Holz (AA)	P	Paul Myskiw (RO)	A	Colin Terry (Student Life)
P	Cathy Timm (AA/RO)	A	Jennifer Veloff (Trefny)	A	Brock Gagna(USG)	A	Muthu Thyagarajan (GSG)
P	Gauen Alexander (GSG)	P	Jason Porter				

Welcome

Marcelo Simoes

Provost / Academic Affairs Update

Rick Holz

Holz indicated that the FDR data has been distributed with an extension on the due date so that all have two weeks to finish; he apologized for delay.

As it relates to new programs, there is a group working on a new Bio major which will not be ready for Fall 2020 deadlines; perhaps the approval of this program can be the test case for targeting a new mid-year start date. This would allow incoming freshmen, and perhaps sophomores, to begin the program in Jan 2021. Holz suggested that this could happen outside of normal Council meetings or reviewed through email. The possible scenario would be to have it submitted in late February for Council to consider; it could be discussed and debated over summer and go to the Council, Senate, and Board in early fall. Goal is to accommodate students. Holz asked Senators to think about how programs can start at various times in an academic year, in particular some of the online programs that could likely start at any time in the academic year. Question about proposing a graduate program to mirror this one; the QBE component is already in place. Team would potentially work on the 4+1 program for the Masters at a later date.

Registrar Update

Paul Myskiw

Myskiw added another comment about new programs beginning off cycle. From an admissions perspective, typically programs are marketed and recruited 3 to 4 months before beginning. A new program would probably need to be approved in August to start in January. There are usually about 75 to 100 transfer students that start in spring.

Question raised about when the schedule for final exams will be released. Myskiw indicated that it should be just about complete.

Approval of Minutes – December 10, 2019 and January 14, 2020

Marcelo Simoes

MOTION: To approve minutes of December 10, 2019. By Handorean; seconded by Greivel. Three abstentions. APPROVED.

MOTION: To approve minutes of January 14, 2020, with amendments from Leydens. By Greivel; seconded by Kuiper. One abstention. APPROVED.

Committee Updates

- **Leadership Nomination** – replace Senator on sabbatical

Alina Handorean

Handorean is waiting to hear from McCray to determine if he has a replacement. Simoes suggested that we may not need to replace him for the balance of the year; rather, have McCray rejoin the group in the Fall when he returns from sabbatical.

- **Survey Committee** – update

Jon Leydens

Question raised about whether or not this is a permanent committee; surveys have been taking place since 2014. Handorean indicated that this is a standing committee of Faculty Senate and was voted on in 2019 while Leydens was on sabbatical.

- **Executive Council Update**

Alexis Sitchler

- **Informational Items on Syllabi**

Sitchler shared a document that she drafted which was a compilation of ideas from previous meeting. This is a strawman recommendation for review before submitting to the Provost. Suggestions on how to handle all the information were discussed.

All were in general agreement that syllabi should include only information that is relevant to the course. Global policies could be published separately, with possibly a link to the details; this will create less confusion and have the information easily accessible. Much of this detail is the same for every student and can be made available to all faculty. Some items might be subjective and some are federal law. While the syllabi represents somewhat of a contract from faculty to student; it was stated that it is also a subcontract with the school. There is also some concern about faculty's responsibility to share pertinent information versus the school's responsibility and which items pertain to curriculum.

Myskiw indicated that, based on his experience, syllabi have become bloated which is oftentimes mandatory based on legal issues and to avoid risk. He suggested that information that is institutional should not be passive. Not every course uses Canvas and this needs to be considered. Comment that having the same information on every course gets redundant, is not reviewed and has no value. Another item to be addressed is perhaps students need to sign a document that they have read and understand the policy to ensure all are in compliance.

Next step is to create a memo in response to Holz' request for recommendation which should include Senate's recommendation. This recommendation might include some best practices from the Provost and Student Life. Sitchler will continue to edit and send to Senators before submitting to Provost.

- **Academic Standards Committee – Grade Appeal**

Marcelo Simoes

There were two appeals brought up at the last meeting. There was one undergraduate student that decided to not move forward with appeal. The graduate one is complicated and is a group appeal. Final appeal must be submitted by Feb 11 and the committee has 25 days to put together a resolution which will come to Senate in mid-March for a vote in April.

Grad and Undergraduate Council Updates

- **Undergraduate Council Update**
 - **UG Program Changes**

Gus Greivel

Greivel shared a document outlining the changes to programs that have been approved to date. These items are presented as information only and not necessarily looking for a vote. Many of the program changes are to clean up some of the course listings. There are more substantive changes in Mining Engineering and Applied Math and Statistics. Mining has reduced credit hour count from 139.5 to 132.5 to bring them more in line with the rest of the campus. There was an initial request related to the core but this has been resolved. They also have Humanities & Social Sciences course in the Mining curriculum to satisfy mid-level electives for ABET. In Applied Math, they have moved the field session from summer to another term and shifted credit hours. They are the second program that does not have a summer field requirement.

Question raised about the request by Provost to start a new Bio program in Spring. Greivel shared that if it's ready for submission and incorporates the necessary degree and core requirements, it can be introduced at the next two meetings of Council. It could be discussed and be up for vote in early fall when Council gets back in session. Having items completed via email might be a challenge with summer schedules as there will likely be significant discussion regarding the program. Another concern was raised as to whether capital investment and faculty can be put in place for a January start; this is part of the discussion about implementing a new program. Initially, there was discussion that the new program could be put together with existing resources; this is still TBD as nothing has been proposed to Council.

- **H&SS Requirements for UG Core Curriculum**

With respect to the core curriculum, the Undergraduate Council is working to clarify what the Humanities & Social Sciences (H&SS) requirement is in the core curriculum. There are 5 or 6 programs on campus that have courses approved for this designation. There has been a conflation between H&SS and HASS. Requirements are not being changed, only moving some of this information and requirements under the core page and streamlining the way it is communicated. Also, the team is reviewing the language in the core requirements which treats the Economics and Business unit differently than the rest of the campus. Council will be empaneling a committee to look at how courses are vetted and approved for H&SS designation in the core.

- **Grad Council Update**
 - **Grad Program Changes**

Jason Porter

Porter was representing Sullivan who is off campus. A document was shared outlining changes to Grad programs that were approved to date.

There is a zero-credit course, which is part of the Electrical Engineering program changes, that was proposed and approved at Grad Council. The GSG representative, Alexander, initially protested the course, and the entire concept of zero-credit courses, but withdrew his objection so that it wouldn't hold up the program. The concept of doing work for which there is no credit received is the issue. Alexander would like to see a broader discussion around this topic.

Simoes indicated that he exchanged emails with the chair of Graduate Council, Sullivan, on the topic. As well, he indicated that the final decision of any Council business is made at Faculty Senate, but routine issues would need at least a communication from the Graduate Council to the Senate, to make sure that there are no issues that should also be considered for approval, CIM should only be pushed to authorize the workflow after either a proper communication with the Senate, or a vote. He believes that the job of Senators is to look out for the best interest of faculty. Zero-credit courses are against shared governance and it means that the faculty will not have recognition for the effort nor will it generate any revenue. Simoes believes that this type of course and activity should not be allowed. There is also an instance of a zero-credit course in Mechanical Engineering department that was previously approved.

Comment that the context should be considered; this is a dilemma in many departments related to seminars. The root is that many faculty believe that a graduate seminar contributes to the overall student's learning and has some value. Another item to consider is whether or not a student should receive credit if they are just sitting and listening to a speaker. There exists a need to look at why departments are offering this type of decision and activity. If this is an issue related to money, just banning zero-credit courses without broader discussion will not solve the problem.

Myskiw indicated that there is currently not a policy. Zero credits are used as an administrative placeholder; for example, a student going abroad for a course is put in the system as a zero-credit course that is not transcribed. It is a way to capture that something has been accomplished. For 1 credit, there should be activity totaling 1500 minutes; this could be fractionized for work being completed. Also, this sort of activity could be rolled into research credits that are required; this was discussed at Council and there was pushback as this is typically controlled by advisor. As well, the requirement of a lecture could be rolled into an existing course. By way of example, Myskiw explained that typically a music student has to take lessons and perform at recitals which would require out of classroom work and cost but still roll up into the requirements of a course. Another option that could be explored is that zero-credit activity could be stipulated as ones that are not part of the responsibility of the faculty member. Usually, it involves a pass or fail and is difficult to track and manage; then the question becomes why it is required and what is the purpose.

Simoes requested GSG representative, Alexander, to do a survey of entire community and bring back to Senate. Additional discussion is needed before this course and this program change can be approved; items need to be approved by the end of February for the new 2020 catalog.

The 4+1 program proposed by Economics and Business was discussed at the Academic Affairs Academic Cabinet and Simoes feels that this is a contentious issue that cannot be approved without more discussion. This 36 credit-hour program is being proposed with 9 credit hours being double counted from Colorado Mesa University. Currently, the Mines policy only allows a student to double count 6 Mines credit hours for a 30 hour program. Several concerns were raised about this precedent and allowing more hours to be double counted over what existing students can count. Along with the disparity in policy, there is concern about the quality of the course being counted.

Regarding equity, Myskiw added that there is current policy where disparity exists. Mines favors incoming grad students working toward a PHD by allowing them to receive 36 hours toward a 72 hour program; existing Mines graduates receive 30 credits of the 72 required. For the proposed 4+1 being considered, the courses are specific ones reviewed and approved by the faculty; they are not just any courses being accepted for the program. The idea is to incentivize students to attend Mines for a one-year program. The concept to reach out to other schools is a good one; concern is around allowing more credit hours to outside schools versus existing Mines graduates.

Next step is to invite the Economics and Business group to answer questions at next meeting. There is an additional 4+1 program on the docket to be discussed as well.

Question and concern raised about whether program changes are to be voted on at Senate or just raised as information only. Simoes indicated that there is an option to vote at Senate level especially in light of controversial and contentious issues.

- **Thesis Formatting Recommendation**

Marcelo Simoes

Simoes reported that Sullivan has discussed this at Grad Council. Smith also wrote a proposal for the Library to take on the task. Zhou sent an email with an update on the current status on the subject; Simoes will forward to Senators. This will be a topic for discussion in the new year.

Briefings and Updates

Marcelo Simoes

• **May Faculty Senate Meeting**

Simoes suggested that the last meeting date for the year, May 12, be a luncheon celebration to close out the academic year. New Senators would also be invited.

• **Senate Elections**

Senate elections will be coordinated by Handorean. While the bylaws were changed last year to reflect a 3-year term, existing senators have the option to stay or end their commitment. Handorean asked people to notify her by end of February so she can send out a call for new Senators before Spring break.

• **Bylaw Updates**

Simoes has been reviewing the bylaws document and would like to propose updates in April; he asked all to submit suggestions in the next month for a comprehensive update.

Questions / Comments

Guests

Faculty Senate went into executive session at 3:30 pm.

Next Meeting: February 11, 2020, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, Hill Hall 300. Please send all items for agenda to Cathy Timm (cgtimm@mines.edu) one week prior to the meeting.