

Colorado School of Mines – FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
 August 27, 2024, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, Guggenheim 3rd Floor Boardroom/[Zoom](#)

Attendees:

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

P	Brandon Dugan (Chair)	P	Nicole Becwar (LB)	P	Jamal Rostami (MN)	P	Cortney Holles (HASS)
P	John Spear (CEE)	P	Chuck Stone (PH)	P	Ventzi Karaivanov (ME)		Piret Plinket-Bjorklund (GGE)
P	Mansur Ermila (PE)	P	Paul Martin (AMS)	P	Jeff Holley (CEE)	P	Ning Wu (CBE)
P	Shubham Vyas (CH)		Cristian Ciobanu (ME)				

Other Regular Attendees and Guests

	Dinesh Mehta (Trustee)	P	Rick Holz (AA)	P	Paul Myskiw (RO)	P	Colin Terry (Student Life)
P	Sam Spiegel (Online)		Carl Frick (OGS)	P	Jen Gagne (GA)	P	Nichole Bigley (AA)
P	Mikhaila Powers (USG)		Megan Sanders (Trefny)	P	Andy Herring (AA)	P	Karla Perez-Velez (CASA)
P	Lauren Guido (GSG)	P	Kathleen Tomon (GSG)	p	Vibhuti Dave (UGS)	P	Jon Johnson (Online)
P	D. Scott Heath (RO)		Kristeen Serracino (AA)				

Special Guest(s): Lakshmi Krishna

Welcome and Introductions

Brandon Dugan

B. Dugan reminded everyone that the responsibility of the Senators is to represent the faculty. From the Faculty Senate bylaws, the goal of Faculty Senate is to promote shared governance, to be the voice of the faculty as a whole, make suggestions/recommendations, receive suggestions/recommendations to share with others, encourage involvement of faculty in the overall operation of the school, and foster a stimulating environment for teaching, scholarship, and service. Faculty Senate meetings are run using Robert’s Rule of Order. The agenda will be arranged differently than in past years in that one meeting per month will be dedicated to the Undergraduate Council and Graduate Council alternately (approximately 30 minutes of allocated agenda time).

Academic Affairs

Rick Holz

As of this morning, Mines welcomed 1,602 freshmen and 154 transfer students. This is the biggest class so far. Due to the Supreme court ruling that removed gender/student background information, Admissions had to change their screening process for Fall admission. This year, the number of women and students from underrepresented groups dropped compared to last year. Of the 1,600 incoming students, 30% are women and 29-30% are from an underrepresented group. The goal for next Fall is 1,550 undergraduate students. FAFSA’s will hopefully be available for everyone by December 1st.

Colorado was awarded Elevate Quantum, a 40-million-dollar grant from the Federal government. The major universities involved are the University of Colorado and Colorado School of Mines along with other industries and state institutions.

Question: P. Martin asked if the number of transfer students is similar to previous years? Do transfer students usually come in as juniors?

Answer: R. Holz answered that there have been 130-150 transfer students over the last several years. Mines has tightened up the transfer policy to ensure that transfer students have at least 60 credits so most come in as juniors. Mines has established Mines Academies at three community colleges (Red Rocks Community College, Front Range Community College, and Community College of Aurora) and signed transfer agreements with every community college in the state.

Question: C. Stone asked what guides target percentages of incoming students or percentages like women or underrepresented students? Can the percentages be broken down to different subgroups such as ethnicity or race?

Answer: R. Holz answered that there is a national database that shows the number of women and underrepresented groups that are specifically attending engineering colleges and universities. One of Mines' goals is to try to get 40% of an incoming class to be women or students from underrepresented groups, but have not reached that yet. It's a high priority to diversify the science and engineering industry/workforce and provide opportunity for everyone to obtain a science/engineering degree. The data can be split into various subgroups. The fastest growing subgroups are students that identify as multiracial or Latino. The goal is to have Mines look like the community it's in and represent Colorado well. Mines has also worked hard to also have the faculty look like the student body by increasing the number of faculty who are women/from underrepresented groups.

Question: J. Spear asked if Mines is partnering with DSST public schools that are serving underrepresented groups statewide?

Answer: R. Holz answered yes, Mines does have an agreement with Denver Public Schools and close collaborations with other public schools within the State. Mines also hold workshops specifically for high school advisors to encourage their students to apply to Mines and market Mines as a STEM school option.

Question: C. Stone asked if there are resources on campus that student groups that serve as ambassadors for Mines programs can use to ensure parallel recruiting initiatives and diversify outreach?

Answer: R. Holz answered that Admissions is a great resource which oversees what schools are visited and provides handout materials for the ambassadors that go out to schools.

Answer: J. Gagne added that she is happy to connect with anyone that has questions. Liz Cox is also a great resource as she is the Director of K-12 programs and coordinates all outreach that occurs in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Question: J. Rostami asked what was the number of incoming graduate students?

Answer: R. Holz answered he was not sure of the exact number, but the total number of graduate students is up, especially in the number of non-thesis master's students. One of the top priorities this year is to find ways to recruit more graduate students since the number of undergraduate students is at the maximum.

Answer: J. Gagne added that Mines has 806 new graduate students this Fall. The total number of graduate students is 1,798.

Registrar's Office

Paul Myskiw

There was a delay in AP scores by a week, but the Registrar's Office was still able to successfully register all 1,600+ freshmen and do 12 credits or more. P. Myskiw gave a big thank you to all the departments that worked with the Registrar's Office to add seats and be flexible.



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Banner, the student information system, is On Prem and is in the process of moving to a SaaS-based or cloud-based version of the software. The goal is to go live in October. With that will come some changes as there is a product currently being used (GEODE) that is not SaaS compatible so it will be going away. To replace it, there is another product queued up called Smart Plan which will attach to the degree audit and has features like self-healing degree audits and the ability for departments to be able to project the number of seats they will need in a particular course in the future. More details will come once implementation begins, hopefully before the Summer and Fall 2025 registration cycle.

Undergraduate Studies

Vibhuti Dave

Navigation Changes for Catalog

V. Dave announced that her office is working on some initiatives to work with faculty on. One of the bigger projects is to do a catalog revamp, especially with the Faculty Handbook and Procedures Manual which are quite cluttered. There are also too many people with catalog editing access which is causing information to be outdated and cluttered. The goal is to reorganize the catalog content so that it is easier for students and faculty to navigate. There would also be a standard put in place, particularly for Program Overview pages, so that there is more consistency across all programs. There is a need for more transparency with the Course Level Learning Outcomes for accreditation purposes and a need for more modern and relevant curricular plans, especially with updated lists of courses and prerequisites.

Some benefits to keep in mind for the catalog revamp is to ensure that the catalog is student-focused and easier for students to navigate. When students review the catalog, they are not necessarily looking for information on departments but degree programs. The revamp will highlight the degree programs and provide improved clarity on the requirements for all majors and minors and help provide more refined information especially on specific degree information, institutional rules/policies, and requirements. The biggest change recommended is to have degrees listed alphabetically instead of by department and structure the policies into 5 categories: Admissions Procedures, Academics, Degree & Graduation Requirements, Complementary Program Requirements, and General Policies & Procedures.

V. Dave created a template for the Program Overview page for all departments to follow as well as a template for Course Level Learning Outcomes. Currently, degree plans are presented assuming that all students are coming in at the same point (at Calc I) but that is no longer representative of the student population. Students are now coming in with AP credits so there is a need to present degree plans in a way that is easier for students to understand what the degree requirements are, how to complete those degree requirements including prerequisites, and how to graduate on time. P. Myskiw added that over the past 10 years, the amount of AP credit that students are bringing in has risen dramatically. Students are coming in with 30+ credits. This revamp is an opportunity to investigate/question the flow of the 4-year plan and take into consideration the transfer credit that are coming in.

Question: R. Holz asked if there is software available where students can input their credits completed and a new degree plan can be populated with recommendations instead of having to review individual plans and configure them manually based on each student?

Answer: P. Myskiw answered the new product, Smart Plan, has a self-healing degree audit feature that can do this and has helped quite a bit. However, the Registrar's Office is seeing that the incoming classes are harder to place into an equal time course load for their first semester because students are starting at various points. This is a great opportunity for programs/departments to identify courses in their major's sequence as well as prerequisites to make sure enough seats are available and that students can get through the 4-year cycle especially with the core classes.



Question: L. Guido asked if the revamp of the catalog and program requirements could also extend to graduate studies? A lot of the graduate catalogs are also out of date and graduate students are having to do their own degree audit and submit them to OGS via Excel.

Answer: P. Myskiw answered that the Registrar's Office has been working to focus on the graduate side to get all programs updated. The revamp in the graduate catalog will help because currently, it is hard for students to find interdisciplinary programs as they are organized separately. Changing to alphabetical order will help significantly. V. Dave added that the focus has been on the undergraduate catalog but a lot of what is being proposed in the catalog revamp will apply to the graduate side as well.

Question: N. Wu asked if existing course level learning outcomes would need to be re-written?

Answer: V. Dave answered that the course level learning outcomes should already exist as they are in the syllabus. They would just need to be entered into CIM. A guideline/instruction sheet on how to update CLLOs in CIM will be distributed.

There has been discussion already between department heads and program directors for the past few years regarding the relevance of the ASIs and minors. The top 5 minors in 2023-24 were Computer Science, McBride, Computational and Applied Math, Computer Science – Data Science, and Aerospace Engineering. About 25% of students graduate with a minor. The ASIs, however, are less than 1%. Between 2015 and 2021, 7,525 students enrolled in a minor, but only 2,191 minors have been awarded. This is something for faculty to consider, are minors and ASIs (the way they are currently structured) student-centric? Do they add value to a student's career? The same can apply to alternative pathways, such as Sustainable Energy, which is not in the catalog. Should we promote alternative pathways? Should we sunset ASIs given that there are no students graduating with them? Is there an alternative to minors that are more student-friendly and would not be a barrier for students to pursue? P. Myskiw added that the minors at Mines, although only listed as 18 credits, are still embedded. If the prerequisites are added up, the minor ends up being much higher in credit hours which may be a reason why there is a such a drop in students graduating with a minor as it would take extra time. Mines has seen an increase in the number of undergraduates expressing interest in the 4+1 concept or taking graduate level courses so it will be worth discussing these considerations. V. Dave encouraged that a Senator or faculty member join the committee that is looking into the catalog revamp to provide input. In terms of the ASIs and minors, that may be a committee that the Undergraduate Council could take on.

Comment: R. Holz added that the pay difference in getting a master's degree versus a minor is significant so it may be better to advise students toward something like a 4+1. Additionally, we wouldn't advise a student to stay an extra semester or year to finish a minor, but we would for a master's degree. Some minors are a big interest for students such as the Data Science minor but currently, Mines has 30 to 40 minors. Of those minors, only five have more than 10 students in them.

Graduate Studies

Carl Frick

No discussion at this time. Frick will visit a future meeting.

Senate, Councils, & Committees 2024-2025

Cortney Holles

Councils and Committees

The following committees are in need of a Faculty Senator representative:

- Academic Standard Committee – Jeff Holley
- Core Curriculum Committee – Cortney Holles
- Leadership Nomination Committee – Courtney Holles



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- Readmissions Committee – Mansur Ermila
- Faculty Oversight Committee on Sports and Athletics – Chuck Stone
- Online Standard Committee – Jamal Rostami
- Library Committee – Courtney Holles
- Budget Committee – Shubham Vyas
- Calendar Committee – Paul Martin
- Handbook Committee – Paul Martin

MOTION: The motion to make the above Faculty Senate representative appointments was moved by C. Holles and seconded by S. Vyas. The motion for the committee appointments was approved unanimously with zero opposition and zero abstentions.

Secretary and Council Chair Positions:

Secretary – Courtney Holles (serve 2nd term)
 Undergraduate Council – Ventzi Karaivanov (serve 2nd term)
 Graduate Council – John Spear
 Research Council - TBD

MOTION: The motion to make the above Faculty Senate Secretary and Council Chair appointments was moved by J. Rostami and seconded by N. Wu. The motion for the Secretary and Council Chair appointments was approved unanimously with zero opposition and zero abstentions.

Announcements and Adjourn

Brandon Dugan

- V. Dave’s PPT slides are available on the Faculty Senate Canvas page.
- The next Faculty Senate is scheduled for September 10th. The first agenda item (approximately 30 minutes) will be an open invitation for all faculty as it is a listening session related to the Provost search. There will be an input form sent out for faculty members that are not able to attend.

Discussion (Senators Only)

Brandon Dugan

Next meeting: September 10, 2024, in Coolbaugh 209. Please send agenda items to faculty_senate1@mines.edu one week prior.

