

Colorado School of Mines – FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES  
 October 10,2023, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, in GH Boardroom & Zoom

**Attendees:**

**Voting Members:** 15 total (8 needed for quorum). Quorum was present

P	Brandon Dugan (Chair)	P	Vaughan Griffiths (CEE)	P	Jamal Rostami (CH)	P	Cortney Holles (HASS)
P	Deb Carney (AMS)	P	Soutir Bandyopadhyay (AMS)	P	Ventzi Karaivanov (ME)	A	Lawrence Wiencke (PH)
P	Mansur Ermila (PE)	P	Pat Kohl (PH)	P	Sid Saleh (EDS)	P	Ning Wu (CBE)
A	Mark Eberhart (CH)	P	Shubham Vyas (CH)	P	Cristian Ciobanu (ME)		

**Other Regular Attendees and Guests**

A	Dinesh Mehta (Trustee)	P	Rick Holz (AA)	P	Paul Myskiw (RO)	P	Colin Terry (Student Life)
P	Sam Spiegel (Online)	A	Tim Barbari (OGS)	A	Lori Kester (EM)	P	Nichole Bigley (AA)
	Mark Bowen (USG)	P	Deb Jordan (Trefny)	A	Andy Herring (AA)	P	Nicole Becwar (LB)
P	Karla Perez-Velez (CASA)	A	Sharfi Rahman (CS)	A	Kendra Stansbury (RO)	P	Vibhuti Dave (UGS)
P	Lauren Guido (GSG)	A	Jon Johnson (Online)				

**Special Guest(s):** Christine Homer, Peter Han

**Welcome**

Brandon Dugan

*Update on Mara's Replacement*

There were 3 finalists that were brought to campus. We will be making an offer to one of them so as soon as HR gives the go ahead, we will move forward with references and background checks to get this person on campus.

*Approval of prior minutes*

**MOTION:** Motion to approve by Shubham, seconded by Vaughan. Motion to approve the previous minutes was passed with 2 abstentions and all else present in favor.

**Academic Affairs**

Rick Holz

We are halfway through the semester and students feel confident, although tired, about how the semester is going. The Deans and Provost have been visiting each Department during a faculty meeting to hear feedback and updates on how the semester is going and what could be improved. During the spring semester the Dean, Provost and Department Head will go through all the numbers from number of majors, faculty, teaching faculty, number of adjuncts, budgets, etc. to get an idea of how the department is functioning and if the department needs additional support.

After meeting with multiple departments already (and the remainder to come) the most general topics are Workday, goals and marketing, and what we are trying to do around coursework master's programs. This title has been changed from master's non-thesis because we received feedback from students that they did

not like that title as it sounds negative. This language will change in the catalog this year (although the programs will not change)

- **Question:** How do the recruiters feel about the terminology? I am not sure how they feel, it is an internal designation more than anything so I don't think that recruiters would have an issue, but I will follow up.
- **Comment:** The Oil and Gas industry really preferred a thesis masters, so the non-thesis did have a little bit of a negative connotation with it. That is very discipline specific.

Feedback from the meetings with the departments has been useful and am looking forward to hearing more from the rest of the departments. Once faculty member from Geophysics said that he has been at Mines for 24 years and the last couple of years have been the very best years of their career.

The University P&T Committee and the Teaching Faculty P&T Committee are taking your recommendations and have reached out to the people you have recommended to get those committees solidified. Once we hear back from those people we will go ahead and charge those committees and get that done by the end of October or early November.

- **Question:** We used to have a Master of Engineering instead of a non-thesis master's or coursework master's program – could that be used instead? I don't think there is much appetite, but we would need to have a conversation about this if we are going to make any substantial change in our catalog. The change from non-thesis to coursework is simple and wouldn't require going through grad council but for a professional masters or something that would change on the diploma then we would need the votes to approve that. All diplomas just say a "MS degree" and do not mention thesis/non-thesis.

Our 5 big programs that will get us to the 1,900 master's students' goal are: EE, ME, CS, Space Resources and the EPM program and EB. Those programs account for 75% of all our master's students and the other certificates and programs will make up the other 25%.

- **Comment:** Some differentiation will be important, especially as the percentage of potential thesis students gets smaller and smaller. If some designation remains that would be important. We will keep that distinction and make it clear to the catalog and make sure students apply to the program they are interested in.
- **Question:** How much representation do coursework master's students/non-thesis masters get from GSG? Do they feel like they are a part of GSG. Or do they feel like an outside cohort? This will be on the agenda for our (GSG) next meeting – a survey will be going out to students to get an idea of this, but we do have a representative from every department, so the discussion is happening to make sure that GSG is functioning best to meet the needs of the non-thesis students. We do think much of our efforts have been focused on thesis, specifically Ph. D students, thus far. It also remains unclear whether GSG is getting the income from the student fees paid from the coursework master's students.

### Registrar's Office Announcements

Paul Myskiw

Last week an email was sent out with links to CIM. There are some curriculum items and courses making their way through the workflow. The best way to check if you have access is to click on the link in the email and log in. If you do not have access reach out to Rachel Bishop and she can help to get you into the right group.

Discussions with those developing the Beck Center indicate the classroom will be coming online for Spring 2024. It will not be ready by the time that we do the rooming so come December, once we get the final certificate of occupancy, we will be moving some of the courses into that space.

- **Question:** How confident are you that those rooms will be ready for the Spring 2024 semester? There will only be 1 classroom in that space. The rest of the space is split between our students,

businesses, and an event space and Einsteins Coffee Shop. The garage (which will be ready in about a year) will have 6 additional classroom spaces.

### **Undergraduate Council**

Ventzi Karaivanov

Students have complained that the Einsteins has weird operating hours and is only open until 1PM.

The first vote for UGC will be tomorrow on the proposed changes that were introduced last time:

**CH New Course:** CHGN 435 - Physical Biochemistry

*This course stresses the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to science, discussing biological topics from the perspective of a physical chemist. It will expand and diversify the course offerings in the chemistry department, with a particular focus on serving the growing population of biochemistry and QBE students.*

*Supporting information is posted on Canvas.*

**CEE Course change:** CEEN442/542 - Timber and Masonry Design

*Change: CEEN442 - Design of Wood Structures.*

*Supporting information is posted on Canvas.*

**1 New Course:** CEEN478/578 - Erosion control and land restoration

*This course was previously offered as 498/498 and now needs a new number. Supporting information is posted on Canvas.*

**EB Program change:** Business Engineering and Management Science degree

*Proposing the following changes to the BEMS curriculum:*

*- Require students to take EBG201 or equivalent*

*- Reduce free electives from 12 credit hours to 9 credit hours*

*This results in a net zero change in total credit hours, keeping the BEMS program at 122 credit hours.*

*Supporting information is posted on Canvas.*

- **Question:** Does it end the student's capability to transfer credits? Many times, if the transfer courses do not match any of our equivalent courses, we give them credits as free electives. This reduced the number of free electives from 12 to 9... The face of our students has changed. Ten years ago, the average number of credits transferred was 6 and now the average number of credits transferred is 27.5. Many of this goes towards free electives and so students are calling in and asking us to remove electives from their account so that they can take an elective here at Mines and their Aid will only pay for something that is going toward their degree.

This brings up a broader discussion that needs to happen at the UG level in accepting credits that students are going to count for courses we offer. There has been a longstanding thought here that since the credit is not a Mines course, the course must be a free elective, but we need to be doing a better job at assessing and accepting credits that are equivalent. If someone is coming in with 27+ credits, they are almost a sophomore and so our graduation rate of 4 years should be increasing but it is not (it is staying flat or dropping a bit)

Another piece of this is the AP/IB program. Maybe we should look at this again and see what is fair. There are some departments that, even if a student receives a 5 on the test, still require the student to take a test and are not accepting that 5. There are many things that we have done historically that we should probably look at.

On the AP front, out of the several thousand AP scores received, only 20 students turned down the credit and most of this was in MATH111. The place we would have the biggest opportunity would be in the cut scores as many of our peer institutions are using cut scores of 4.

- **Question:** If we are giving students credit for AP physics or AP chemistry, we will give them credit towards Chem 1 or physics 1? Based on the cut scores the department will tell us what they will give credit for and how much. We automatically apply and upload that when the students upload the scores.
- **Question:** How do we tackle this as it seems like a department-to-department problem. The issue with the challenge exams is that they are all handled differently. Vibhuti and Paul are working on a university wide process so that each student is having the same experience across the board.

For specialty electives, each department will need to make their own criteria. The other thing we need to think about is enrollment as UG enrollment is capped, the market is more competitive and what do we want to do for the next 10-15 years.

This topic has not been looked at for a long time so it would be nice if UGC could look at transfer credits and if, in general, we could have 70% overlap and maybe some overarching statements that departments could use as guidance as we start to rethink policies surrounding transfer credits. Making sure that we accept 4s and 5s on the AP/IB exam and maybe not do Challenge exams is someone has a 5.

- **Comment:** Can we pull the historical data, know how students are doing at Mines to inform our decision.
- **Comment:** Taking the challenge exams 10 years ago was very discouraging. It was rumored that if you did not get a 5 don't even attempt to take the exam and on top of that the exam was held at an inconvenient time – maybe if you are more encouraging more people will take it and might surprise themselves. Students are probably not looking at or paying attention to emails that are being sent out about the challenge exams.

New changes that will be going to council are:

- **Question:** Are we ever asking departments to cut/remove courses that are no longer needed or taught? When Paul started, he went through the catalog and many courses have not been taught in years (5-7 years). Best practice is to review courses every 5 years or so. Some institutions have the authority to remove a course/program if it is not taught in 5 years without running it through the council – but we are not there yet. The Registrar should review the last 5 years and send communication to the departments that if they do not provide reasons that a course should not be removed it will be removed from the catalog.

Removing courses are important to appropriately represent what is being taught here to students. So, that students are not finding courses they want to take just to find out they haven't been taught in years while the other reason is budgetary and efficiency.

- **Question:** What do people think about having new courses that are being proposed to have a 3-year plan.

## Graduate Council

Soutir Bandyopadhyay

All the new courses and program changes will be discussed in the October 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. There was a discussion on the change in the master's in data science program and some of the counselors do have

concerns but at some point, we do need to move on. We will vote on that program change in the November meeting.

GSG presented an idea regarding paid leave for grad students on contracts since they do not receive any paid leave currently. The document that was shared in the meeting was supposed to be taken back to the departments and discussed to get feedback to bring back to the group. The other thing that was brought up was having an Ombuds person for graduate students. They believe that Mines Faculty should not be the Ombuds person as students will not feel as comfortable sharing their concerns.

The main idea was to have structured language around what days grad students are allowed to have off. There were many thesis students who were working during all the breaks, during snow days etc. where they were expected to work without any days off. So, while paid leave would be good, also clearer wording around when they do not need to work.

This brings up the larger issue that involves many areas across campus. If grad students are taking 15 credits, meaning they should be working 45 hours per week plus they are on a grad contract assisting (either teaching or research) for 20 hours per week – does that mean we are expecting these students to be working 65+ hours per week? Even if they are only taking 12 credits, that is still 56 hours per week. So we should probably come up with a policy around this however each project, advisor, course, department will be different and have different needs.

We are starting small with the Ombuds Office and Dugan would like to go to a GSG meeting to inform them of the history and discuss pros/cons of having inside vs. outside people in the Ombuds Office.

*Update on the Ombuds position:*

Priority review of the application should start soon. Hopefully there will be an update by the next meeting. The first thing is to select someone to represent the faculty and the first order of business will be to send this person to training and make sure that we are functioning as well as following all the rules.

**Research Council**

Mark Eberhart

No updates until the next meeting

**Peer Observation Updates**

Deb Carney

This is a partnership between AA and Trefney led by Megan Sanders, Deb Carney, and Justin Schaefer. The two peer observation fellows were just hired with 2-year terms, and they will take the first couple departments in the spring after training.

- **Question:** Was it easy to recruit fellows? Yes, it was. There will be up to 4 fellows at one time and there will be off-cycle rotations that will help with sustainability.
- **Question:** What is the main goal of the proposal? Start to build a positive culture around teaching and learning on campus. Completely performative feedback and connect to the definition of effective teaching on campus and reflective. New faculty will get to reflect on their own observation and opt to include that in their FDR if they choose.

We were hoping to ask that you participate to get “meets expectations” on your teaching FDR but as this is only a pilot, we were not able to do that. We are hoping that can be an option in the future. The plan is to make this a requirement for P&T as well to include this reflection piece. There is a link on the senate website with the original proposal.

The pilot will be 5 departments that will start in the Spring semester when the official observations will be happening and then the fall is left for any type of make-up work.

- **Question:** What about courses that are only taught in the fall? That would be part of the make-up in the fall. We are trying to focus on in-person courses.

### Research Faculty – Handbook & Procedures

Kamini Singha

There has been a collaboration with Mike Kaufman, VPRRT, HR, ORA, and Kamini to try and fix some issues around research faculty language and handbook. The adjustments to the handbook have already been run through the handbook committee but wanted to run this through the senate as well. The handouts were circulated to all the senators prior to the meeting.

There are two primary errors with the handbook:

1. We do not hire RF as admin faculty (they are AF) *HB 4.5.2C* – this should be an AF position.
2. We do not have MOUs with anyone except a few national labs & we cannot have external JA with external institutions whom we do not have a MOU with. *HB 4.1.2.8* – Remove the list of incorrect institutions since they could change or at least update them.

Additional problems with the handbook are...

1. When we pulled data on research faculty there are some that are acting more as admin faculty with zero expenditures meaning they may be under the incorrect title.
2. There is no language on the expectation for research faculty for success. How do they know they are on track for promotion
3. HB talks about RF being required to do service, but these people are paying themselves in full. 100% of their funding is soft money and should we really be asking these people to do service without pay?
4. Affiliate faculty's only requirement is that they possess the qualifications for the position to which they are applying. Better language around Affiliate Faculty should be written in the Handbook around terminal degree and/or excellence in research in that area.

The idea is that the research faculty title is reserved for those really doing research, running research programs, applying for grants etc. We may have a solution for “super post-docs” as they are more of a parochial position. This is happening because these post-docs have not been allowed to submit grants. Johanna has agreed to allow this to happen as we are really shooting ourselves in the foot since there are grants that are only available to post-docs. We should set a bar for RF so that people could be moved out of their current title. The proposed wording should/could be changed to:

“Someone who has received less than 25% remuneration has not published in the Peer review literature that the minds affiliation has had no proposal. Submissions as principal investigator, and or have not advised or co-advised. Any graduate students in an annual evaluation period should be changed to affiliate faculty and or terminated”.

Many of the Research Faculty were evaluated for the first-time last year. The other concern is who should be evaluated on them. They should be more than post-docs and that makes it a departmental decision.

- **Question:** If we allow post-Docs to submit grants, they are able to leave at any time and then the grant would be left hanging. We can make them co-PI's or have the hierarchy where the grant would revert to their supervisor if they left.
- **Question:** What is the pro to Affiliate Faculty vs Joint Appointee? You get the title – which is not nothing. There will be a table explaining all the RF positions and what they can/cannot do that will be in the Procedures Manual.

Let Kamini know if you see anything that is incorrect or needs updating.

Mines@150

Peter Han

We will be celebrating our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The official dates that we are anchoring are 2/9/1874 which was the signing of the act that made Mines the Territorial School of Mines and then September 1874 was the first entering class as the Territorial School of Mines. We are looking at a Founding Day celebration on February 8<sup>th</sup> with a birthday type theme. This will also be a grand opening celebration of the Labriola Innovation District. Jeff King will be casting a bell that will be used as a time capsule to be filled during the February celebration and the culmination of the celebration will be Homecoming 2024. The Foundation will be doing a campaign celebrating 2025 so the celebration will kind of extend through 2025 but the official Mines@150 will be from February 2024 through Homecoming in September 2024.

- **Comment:** Possibly having a conference in September and bringing back faculty for this conference and discuss how we can bring Mines and the students into the next generation.
- **Comment:** Maybe we could have a walking brick path or a column on campus for faculty with distinguished careers which could keep growing.
- **Comment:** Donna Anderson just published a book on the history of Golden and could be a good person to reach out to.

## Discussion & Adjourn

Brandon Dugan

### *Upcoming visitors & topics*

Kirsten Volpi – Budget and Finance (10/24)

Christine Homer – Benefits (November)

Campus space (TBD)

Faculty well-being (TBD)

Faculty Senate adjourned at 3:57 pm.

Next Meeting: October 24, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, via GH Boardroom & Zoom. Please send all items for agenda to

[Faculty\\_Senate@mines.edu](mailto:Faculty_Senate@mines.edu) one week prior.