

Colorado School of Mines – FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
November 24, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, via Zoom

Attendees:

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

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|---|-----------------------|---|------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 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) |
| A | John McCray (CEE) | P | Cynthia Norrgran (CBE) | P | Alexis Sitchler (GE) | P | Neal Sullivan (ME) |
| P | Bettina Voelker (CH) | | | | | | |

Other Regular Attendees and Guests

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|---|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|--------------------|---|----------------------------|
| P | Linda Battalora (Trustee) | P | Rick Holz (AA) | A | Paul Myskiw (RO) | A | Colin Terry (Student Life) |
| P | Sam Spiegel (Trefny) | P | Sydney Marchando (USG Rep) | P | Amanda Field (GSG) | P | Mara Green (AA) |
| A | Vibhuti Dave (UGS) | P | Julie Lambert (EM) | P | John Bradford (AA) | | |

Call to Order

Andy Herring

Herring begins with a brief overview of the agenda, discussion of Faculty Senate attendance, and the written report for the Board of Trustees that Senate members will be developing.

Provost / Academic Affairs Update

Rick Holz

Holz updates Senate on the amount of COVID cases. The number of cases has dropped, and Holz states that as of Monday (11/23) when the update was received there were sixty-four cases. Five of these cases are due to come out of quarantine, leading to a total caseload below sixty. A week prior there were over 120 cases and this number has dropped to half. Holz states that the spike seen previously was most likely due to the proximity of Fall break and Halloween, coupled with off-campus events.

The majority of Mines cases are off-campus. Holz states that this continues to be the case where new positive cases are 70-75% off-campus students. Additionally, it is known that two faculty have tested positive for COVID and are both in the hospital. The first faculty member was teaching remotely and had not been on campus or in contact and had contracted the virus externally. The second faculty member was also off-campus for several months due to leave and had contracted the virus externally, as well.

Holz emphasizes that it is still the case that there has been no evidence of COVID transmission within the classrooms and that classrooms are safe and students and faculty have created these safe environments.

There are no updates on the two hospitalized faculty members.

Holz begins with an update on registration. There has been strong registration for Spring semester. Holz states that the last update heard on Friday (11/20), was that 88% of freshman or eligible students have registered. Departments and advisors are in the process of contacting students that have not yet registered.

Holz states that the big question, while registration for the Spring semester is strong, is whether or not students are planning to return in the Spring and this is still unknown. Reports in the Chronicle have stated that students are planning to not return in the Spring due to experiences this Fall. Holz states that this is being closely monitored. Holz reports that half the number of students drop out of the institution as is typically seen, this year, and there have been very few deferrals.

Holz speaks on the strength of the Spring semester with around 50% of all lecture classes are face-to-face and about 51-52% for juniors and seniors. Holz appreciates the hard work of the departments in building the Spring schedule. The Jedi program is moving forward and there has been a call for student sign-up. The program is looking to hire about 120 students to work 10-15 hours a week. These students will be available to help faculty with their technology and helping to make sure that students who are taking remote will get the same or similar experience to those classes taught in-person. Holz states that this is expected to relieve some of the strain and stress that faculty have felt this Fall.

Holz then directs to faculty positions. All positions have been advertised and applications have been coming in. Committees have been formed and are meeting. Holz brings up that the unknown is whether or not people can visit. This will be decided as Spring plans pan out. The hiring committee would prefer to hire individuals that have been on campus so that faculty have a chance to meet and talk with new or potential hires.

Holz informs senators that there have been assumptions that new hires will most likely not be brought on campus until February. Holz states that this will provide time for Mines as well as the state of the country to improve COVID numbers.

Questions asked: is there consideration of teaching remotely and then transitioning to in-person and what the timeline on those decisions would be if that is something being considered? What is the status of Spring Break? Do we have a sense of how up-to-date Mines COVID numbers are?

Holz begins with answering the COVID Mines cases. COVID numbers are updated on Tuesday and Friday on the Mines COVID page. Printouts are typically made daily where the most up-to-date information is provided. Holz informs Senate that he is unaware of the exact number of quarantine cases on-campus, but he states that it is usually 6:1. Many of these are off-campus, and the assumed reason for this spike in off-campus cases is due to individuals in apartments or households with five, six, or a dozen people that the virus spreads through.

An issue on campus arose when a member of a fraternity house became sick, forty young men living in the fraternity were in-contact and the virus spread like wildfire. This was considered a part of the COVID spike on campus. Holz also states that there was also word of a social gathering on Saturday night (11/21). Students have headed home by this time, or are in the process of doing so, and parents and family have been notified that their child may have been exposed.

To address questions on Spring Break, Holz answers that no decisions have been made as of yet. Information is being gathered so as to the decision for Spring Break while allowing adequate time for faculty, students, and staff to plan. Based on feedback received from the undergraduate and graduate president and organizations, Holz states that it is preferred to leave the week intact. Holz reminds Senate that it was previously suggested that E-Days be moved into Spring Break to keep students on-campus; however, this was not well-supported by undergraduate and graduate student governments. This decision is considered off the table at this point, but no official decision has been made.

In regard to remote-learning after Winter Break, Holz says that this has been discussed. Students are expected to arrive the weekend before school starts on Tuesday (01/12). It is expected that everyone will be tested, but Mines is not at the capacity to test everyone in one day. The testing is expected to occur over a three-day period. Everyone, including on- and off-campus students are going to be tested, as well as staff and faculty.

The right for a remote learning notice to be called is still on the table, and faculty will be given as much advance notice as is possible.

A question is asked in regard to why students have made the decision to not come back for the Spring semester and if there is something that can be done to fix this. Holz replies that the vast majority of students are returning, and that these numbers of non-returning students is not severe. The typical reason has been listed as financial with many having lost jobs or experienced reduced income during the pandemic. The university financial aid office is working with students to provide additional financial assistance and resources. Some students have stated that they are unable to work with remote learning or do not function well in the remote learning environment.

Registrar Update

Paul Myskiw*

A representative from the Registrar's Office was not present at the Faculty Senate meeting (11/24). Holz provides a brief update on the registration process and student comments on pass-fail options in courses.

Approval of Minutes – November 10, 2020

Andy Herring

MOTION: To approve minutes of the November 10, 2020 Faculty Senate meeting. By Figueroa; seconded by Sitchler. No abstentions. APPROVED.

Mines' Online Strategy

John Bradford

Bradford presents on the Mines' Online Strategy. There has been an operational plan in place for about three years which led to the accreditation of online programs for Mines. Parts of what is happening in the strategy have already been implemented and are being meshed with the previous plan; work is going into the marketing for the strategy itself.

The key points that Bradford outlines are how Mines will deliver quality science and engineering education in an online platform everywhere that is accessible to qualified students of all backgrounds, Mines Online will be the forefront of technology coupled with innovative and effective pedagogy to educate the complete engineer, and Mines Online will meet the needs of STEM learners across a continuum of career stages.

Bradford states that for each key strategy, a set of tactics has been developed. These tactics include launching a global marketing effort for domestic and international markets, stackable and adaptable programming, and continuation of building out programs with an expectation of 900 students by 2024 in online programs. Bradford informs Senate that Mines is currently at 220 students and the operational plan that was put in place a few years ago expected 116 students this year, and this is projected to double next year to stay on target.

Bradford presents two goals for building out programs by growing graduate certificates into Master non-thesis programs and prioritizing varying departments such as Cyber Security, Mechanical Engineering, and others. Additional goals include integration of virtual reality where it makes sense in Mines programs as well as staying at the forefront of online education and broadening programs. Mines would also want to create a fair number of graduate certificates alongside the full degrees online.

Bradford then explains the organizational structure for the Office of Global Initiatives and Business Development before moving onto the Mines Online organizational structure.

Bradford moves onto the operational considerations that have not yet been resolved that are being looked into which includes a revision of the financial model for online, profit sharing or incentives for department returns, compensation for course development, and long-term goals of online implementation.

A conversation is started on Faculty Senate's place in regard to online and interdisciplinary programs. It is then asked how Senate can support the online courses while individuals that do not have experience teaching online, are approving courses. Bradford responds that this is in the works of being resolved, where 60% or so of faculty on-campus have been through the online-teaching training course. Holz mentions that faculty that will be hired in the future will attend these trainings so as to teach both online and in-person.

It is brought up that time management has become hard during this process, and what faculty really need are course releases during semesters in which this process has become long. These costs, then, go to the department as opposed to compensation which goes into the faculty's professional development funds. It is then stated that it should be considered that faculty who need to complete these trainings receive a course release or some sort of practical relief on their time and, in addition to that, compensation and their professional development funds.

Conversation continues on course releases, departmental flexibility in regard to faculty compensation, and department adjuncts. Bradford states that the key goal in the revised financial model is to make sure that it is self-sustaining and that online teaching is providing a good revenue stream for Mines. Discussion continues on Mines Online revenue and its affects on hiring and stipends.

A question on the pricing of technology and what limits have been run into. Spiegel responds that new technologies are being continuously monitored. Currently, it is being looked into what is the best way to integrate this technology and meet the needs as well as tapping into internal expertise.

Faculty Needs in COVID-19 / Health and Wellness

Andy Herring

Herring begins by briefing senate on what was covered in the Faculty Senate working group regarding faculty resources and mental health. Faculty appreciation has been low and this is something that is missed by many members. Sitchler and King have worked on providing a Mines Faculty and Staff discord server in which informal conversation can occur.

Discussion continues on resources that were originally on-campus, but have been removed due to COVID and social distancing regulations and how to simulate this in a virtual environment. Suggestions are made regarding a space for faculty and staff to access water bottles or protein bars and have a conversation with other members on-campus or appreciation from the student-body. Sitchler mentions that at the end of semester, postcards were left in faculty mailboxes from Student Life.

Graduate Student Quality of Life / GSG Update

Amanda Field

Field begins with updating Faculty Senate on issues that have arose from Graduate Student Government in regard to funding. Students that are struggling amid COVID. Field states that GSG is working on making improvements to graduate student quality of life by addressing dependent coverage through insurance and stipends.

Field states that a few students have families, children, or spouses that are unable to be insured because of the stipend levels creating boundaries with insurance. GSG has personally funded several students' children or spouses.

Stipends are also discussed and this was previously brought to the attention Graduate Council as well. The president of GSG is drafting a letter and looking across multiple universities due to students being paid the bare minimum required by Mines. An issue brought up to the Senate by Fields is that some students after having accepted a contract have found that their contract changed to become far less than what was initially agreed upon.

Holz states that the new graduate Dean has been asked to survey stipends and create a comparative survey on aspirational institutions. This information is in the process of being collected so that Mines can move forward on working with finances in order to bring up stipends to a competitive level with other institutions.

Conversation continues on departmental stipends, university regulations, and stipend minimums that are publicized. It is also mentioned that stipends should be adjusted every year. Students that find their stipend lower than the contract that was agreed upon should contact the grad Dean with a complaint.

Fields brings up additional points of consideration for the council regarding faculty assigning additional work and assignments over the Thanksgiving holiday or having projects due the Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday following a break. Holz responds that specific classes or instructors doing so will be addressed directly.

The Graduate Research and Discovery Symposium is put on at Mines to present students' research and work and provide experience in presentation. The workshop submission will be posted soon, and faculty are encouraged to share in their expertise with Masters and PhD students.

Committee Updates

Alina Handorean

- Committee Ballot Results

The Colorado Faculty Advisory Council and Scheduling Policy Working Group ballots were sent out to senators for vote on candidates. Handorean begins by reviewing the results of the votes with senators. The vote results were in favor of Gregory Jackson of Mechanical Engineering for the Colorado Faculty Advisory Council and Gus Grievel of Applied Mathematics and Statistics for the Scheduling Policy Working Group.

MOTION: To approve Gregory Jackson for the Colorado Faculty Advisory Council representative and Gus Grievel for the Scheduling Policy Working Group. By Handorean; seconded by Figueroa. No abstentions. **APPROVED.**

- Board of Trustees Election Ballot items:
 - Proposition of Faculty Senate Membership amount

Handorean informs Senate of the election ballot process and what will be contained on the ballot. The proposal for the Faculty Senate bylaw change has been discussed with the Executive Committee. Discussions continues on the bylaw change wording, as well as Senate membership details and what these changes entail.

MOTION: To approve the Faculty Senate Bylaw change describing the number of Senators and Senator membership details being added to the Board of Trustees Election ballot. By Handorean; seconded by King. 1 abstention; Sullivan. **APPROVED.**

Following the motion, Horan brings to the attention of the Senators the intention to work toward establishing a procedure in which teaching faculty can be secure in expressing their opinions and having equal representation in the Faculty Senate. This has also been a discussion point for the Research Council bylaws in which Senate should consider if a minimum will be made for teaching professors in Senate. Sitchler states the importance of having a comparison ratio between tenure track and teaching professors on campus in order to balance representation on the Faculty Senate. Nickum mentions the inclusion of non-tenured faculty such as librarians and research faculty being included in this discussion.

- Faculty Senate Approval of Template for Undergraduate programs

MOTION: To approve the template for Undergraduate Programs. By Sitchler; seconded by Figueroa. No abstentions. APPROVED.

Undergraduate Council Updates

Jeff King

1.1 ECONOMICS and BUSINESS

[status: CIM 10/13; Undergraduate Council approved: 11/11]

1 new program: BS in Business Engineering and Management Science

1.2 CHEMICAL and BIOLOGICAL ENGINEERING

[status: CIM 10/8; Undergraduate Council approved: 11/11]

1 program change to new Program: Minor in Biomedical Engineering

Items 1.1 and 1.2 are tabled for presentation.

1.3 Every Oredigger Policy sub-committee and Readmissions

Revised proposal for GPA Recovery Policy & summary of feedback from CEE

Undergraduate council has reviewed the pros and cons of the GPA Recovery Policy and concluded that there is no negative. Further discussion on the Every Oredigger Policy sub-committee and Readmissions has been tabled for input with the Registrar's office.

Graduate Council Updates

Neal Sullivan

2.1 NUCLEAR SCIENCE and ENGINEERING

[status: CIM 10/5; Graduate Council approved: 11/18]

1 program change: Minor in Nuclear Engineering

MOTION: To approve 1 program change in Minor in Nuclear Engineering. By Horan; seconded by Sitchler. No abstentions. APPROVED.

2.2 COMPUTER SCIENCE

[status: CIM 10/13; Graduate Council approved: 11/18]

1 program change: Post-Baccalaureate Professional Computer Science Certificate

MOTION: To approve the 1 program change to the Post-Baccalaureate Professional Computer Science Certificate. By Sitchler; seconded by Figueroa. No abstentions. APPROVED.

2.3 CHEMISTRY

[status: CIM 11/12; Graduate Council approved: 11/18]

2 program changes: MPMSPHD-CH: MP, MS & PhD

Item 2.3 had been covered and approved in a previous Faculty Senate meeting, and was not further discussed.

Sullivan discusses the Graduate Council's decision to create three subcommittees for discussions relevant to the graduate school: Stipends, Interdisciplinary programs, and Adviser/Advisee Expectations. This was done to tackle additional issues that may arise during council meetings and discussions.

New Business/Adjourn

Andy Herring

MOTION: To adjourn the November 24, 2020 Faculty Senate meeting. By Horan; seconded by Sullivan. No abstentions. APPROVED.

Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Next Meeting: XX Date, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, via Zoon. Please send all items for agenda to mgreen1@mines.edu one week prior to the meeting.