

Colorado School of Mines – FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
September 22, 2020, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, via Zoom

Attendees:

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

P	Andy Herring (Chair)	P	Robin Bullock (EDS)	P	Sebnem Duzgun (MN &CS)	P	Linda Figueroa (CEE &MN)
P	Alina Handorean (EDS)	P	Joseph Horan (HASS)	P	Jeff King (MME)	P	Yvette Kuiper (GE)
P	John McCray (CEE)	P	Cynthia Norrgran (CBE)	P	Alexis Sitchler (GE)	P	Neal Sullivan (ME)
P	Bettina Voelker (CH)						

Other Regular Attendees and Guests

A	Linda Battalora (Trustee)	P	Rick Holz (AA)	A	Paul Myskiw (RO)	P	Kendra Stansbury (RO)
A	Jennifer Veloff (TIIC)	P	Sydney Marchando (USG)	P	Amanda Field(GSG)	P	Julie Lambert (EM)
P	Lisa Nycum (LB)	P	Samie McCleary (USG-alt)	P	Kirsten Volpi (VP)	P	Michael Kaufman (Dean)

Welcome

Andy Herring

Provost / Academic Affairs Update

Rick Holz

Holz stated that schedulers in the Registrar’s Office are actively working to build the Spring 2021 schedule, including additional face-to-face courses, in particular for junior and senior classmen. For students wanting face-to-face, the goal is 50% or at least two classes face-to-face with a mixed hybrid, except labs and recitation sections. Due to limited classroom space, consideration is being given to scheduling more available class hours in the day utilizing a multi-section block in order to social distance.

New this year, Holz is asking departments to draft the summer 2021 schedules to publish in November with the spring schedule to provide options that may benefit students. Faculty can also consider developing online courses for summer delivery; the Trefny Center indicated the capacity to develop approximately 30 online classes for summer.

Holz asked for feedback from Senate regarding Thanksgiving break, the regular class time following, and finals week. Overall the campus has been safe. Students may potentially travel out of state during Thanksgiving break and return for class and finals weeks. Discussion followed regarding considerations of having students return for in person finals versus moving to remote classes, including potential risk, safety, and handling possible scenarios. Question regarding whether there will be a policy or a recommendation; when decided; there will be a policy, not a recommendation, that applies to all classes with considerations for particular classes requiring in-person participation. Senate can collect and share opinions and feedback from faculty based on the current teaching conditions.

Registrar Update

Kendra Stansbury

Stansbury, Assistant Registrar, stated registration and rooming are moving forward for Spring 2021. Question regarding positive numbers in enrollment since census and any other benchmarks; retention rate is over 92% for first-year and second-year students. Holz stated the target for incoming freshman was 1,235 and the enrollment is 1,176; three times as many students deferred than normal. Transfer enrollment is 162 and the target was 170. While census and benchmarks are positive, the budget is conservative due to other scenarios, such as the state is considering a significant cut to higher education funding next year, and shifting to remote learning due to a possible outbreak.

Approval of Minutes – August 25, 2020, September 8, 2020 and September 15, 2020 Andy Herring

MOTION: To approve the minutes of August 25, 2020. By Sitchler; seconded by Horan. No abstentions.
APPROVED.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of September 8, 2020 as amended. By Handorean; seconded by King. No abstentions. APPROVED.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of September 15, 2020 as amended. By Sitchler; seconded by Bullock. No abstentions. APPROVED.

Budget Update

Kirsten Volpi

Volpi shared a couple of slides to guide the conversation. In entering the budget year, 87 models were considered and reduced to three scenarios: best-case, middle-case and worse-case. The best-case scenario reflected an \$11M decline from last year in overall revenue and expenses due to projecting a lower tuition from enrollment, less continuing education, and conservative estimates in housing and dining.

The majority of the budget is composed of tuition and enrollment. While enrollment from census is higher than budgeted, housing was budgeted at 78% occupancy and is currently down to 75% from 95% normal rate. Census in Fall 2020 totaled 6,754 undergraduate and graduate students, an increase from Fall 2019 at 6,607. New students were flat between freshman and transfers. Returning returns and graduates accounted for the growth.

The state cut the FY21 budget \$14.71M with \$13.43M backfilled, leaving a net negative at \$1.3M. The state revenue forecast projects cuts of at least 10% for next year without federal backfill. Volpi addressed that \$131M is available in the university's unrestricted net assets, however \$74M is marked for startup RD accounts, financial aid, and other designations. Policy requires a minimum of \$35M base and realistically about \$57M is available. After difficult cuts in the first quarter, there are considerations for restoring budgets mindful of risk aversion. Question regarding funding from the state; the state has had similar patterns with the economy. The capital gains tax received in fiscal calendar year ending 2020 is a significant contributor to the state budget. Without unrestricted sources to fill gaps, the state uses funding from higher ed. The budget for the state is due November 1st, after which more information will be available.

From a personnel perspective, the voluntary retirement incentive plan was announced. Pertaining to furloughs, currently only the executive team is furloughed. If finances remain consistent then furloughs will stay among the executive team. Funds will be reserved for necessary adjustments identified through the project on Equal Pay for Equal Work through Human Resources. The level of compensation gap will be examined to determine the financial impact and how to manage the financial impact, likely utilizing a multi-year approach. Discussion followed regarding the approach to research faculty and research support positions, including identifying a defined structure and salary range, the timelines of grants, and realigning budget with sponsors. Question regarding whether reversing the furloughs is being considered; the executive team will revisit whether furloughs will continue into second quarter. Question regarding hiring new professors during a hiring freeze; critical open positions are being hired after being reviewed and many positions are being held vacant. Faculty hires are positions that are open due to individuals leaving Mines.

Question regarding the examination of proposed changes in Section 9 of the Faculty Handbook, including sensitive topics of termination and exigency; changes would be led by the Provost with the support of faculty. In terms of financial exigency, most other university handbooks include related policies. For Mines, financial exigency applies if there is significant financial peril. Addressing changes to the Faculty Handbook, Holz indicated he and the President intend to talk through this topic with the faculty and the Handbook Committee, specifically in terms of a compromise on the timing and limits to financially respond.

Joint Appointments and Faculty Retention Program

Michael Kaufman

Kaufman stated he has experience at other institutions with programs to recruit, reward and retain faculty that are highly research active. He is proposing the incentive program, Mines Adjusted Salary Program

(MASP). Faculty can use funds from research contracts or from joint appointments to supplement their Regular Academic Year Salary, (RAYS), which is typically paid from the general fund with some exceptions from Foundation endowment funds. Eligible faculty could supplement up to 30% of their base RAYS, provided that sufficient resources are verified by the beginning of the academic year. The Total Mines Salary (TMS) would consist of RAYS plus this Negotiated Salary Component (NSC).

Benefits to implementing MASP include reducing retention costs, incentivizing scholarly productivity, enhancing relationships with National Laboratories, and providing additional opportunities for students involved in research activities. MASP also has some constraints and safeguards, such as negotiating additional income annually, June 30 deadlines, requiring the maintenance of teaching and service activities, disallowing charge outs, avoiding risk of expense to supporting graduate students and post docs, eligibility requirements, and restrictions on types of funding sources. Concerns and solutions were presented surrounding equity of competitive salaries, core mission, potential negative impacts on merit and promotion, and possible pushes toward generating soft money. Requests would be sent through a scheduled work flow for authorization through the DH, Dean and Provost. Examples were presented to demonstrate the calculations, eligibility qualifications, and maximum allowable percentage.

Question regarding conflict of interest and contractual details; a more detailed document addresses some of these issues and there are areas that need discussion on a case by case basis. Additional questions followed regarding equal pay for equal work, counting of the students supported, the applicable accounts, and impacts to mentoring junior faculty. Discussion will be pursued in a designated Teams channel.

Committee Memberships

Alina Handorean

Handorean indicated she shared a document with the senators outlining the various University and Senate Committee nominations. The vote was conducted electronically and the results were tallied. After approval, the results will be forwarded to the offices of the Provost and President as appropriate.

In regards to Senate Committees:

- Becky Lafrancois, Emily Bongiovanni, and Joel Bach were elected to the Faculty Oversight Committee on Sports and Athletics (FOCSA).
(Update noted: Becky Lafrancois declined. Paula Farca was then elected to FOCSA.)
- Debra Carney was elected to the Academic Standards Committee.
- Amanda Jameer, Becky Lafrancois, Jeffrey Holley, Ventzi Karaivonov, and Serena Eley were elected to the Readmission Committee.
- Tzahi Cath was elected to the Library Committee.
- Tyrone Vincent was elected to the Survey Committee.

In regards to University Committees:

- Angie Sower was elected to the Calendar Committee.
- Anthony Petrella and Terry Bridgman were elected to the Conflict of Interest Committee.
- Sandra Woodson and Manika Prasad were elected to the Faculty Grievance Committee.
- Kip Findley and Ning Wu were advanced to the Provost for the Faculty Handbook Committee.
- Alan Sellinger, Kamini Singha, Robert Braun, Douglas Nychka, Piret Plink-Bjorklund, and Manika Prasad were advanced to the Provost for the Promotion and Tenure Committee.
- Nanette Boyle and Terry Lowe were elected to the Bio-Safety Committee.
- Jonah Klemm-Toole and C. Michael McGuirk were elected to the Safety Committee.
- Maggie Greenwood and Melanie Brandt were elected to the Student Media Board.
- Gus Greivel was elected to the Tech Fee Committee.
- Terry Bridgman, Cortney Holles, Paula Farca, Mike Nicholas, Rebecca Swanson, and Abd Arkadan

were advanced to the Provost for the Teaching Faculty Promotion Committee.

- Tzahi Cath was elected to the Budget Committee.

MOTION: To certify the electronic vote and the recommendations for the University and Senate Committees. By Handorean; seconded by Sitchler. No abstentions. APPROVED.

Committee Updates

- **Research Council**

Yvette Kuiper

Kuiper indicated that subcommittees are interacting via Teams. Six committees were identified: faculty research awards; redefining the roles of tenure and non-tenured type research professors; survey; by-laws; mentoring for faculty, post docs, and research associates; teaching instrumentation committee; and Research Council lecture series.

Concern regarding the number of surveys currently being sent to faculty; suggestion to cooperate with the survey committee to gather the faculty input. The Survey Committee would like to coordinate with departments in order to group the surveys and limit the number received by faculty.

The Research Advisory Board is working on three topics, including shared instruments, statistics research, and industry collaboration. Collaboration is ongoing with VPRTT, Research Council and the Research Advisory Board.

- **Core Curriculum Definition Committee**

Alexis Sitchler

Sitchler presented a charge for the next iteration of the Core Curricula Definition Committee, which would be co-chaired by Sitchler and Vibhuti Dave with 11 additional members. The overarching goal is to develop pathways to revise the Mines core curriculum to align with defined learning objectives. The previous committee was working on defined learning objectives with rollout of new core beginning in the fall 2020. Deliverables and a timeline were presented to tie to Senate leadership and create a clear communication channel for the proposal process. Of importance is strategically planning for Mines@150 and the Student Signature Experience initiative. Question clarifying whether the committee develops the core curriculum; when charged; the committee would review competing proposals on what the core would look like that, after approval, would be provided to an implementation committee to work with the departments and other stakeholders to satisfy the learning objectives into the curricula. Senate will consider charging the committee during the first meeting in October.

Undergraduate and Graduate Council Updates

- **UnderGrad Council**

Jeff King

King indicated that there are two large program proposals working toward Senate and a handful of administrative changes on the agenda for the next meeting. Council will also discuss the proposition and review commentary and feedback from the departments relating to the process for proposing future programs to the Senate in conjunction with the Council.

- **Grad Council**

Neal Sullivan

Sullivan indicated that Graduate Council functionally reviews all proposed changes to current graduate courses and new graduate courses. Considering the members had served last year, the Council is expanding their scope, with possible topics of graduate student stipends, zero credit courses, and other items in a broader scope. The upcoming meeting agenda will include creating a new list of action items. Comments followed regarding the variations of graduate student stipends; Dean Barbari is conducting an analysis on this topic and is in communication with Council.

New Business

Andy Herring

Herring introduced two items for new business: the availability of Zoom recordings; and the posting of materials from presenters on the webpage with the minutes.

In the first new business item, discussion followed regarding whether Zoom recordings of the Senate meetings should be publicly visible or available upon request. The meeting minutes are thorough and are available to the public after approved by the Senate. Permitting the recording to be available limits open discussion and could create issues when items might be taken out of context. Similar to the minutes, an available video should have a committed member review, edit and approve the recording. The Senate has an obligation to be transparent, and the current level of transparency allows attendance as the Zoom invitation is posted on the webpage.

MOTION: To encourage participation through online attendance in the webinars; and official records of the Senate meetings are recorded through written minutes available on the website and not distributed through recordings. By Sitchler; seconded by Horan. One abstention. APPROVED.

In the next new business item, discussion followed regarding the posting of slides and materials with the minutes from meetings on the webpage, including allowing the presenter the opportunity to redact the materials before being publicly available; protection of drafts; use of historical numbers; redacting the entire document; and communicating to the campus. The presenter would be in charge of redacting.

MOTION: For Senate to provide the option for presenters to include any materials that are associated with their presentation after an opportunity to redact sensitive information with the Senate minutes. By Sitchler; seconded by Horan. No abstentions. APPROVED.

Adjourn

Andy Herring

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting. By Horan; seconded by Sitchler. No abstentions. APPROVED.

Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Next Meeting: October 13, 2020, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, via Zoom. Please add agenda items in the Teams Working Group more than one week prior to the meeting.

Note: Per the request of Mike Kaufman, the MASP slide deck can be posted to Canvas for the Faculty Senate and should not be posted to the webpage for public view.