

Colorado School of Mines – FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
 December 13, 2023, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, Zoom

Attendees:

Voting Members: 15 total (10 needed for quorum). Quorum was present.

P	Brandon Dugan (Chair)	A	Vaughan Griffiths (CEE)	P	Jamal Rostami (MN)	P	Cortney Holles (HASS)
P	Deb Carney (AMS)	P	Soutir Bandyopadhyay (AMS)	P	Ventzi Karaivanov (ME)	A	Lawrence Wiencke (PH)
A	Mansur Ermila (PE)	P	Pat Kohl (PH)	P	Sid Saleh (EDS)	P	Ning Wu (CBE)
P	Mark Eberhart (CH)	P	Shubham Vyas (CH)	A	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	Kristeen Serracino (AA)
A	Mark Bowen (USG)	P	Deb Jordan (Trefny)	P	Andy Herring (AA)	P	Nicole Becwar (LB)
P	Lauren Guido (GSG)	P	Jon Johnson (Online)	P	Nichole Bigley (AA)	P	Karla Perez-Velez (CASA)
P	Vibhuti Dave						

Special Guest(s): Allyce Horan, Susan Gieg, Danielle Ostendorf, Lisa Dunn

Welcome

Brandon Dugan

Thank for the accommodation of meeting on Zoom only for today’s meeting, especially during such a busy time at the end of the semester. We are almost to the finish line with exams wrapping up. Once we get done with our grading, we all get a much earned and deserved break. I hope everybody takes advantage of the time to refresh, recharge, and come back to tackle all the things we get to do in the spring.

Approval of prior meeting minutes

Brandon Dugan

MOTION: Motion to approve previous meeting minutes by Jamal, seconded by Deb. Motion to approve the previous minutes was passed with 1 abstention.

Academic Affairs

Rick Holz

I do not have very many announcements since this is a time to be more focused on getting all of our grades in. Our Mines football team did win last Saturday, so the National Championship football game is this Saturday in McKinney, Texas. Hopefully, you are all going. If you can’t make it, it will be shown on ESPN+. Be sure to tune in and cheer on the Orediggers.

Graduation commencement is this coming Friday. Please make sure that you are asking your colleagues to be present. All of the students really love to see faculty in their regalia cheering them on as they cross the stage.

Lastly, I sent out a note yesterday about an updated syllabus template that the Trefny Center has pulled together. Please make sure that all of the faculty in your various departments have seen the message and review as they're developing their syllabi from the spring semester and use the template that includes some language around our AI policies. The policies were developed by a group of faculty, including someone from Senate last spring and summer. And again, we're probably going to review those this spring again given how quickly the AI space is changing. We may have to update those policies, but I think it is important for students to see those kinds of things. I wish you all Happy Holidays, and I hope that you take time to kickback and relax because the spring semester will be on us fairly quickly, and we are planning on a busy spring.

- **Comment:** Talk to your colleagues and make sure grades are turned in for Paul's office. Encourage people to use the syllabus template. Consistency is important for our students. At one of our first meetings, Estelle Smith from CS talked about the AI survey that she did of undergraduates at the end of last spring, and then did an AI survey of faculty in the fall. She is going to give us a report in January about what she learned about the feeling for incorporating AI in classes.

Registrar's Office

Paul Myskiw

Grading is due Monday at 4:30 pm. We would like to have 100% so that we can move on with end-of-term processing. Please remind faculty to have grades submitted.

The Calendar Committee is reviewing several changes. In our last meeting, we discussed how far ahead we can build calendars because we want to keep in line with Jefferson Public School Spring Break. Currently, we are only 18 months out. A way around that that was proposed to the Calendar Committee is publishing without Spring Break dates so that we can publish 2-3 years out. There's more and more need from some of our constituents to have future calendars built out specifically from the start-of-term and end-of-term dates for planning. There are some pretty big changes that are happening with the onboarding of freshman with Oredigger Camp. They need firm dates so that they can make reservations for the entire freshman class. Additionally, Homecoming fluctuates about 4 weeks, but neither Spring Break nor Homecoming are detrimental to the start or end of the semester, so we'll be able to publish. The goal of this year is to publish through 2027. Currently, we are working on the 2025-26 calendar.

Two years ago, we reined in the add date to one weekend of the semester for the fall and spring semester. At that time, we talked about making the drop date the same date. The Senate decided to wait to see how it went with the change of the add date. Therefore, another big change that the Calendar Committee is reviewing is pulling back the drop date of classes, which is currently at census date, two and half weeks in to the end of week 2. This would result in by census date, classes and enrollment are more settled.

- **Comment:** At this point, nothing has been formally approved. Hopefully, in January, we will finalize some of these dates to add more consistency to our calendar.
- **Comment:** The complete withdrawal (from all courses for the term) is still the last day of the term.
 - o **Comment:** We are also looking into doing more firm anchor dates. For example, in the fall semester, the proposal is that we would start on the third Monday of August. For the spring semester, we would start on the second Monday of the year. This will provide a consistent start date and the ability to plan and project out the weeks for the calendar. One of things that came up from a couple of faculty and Student Life was how late our withdrawal date is. We are considering changing the withdrawal date to a week or two earlier to provide students with the ability to withdraw prior. Currently, it happens during priority registration which has caused contradictory advising in the sense that the students that are intending to withdraw from a course they're in cannot register to retake the course in the spring because it says it's a duplicate course. By making the withdrawal date earlier, that would help resolve that issue. It will also help with the advising load and the types of questions

about moving into CASA and students seeking withdrawal information versus planning for the future term. Our single course withdrawal date compared with our peers is late in the semester. Most institutions rest around week 9 or 10. Currently, ours is at week 13.

Complete withdrawal is still through the end of term, and that's through Student Life.

- **Question:** I have a question about final exam make ups. I noticed that the language that is published with the abbreviated schedule says if a student has 3 exam make ups (and enrolled in more than 6 hours), then the course with the lowest number must provide the make up work. This is different from the Procedure Manual in the Handbook, which states 2 courses (or 6 hours), so there is a bit of discrepancy. Also, the Procedure Manual does not say who provides the make up work. Is it possible to quantify this going forward?
- **Answer:** Please send the language from the Handbook. I was not aware there was language in there. We can certainly make sure it's in alignment and run it back through the councils and through Faculty Senate. There isn't any space on campus to do make ups besides reserving a room or doing it in an office, and every department does it differently.

There are two buildings, Marquez and Coolbaugh, that were locked on Saturday. Do any of you know or heard from your faculty about any other spaces that were locked on Saturday? Please send an email to Paul so that we can let the Lock Shop know.

Committee Appointments

Brandon Dugan for Cortney Holles

There is a request for an updated appointment with the Safety Committee. Barbara O'Kane reached out to me about a sabbatical replacement for the spring of 2024. Ryan Richards, who currently sits on the Safety Committee, will be on sabbatical, so they are looking for a replacement. They have talked to Veronica Eliasson from Mechanical Engineering who agreed to serve as the replacement.

MOTION: The motion to approve Veronica Eliasson as the sabbatical replacement on the Safety Committee by Shubham, seconded by Mark. All were in favor with zero opposed and zero abstentions to approve Veronica Eliasson to the Safety Committee.

Undergraduate Council Updates

Ventzi Karaivanov

There are no significant updates from the Undergraduate Council at this time. Our next meeting in tomorrow afternoon, so we'll see some updates in January. One of the biggest items for our meeting tomorrow is discussion on CSM102 which Allyce Horan will present. There's at least one proposal for CSM301 that will be introduced next month.

CSM102: Intro to Technical Writing

Allyce Horan

Allyce Horan is the Director of the Writing Center. I am here proposing a course change to CSM102, Introduction to Technical Writing. We will be presenting to the Undergraduate Council tomorrow, but, being mindful of deadlines, we are making sure to present to Faculty Senate today. We already presented this course in spring of last year. It was originally intended to count as one of the Success and Wellness options and 1-credit elective. It ended up not counting for that, so that's why we're doing it in this order. We are working to get approval in time for the next time we offer this course which will be Fall 2024 so that it counts for the Success and Wellness elective.

Key things about this course include preparing students to have a strong foundation in technical writing and communication, building off the writing experience they have, and boosting their confidence. We aim to give students familiarity with different types of assignments that they will encounter and act as a bridge between first- and second-year courses and specific writing in their junior and senior-level courses. They will already have a sense of expectation and foundation before they learn how to write a report in

Mechanical Engineering or Hydrology. The course is meant to assist in receiving feedback, working in groups, formatting, and creating an engaging and persuasive presentation that also considers your audience and accessibility.

- **Question:** Are you working with faculty and upper-division courses to see what their perspective is to differentiate specific writing skills needed for a ME student vs a Hydrology student, or is that something students will pick up later?
- **Answer:** One of things that will make this class effective by being offered through the Writing Center is that we are seeing technical and scientific writing across different disciplines, so we get a good sense of what the general expectations are. We will not be going into specific majors but instead diving into topics like what is good writing and understanding different concepts of quality writing in technical and scientific disciplines. We've received great feedback specifically about active vs passive voice and first person vs third person writing. We will use this data to give us a general sense of what expectations might be in future courses without interfering with the faculty.
- **Question:** Do you go over topics like peer editing techniques and self-editing techniques?
- **Answer:** Absolutely. We have specific sections in our syllabus designated to talk about those topics. We will also have practice writing in collaborative essays and low order and higher order editing.
- **Question:** Regarding the feedback you are receiving across campus, is it consistent, or are different departments looking for different things in terms of writing styles?
- **Answer:** We will publicize this data in a few semesters, but it is not consistent throughout all departments, but does follow a general trend in technical and scientific writing. This trend includes using active voice and larger elements of report writing. Our first question to the student is always, what is your professor's expectation? We never want to overstep a boundary and tell them what to do. We respect everyone's individual expectations that are discipline specific.

Graduate Council Updates

Soutir Bandyopadhyay

We do not have much of an update except for the Master's in Data Science program. The online version got approved in our last meeting. We had 12 approved, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions. Brandon attended our meeting, so we had discussion and provided feedback for Sam and Doug. Next semester, Tim will propose a policy where the grad student cannot take a 400-level course and have it count towards their degree. I will share more details in the spring.

Research Council Updates

Mark Eberhart

The Research Council had a very good meeting last Wednesday. We got our 3 subcommittees up and running. They are the Lecture Series, Excellence in Research Awards, and Research Equipment/Instrumentation (REI) Awards subcommittees. We expect to send out an announcement, particularly for the REI awards and Junior/Senior research awards, at the beginning of January for proposals. We should be able to complete all our tasks this coming semester.

- **Comment:** Please be sure to keep in contact with Kim in AA to make sure all the nominations are received. Faculty awards are due on the 15th, so if you have a colleague worthy of a teaching award, please nominate them.
- **Question:** Do you have an idea what the budget will be for the Research Equipment/Instrumentation awards?

- **Answer:** I haven't heard from the deans yet, but between them and the VRPTT, we are looking at around \$160,000.
- **Question:** Does the Senate have a budget set up for food for the awards ceremony? Last year, it came from a Foundation account.
- **Answer:** Last year, we had a budget set aside by VRPTT. To help with the Research Fusion and other Research Council activities, we set up an account with the Foundation to help raise funds. Part of it came from the Senate, and then the account was auxiliary to be able to raise funds and try to scale up for larger programs.

Excused Absence Policy

Vibhuti Dave & Colin Terry

The reason why we're revisiting the absenteeism policy is because post-Covid, things have changed. When students get sick, they are not able to visit health clinics because doctors and nurses are recommending not to, just recover at home. That means there is no way for us to vet these types of requests or verify what is happening. That led to a change in process. There are also some discrepancies between what is currently being practiced in the classroom versus what is written in the policy. Additionally, some equity issues have come up. Also, with increased enrollment, the percentage of students coming in with accommodations has increased. All of this was getting out of hand the way the policy was written, so we needed to revisit and update to account for all these changes. Colin and Vibhuti co-chaired the Ad Hoc committee with various faculty to discuss the policy. We looked at several other institutions to come up with best practices, and then formulated a proposed policy that worked for Mines.

One of the biggest issues with the current policy is that if a student is granted an excused absence, the student must be given the opportunity to make up the missed work. There were several faculty on campus who chose to remove that grade for a missed activity from a student's final grade calculation which is not in compliance with the way the policy is written. In the proposed policy, we are providing faculty with a menu of options so that they can ultimately decide if the activity missed can be made up through providing an identical activity as make up work, or if it can be a similar assignment which targets the same learning outcomes and is comparable in rigor and time. If a faculty member determines that the assignment has pedagogical value and cannot be replicated to a reasonable degree through a make up assignment, then the faculty member has the option to remove the graded activity from the overall grade calculation. This adds more flexibility for the faculty to choose from instead of being obligated to provide make up work.

We also added language to the policy that would provide boundary conditions associated with removing grades versus grading adjustments available to the remainder of the class as well as providing a reasonable threshold from the faculty member to define how many absences are too many that interfere with the student achieving the learning outcomes set for the course. We also want to make sure that students are aware of what kinds of activities can and cannot be made up by having faculty state clear expectations in the syllabus. We also have a set of responsibilities that students should be aware of such as being familiar with the syllabus and taking responsibility for their own performance. One of the big things we heard from faculty was that student athletes were missing class because of practice and/or games. This might not be something that can be completely resolved but we do put the onus on the student to make reasonable efforts to avoid those types of conflicts and prioritize their academics.

We also organized absences into five different categories so that the process could be clearly delineated in terms of what type of protocol to follow for the type of absence and to discourage students from abusing

the absence policy. We have also set up a new form that's automated and goes directly to the faculty wherein the student submits appropriate information, and it notifies the faculty that they are unable to make it to class because of an unexpected illness. We've included a statement in the policy that students that submit a short-term illness can be forwarded to the Student Life Office for review and approval which may include a corroboration in documentation or to work with Student Life as appropriate. Other categories of absences include a general absence due to a school activity or personal reasons such as a job interview and athletic commitments. The revised policy has gone through both the Graduate and Undergraduate Councils and was approved. We found it important to include the Graduate Council because in the past, graduate students never had an absence policy.

- **Question:** Is there any requirement that faculty and/or students must use the forms or that faculty/student must reach out to report excused absences?
- **Answer:** We have an explicit note in the proposed policy that faculty retain 100% authority to excuse a student without the form. The policy exists to provide support and protection for students and faculty. If a faculty member wants to make the decision with the student directly, that is fine. However, whatever decision the faculty member makes must still follow the policy itself.
- **Question:** Who polices this? If a student or faculty member finds an issue, who do we refer to?
- **Answer:** Students will reach out to Student Life if they feel a faculty member is not in compliance with the policy. That, then, starts an investigation, which means Colin or Vibhuti will reach out to the student to do a chain of command (faculty member, department head, dean). We ask that students follow to resolve any kinds of concerns with the course itself.
- **Question:** Where does weekly homework fit into this? For example, an assignment is available but on the due date, the student submits an excused absence.
- **Answer:** Before, the policy did not address this issue, but the proposed policy does. It is very faculty-friendly and provides faculty with the agency or discretion to decide related to how much the excused absence impacted the ability for students to complete an assignment. The policy states any out-of-class graded activities that are due on the day of an excused absence should be accommodated. The details can be established by faculty based on the student situation, or more generally, in their course syllabus.
 - o **Comment:** The language of "should be accommodated" feels like the decision is not up to faculty. Maybe we can change the language to "could be accommodated based on the student's situation."
 - o **Comment:** Maybe we need to use the potentially loaded word of "reasonable". But if it's a legitimate excused absence, I don't want faculty members to say they don't have to accommodate. We can fine tune that sentence to give more empowerment to faculty to decide based on the situation. We can update the wording, but we would really like to see a vote on this today to go into effect in the spring.
 - o **Comment:** Possibly wording may be: Any out-of-class graded activities due on the day of an excused absence may be accommodated based on the student's situation. The details can be established by faculty based on the student situation or more generally in their course syllabus.
- **Question:** In the policy, is there any account for excused absences based upon the student who has caretaker responsibilities for other people who may become sick unexpectedly?
- **Answer:** There are specific points of guides as it pertains to parental care or a caretaker for someone who is not a dependent. In those situations, we try to work directly with the student and think about the totality of the request and the feasibility of accommodating that future need that

often leads to direct case management and potential conversation around the ability to both prioritize a full-time commitment to school and home. We find that excused absences are the symptom of a bigger issue or bigger area of support or need. Some of the redone forms ping in automatically our SOS and case managers so they can work directly with students to intervene in a positive way earlier.

MOTION: Motion to approve the proposed change to the absence policy was moved by Pat, seconded by Shubham. All were in favor with zero opposed and zero abstentions to approve the updated absence policy.

Transformative Record of Applied Integrated Learning ([TRAIL](#))

Susan Gieg

TRAIL is a two-part, campus-wide initiative which includes Experiential Major Menus (EMM) and Oredigger Record of Experience (ORE). The purpose of TRAIL is to highlight what students learn outside the classroom and give students information on personal and professional development opportunities that they can participate in at Mines and off-campus. We have 5 Ore Carts that are themed focus areas that students are engaging with: Leadership & Innovation, Professional Development, Research, Creative & Scholarly Achievement, Inclusive & Impactful Civic Engagement, and Health & Wellness. We will have 3 different levels within each of these Ore Carts which were developed with the help of the Trefny Center. We are almost done working through the exact competencies for each level under each Ore Cart. We will publish those so that people putting on events or activities can determine where that activity will fall within the level and which Ore Cart.

We have launched the EMMs. They are a guide tailored to each degree program and are co-curricular experiences that complement classroom learning, but do not occur within classes. EMM's identify extracurricular learning opportunities, specific skills that students can learn from participating in different activities, and when to take advantage of these opportunities. They are structured by year and include campus-wide opportunities as well as departmental-specific activities. These opportunities focus on various skills such as strengthening communication, leadership, teamwork, and ethics. When students go to the EMM page, they will be able to peruse through information regarding employment, where students go after graduation, and academic options (minors and certificate available at Mines).

The ORE webpage is coming soon, hopefully, partway through next semester. This includes a co-curricular transcript for students to take with them. It will not include anything listed on the student's academic transcript. We are hoping this will assist students in searching for jobs and internships and help showcase what the student has learned at Mines. It is also called the CLR (Comprehensive Learner Record). We have new software called OreConnect, which gives departments and student groups a way to post and host events, receive feedback, and measure progress towards goals.

In the future, we plan to pilot departments in the spring semester for event publication on OreConnect. Faculty will be able to customize event participation (students within a specific department, seniors only, all students across campus, etc.), track attendance, and follow up with attendees. Our hope is that departments can more easily measure and improve student learning outcomes for events. We would like you to think about someone in your department to be trained in this software such as department managers or anyone who regularly puts on events in your department. In Summer 2024, OreConnect event creation will expand to student groups. In Fall 2024, the transcripts will launch, and official acknowledgement of ORE events begin.

We will be sending out a departmental event questionnaire to hear what your department is already doing in terms of events for students and what your students learn from these events. Also, we hope that you will take this back to your departmental faculty meetings and spread the word about TRAIL (<https://www.mines.edu/undergraduate-studies/TRAIL>).

- **Question:** How are you planning to upkeep and manage events to be sure they stay relevant to students?
- **Answer:** The TRAIL office will work on this. We have worked with program directors and department heads to receive feedback. We plan to check with departments in the spring semester of every year to ensure the events are still happening, check for relevancy, and receive any updates/changes.
- **Question:** What is the relationship between this and the software within SAIL and ITS? Will this be a replacement for those platforms to post events? It might not be easy to also have to come up with learning outcomes on top of putting on an event.
- **Answer:** This is a student engagement platform which SAIL was instrumental in choosing. It will be what they use for all their student clubs and organizations. We felt this platform was more intuitive and easier to navigate compared to the other software used by SAIL and ITS and will be a replacement. It will house club and organization websites, event pages, list of group members, and a payment portal. You will not need to come up with learning outcomes for your events. You just need to review the learning outcomes we have already drafted and map your events back to those competencies or Ore Carts.
- **Question:** Will there be a mechanism to add an event quickly or last minute?
- **Answer:** It will be best to utilize the OreConnect software to quickly publicize events. There will be a feed where you can blast information and provide links quickly to students and customize what type of student receives it.

E-Resource Licensing Priorities

Lisa Dunn & Danielle Ostendorf

Nicole Becwar has put in our request to Faculty Senate to approve a resolution to endorse our e-resource licensing priorities. This is an important step in our ability to negotiate with vendors on their licenses as part of our regional consortium. CU Boulder and Wyoming have already done so for this round of consortium work. What it fundamentally does is send a message that within our consortium, we collaborate with others on e-resource issues and priorities.

The budget for our libraries collection is just over \$2.2 million, but we are having to constantly evaluate our collections (to add and cancel things based on our budget and needs of the campus). Every year, we face approximately 5% inflation of our resource costs, which slowly eats away at the funds available to our department on these collection budgets that are dependent on campus support. Sometimes, campus has supported by paying those increases to allow us to continue resources and not cancel as much. This is true to all academic libraries, not just Mines. Some libraries even have a more difficult time than we do with cutting budgets.

One way that we get a better deal on some of our journal packages and databases is to partner with the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries. The Alliance consists of 18 members from Colorado and Wyoming including CU Boulder, CSU, and DU. Currently, 16 of those members of the Alliance are negotiating with Elsevier ScienceDirect Agreement through a contracted third-party negotiator. Elsevier e-books and journals are approximately 15% of our collections budget at Mines. Our current contract ends December

30th, but our access will remain through January as we are in current, active negotiations.

To show the impact of this, in 2022, nearly 300,000 articles and 47,000 book chapters and conference proceedings were accessed through ScienceDirect. Due to these negotiations that are happening at the Alliance, faculty at CU Boulder and the University of Wyoming have made public statements supporting the library through equitable access of information. Currently, the library can use the support of Faculty Senate to publicly state that you are backing the library in these negotiations with Elsevier and other vendor publishers.

WYOMING: <https://www.uwyo.edu/news/2023/12/uws-faculty-senate-and-libraries-call-for-responsible-stewardship-and-equitable-access-to-information.html>

BOULDER: <https://www.colorado.edu/libraries/2023/10/11/cu-boulder-faculty-and-university-libraries-call-equitable-access-information>

If Elsevier does reach out to any of you, please direct them to Danielle Ostendorf. We ask that no one talk to Elsevier as all negotiations are confidential. Lastly, if the Faculty Senate is in support of doing a similar statement as CU Boulder and Wyoming, the library faculty would be willing to write a first draft if deemed appropriate, to ease the work on Faculty Senate.

MOTION: The motion to approve Faculty Senate to work on with the library to draft a statement by Mark, seconded by Shubham. All were in favor with zero opposed and zero abstentions to approve Faculty Senate to work with the library to draft a statement. We will let the library make a first draft for Faculty Senate to review and approve in our next meeting on January 9th.

Board of Trustees Meeting Update

Dinesh Mehta

Dinesh was not present so we will have a BOT meeting update in January or February.

Discussion and Adjourn

Brandon Dugan

We met last Tuesday for an informal meeting. We put together some action items that we will circulate to the Senators in the first week of January before the semester starts. In January, we will also get updates from Futures, CSCI128, ITS, and Generative AI.

Council representation/processes (11/28)

Vibhuti Dave – TRAIL (12/12)

Faculty well-being (12/5?)

Faculty Forum (end of January?)

Core curriculum updates (January?)

Campus space (TBD)

Next meeting: January 9, 2023, in the Guggenheim Boardroom. Please send agenda items faculty_senate@mines.edu 1 week prior.