

Colorado School of Mines – FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES  
February 25, 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	Brandon Dugan (GP)	A	Sebnem Duzgun (MN)
P	Gus Greivel (AMS)	P	Alina Handorean (EDS)	P	Andy Herring (CBE)	P	Yvette Kuiper (GE)
P	Jon Leydens (HASS)	P	Lisa Nickum (LB)	P	Alexis Sitchler (GE)	P	Angie Sower (CH)
P	Neal Sullivan (ME)						

**Other Regular Attendees and Guests**

P	Linda Battalora (Trustee)	P	Rick Holz (AA)	P	Paul Myskiw (RO)	P	Colin Terry (Student Life)
P	Cathy Timm (AA/RO)	A	Jennifer Velloff (Trefny)	P	Brock Gagna(USG)	A	Muthu Thyagarajan (GSG)
P	Gauen Alexander (GSG)		Justin Shaffer	A	Lori Kester (EM)	P	Sam Spiegel (Trefny)
P	Megan Sanders (Trefny)	P	Pete Maniloff	P	Mike Wakin (EE)		

**Welcome**

Marcelo Simoes

**Provost / Academic Affairs Update**

Rick Holz

Holz received recommendations from the search committee on the Associate Provost position and he'd like feedback from Senate. Announcement will likely take several weeks. Grad Dean search has concluded and committee is sending out a survey for people to complete. As well, an announcement will be coming out for the Undergraduate Dean interviews.

**Registrar Update**

Paul Myskiw

Myskiw had no specific update, but asked for questions. Question came up about when a newly approved program would be published and available for a student to be admitted. The process includes Board of Trustee and Colorado Department of Higher Education approval. The catalog will be published at the end of March, first of April and available for students to view. Banner will be updated and students can be admitted to the program.

There was some discussion about creating a real-time catalog and having ability to approve and launch programs throughout the year. Myskiw indicated that there would need to be an off-cycle publication of the catalog and admissions can occur as programs come up. Concern expressed that there wasn't enough time to get everything approved for Fall 2020 and would like to determine how to proceed on approvals that missed the deadline.

Myskiw brought up the subject of a course expiration policy. Historically, courses have stayed on the books until department makes decision to deactivate them. Myskiw would like to send list of courses to departments that have not been taught in many years. It was suggested that Council should look at these items; there are about 1200 courses. If there are classes that have old prefixes, like BELS, that have not been used in years, this shouldn't be a problem to remove. This process would exclude x98, special topics, courses.

**Approval of Minutes – February 11, 2020**

Marcelo Simoes

Approval of minutes was deferred until next meeting.

**Briefings and Updates**

Alexis Sitchler

Discussions around double counting and zero-credit courses were raised based on proposals from Council. Sitchler indicated that there didn't seem to be enough time to explore options during this academic year. Suggestion that these be tabled until next year and vote on the programs as they are currently proposed.

- **Double counting and transfer credits**

Double counting discussion noted below as it relates to the 4+1 program proposed by Economics and Business.

- **Zero-credit courses**

The GSG representative, Alexander, suggested that now would be a good time to act on the zero-credit courses so that recommendations generated could be acted upon for the coming year. Starting the discussion in the Fall will likely delay any changes for two years. Sense is that the timeline is quite involved anyway and likely not able to get changes together in one academic year.

- **Taskforce for Evaluation Effectiveness**

Alina Handorean

Justin Shaffer, Sam Spiegel, Megan Sanders

Handorean and Shaffer shared a presentation outlining the activities of this taskforce that was started almost a year and a half ago. The committee has worked closely with the Trefny Center and thanked all for their assistance. They performed a pilot and overall it was a very positive experience. Another iteration is planned to take place in Spring 2020. In addition, there will be meetings to share information with department heads, Senate, and at a faculty conference.

A key component of the program is a peer observation program. This is a helpful tool to assist one another by providing formative, supportive feedback and improving teaching. Question raised about the degree to which the observed faculty member can choose the person doing the observation. Discussion will continue around this topic; there is no real mechanism on how to manage this. There would be flexibility around what and how to report up; by way of an example, if someone was trying out something new, this might be a stressful situation and the observer could be asked to return to help and see improvement. Suggestion that information put forth for the FDR might just be a statement that this activity was performed versus any detail; the activity represents a willingness to be more effective and should be recognized.

Question about the program being available, and potentially mandatory, for graduate students. This would be a helpful process; this is something for the team to consider. Sanders, from Trefny, suggested that all can request a formative observation which is separate from this process. Also, graduate students are welcome to participate in almost all of the Trefny workshop sessions. They are also working on a TA training program and SYGN600 is a graduate course on college teaching that is offered every fall.

Training for observers is also a part of the program with tools, like a list of suggested changes, available. The observer would be trained on the protocol so they aren't walking into the classroom cold. A suggestion was raised that perhaps a standing committee could be created for faculty to commit to being an observer and they may possibly receive credit for their faculty service load.

Question raised about overlap of work on the committee and Trefny; Spiegel shared that Trefny does not do evaluation, only observation to look at patterns across campus. They provide coaching support and pedagogy expertise. The pilot presents an opportunity for collaboration for the benefit of students.

12 faculty participated from 10 departments in the pilot in the Fall with 15-20 that expressed interest in the process. The initiative was not advertised; effort was centered around the diversity of the departments. The pilot was intentional in trying to keep the population small enough to manage well. Recommendation to do a resource loading, so people would have an idea of how it will impact them.

**MOTION:** To move forward with Spring 2020 pilot and return to Senate with a report on April 28, 2020. By: Handorean; seconded by Sullivan. No abstentions. APPROVED.

- **Graduate Student Government**

Gauen Alexander

Alexander shared that he objected to a zero credit course being submitted by Electrical Engineering, yet approved the program so that the specific program wasn't held up in lieu of a broader discussion. Alexander polled graduate students around the subject of seminars and shared a presentation outlining the various paradigms of seminars. About 5% of people responded with results split pretty much evenly on whether they agree with having non-zero vs. zero-credit courses.

Comments from the survey were shared with many complaints as well as ideas for improvement. Question raised about non-thesis students being required to do seminar courses; this information was not split out in the data. There doesn't appear to be consistency about how seminars are offered and managed across campus. Question raised about possibility of having a 1 credit course that does not have a fee associated with it; this is an out-of-the-box idea that would present some challenges in how it would be offered. Suggestion that existing courses could be restructured to include seminar.

Alexander put forth a recommendation to put together a broader campus committee to consider the issue and make recommendations for implementation; any committee should represent all faculty and students. In addition, best practices should be gathered from other campuses. Concern raised that there should be a better problem statement that requires more data before establishing a campus-wide committee. It appears that there are 3 or 4 programs that offer zero-credit seminars. There may be a simple solution to address the concern. Information could be gathered from stakeholders and departments so that it includes a holistic view. Objective is to ensure departments have autonomy in how to manage seminars. Not every department will want to take the same approach to improve attendance at seminars.

Discussion will be continued at later date.

#### Grad and Undergraduate Council Updates

- **Undergraduate Council Update**

Gus Greivel

Greivel indicated that there are a few changes on programs in undergraduate council and nothing significant has been approved yet. He anticipates the approval of a new 4+1 track in Physics and a track with Honors distinction in Chemical and Biological Engineering. A new track does not typically go to the Board for approval, only an information item. There are no new programs. Question about the Honors program and whether the degree would state a "BS with Honors"; this exists within Computer Science. A designation of Honors would be noted on the diploma. It's currently considered a new track within an existing degree; adds a line on the diploma.

- **Grad Council Update**

Neal Sullivan

Simois reiterated that the Senate approves all programs. In order to make things more fluid and operational, an informational item is shared and does not need a vote. The Council chair needs to determine if something needs a vote. Simois suggested that Sullivan share information on minor program changes at next meeting. Specific items to share with Senate today are noted below.

#### 1) **Electrical Engineering graduate seminar course**

Mike Wakin

The zero-credit course and program it impacts were previously approved at Grad Council. Wakin, from Electrical Engineering, was present and indicated that the zero-credit course is based purely on attendance and will help students gain breadth and create a community of research; their department views this as being helpful. He appreciated Alexander's presentation, the pros and cons, and indicated that they have discussed all options internally at great length. He added that they will allow waivers for non-traditional students; if the course were to be a for-credit one, it would be difficult to justify providing a waiver.

When this issues was raised in January, one of the main concerns was that faculty would not be receiving credit for the course. Wakin clarified that, under an old model, faculty were more involved; this is not the case at this time. Faculty are only required to track attendance; essentially, faculty would have zero effort for a zero-credit course. Wakin asked for a vote on the zero-credit proposal as it is presented. It was noted that GSG representative, Alexander, does not believe this type of course is a positive one for students. As well, there is an objection about the term “non-traditional” student.

Question raised about the root cause of attendance and how to fix the issue. The department is working on the concern to establish a climate of research with positive messaging about the seminars. There is ongoing effort to improve attendance.

**MOTION:** To approve the course and program as presented. By: Greivel; seconded by Sullivan. Two opposed. No abstentions. APPROVED.

### 2) **Economics & Business 4+1 program change**

Pete Maniloff

Sullivan shared that this was originally approved at Council. After some suggestions from Senate, the program has been updated and, again approved at Council. Maniloff indicated that there are really two issues; the specific language and the concept of having this sort of program. For clarity, this is a 36 hour program and proposal is to have 6 hours double counted. Expectation is that some students will also transfer up to 6 credit hours. Question raised about this university and whether other schools can participate; Maniloff indicated that this school is very targeted because it’s a natural fit with Colorado Mesa University’s program and a first step. If this is a success, there will likely be other plausible programs that can be approached. The process of how MOUs are created is still being developed and there would likely need to be a MOU for clarity with participating schools. He shared alternative language for the catalog.

Question raised about the precedent for a 36 vs. 30 credit hour program; it appears that this has not yet been determined. Precedent is that we are taking credits from another school and double counting them at Mines. Departments are making unique partnerships where opportunity exists. Question about an assessment loop; current drafted document looks at whether there are sufficient students and either party has opportunity to end the MOU if not working.

**MOTION:** To approve the program with the revised language provided by Brennecka. By: Sitchler; seconded by Sullivan. 1 opposed. No abstentions. APPROVED.

### 3) **PhD to Masters program**

Colin Terry

Sullivan indicated that Terry’s office has put together proposed language for catalog about a procedure that has functionally been happening and now would like to document the process. This was discussed at Council with no objections. Terry shared that this came about from a recommendation from an Every Oredigger initiative to support mental health on campus. Many PhD students that have been successful have had to depart the program for various reasons and Mines would like to provide a pathway that is supportive and acknowledges the work they have completed. The recommendation formalizes the process that is currently in place on an informal basis.

Another suggestion was raised to document the research and independent credits for the program; Terry indicated that he would like the policy to simply state that there is an avenue for those that have performed and then there is an individualized pathway rather than talk to all the details.

Question about this happening on the Master's level for Thesis to Non-Thesis; this is a different situation and there is currently a process in Registrar's office. Suggestion that this also be a process that is put in print; Terry would like to look at this at another time as the deadline for 2020 catalog is approaching.

**MOTION:** To approve the new language for the catalog as submitted. By: Sullivan; seconded by Bullock. No abstentions. APPROVED.

### **Announcements**

Simoes shared a few announcements. At next meeting, will discuss the 2021 distinguished lecturer candidates for a decision. Also, Simoes was successful in obtaining an email devoted for group communication related to Senate business; [senate@mines.edu](mailto:senate@mines.edu). The first Research Council meeting will be held on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February.

3:40-4:00 pm Executive Session

Marcelo Simoes

Faculty Senate went into executive session at 3:40 pm.

Next Meeting: March 10, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, Hill Hall 300. Please send all items for agenda to Cathy Timm ([cgtimm@mines.edu](mailto:cgtimm@mines.edu)) one week prior to the meeting.