

Colorado School of Mines – GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
September 18, 2024, 4:00 – 5:00 pm, via Zoom

Attendees:

Voting Members: 22 total (14 - majority needed for quorum). Quorum was present.

P	John Spear (Chair)	P	Danielle Ostendorf (LB)	P	Andy Osborne (NSE)	P	Kip Findley (MME)
	Ian Lange (EB)	P	Bettina Voelker (CH)	P	Jaeheon Lee (MN)	P	Uwe Greife (PH)
P	Jeff Shragge (GP)	P	Ebru Bozdog (EDS)		Adrienne Marshall (HSE)	P	Pejman Tahmasebi (PE)
P	Mehmet Belviranli (CS)	P	Adrienne C. Kroepsch (HASS)	P	Ryan Venturelli (GE)		Jim Ranville (GC)
P	Lori Tunstall (CEE)		Nikki Farnsworth (CBE)	P	Kathleen Tomon (GSG)		
P	Rajivasanth Rajasegar	P	Yamuna Phal (EE)		Samy Wu Fung (AMS)		

Other Regular Attendees and Guests

	Carl Frick (OGS)		Carolyn Freedman (OGS)	P	Jenny Briggs (OGS)		Roxane Aungst (OGS)
	Wendy Adams (HNRS)		D. Scott Heath (RO)	P	Paul Myskiw (RO)	P	Colin Schneider (RO)
	Sam Spiegel (Mines Online)		Suzanne Beach (Payne)	P	Kristeen Serracino (AA)		Richard Krahenbuhl (GP)
	Jon Johnson (Mines Online)		Peter Concepcion (Grad Admissions)	P	Luke Contreras (Grad Admissions)		Kelsie Diaz (CS)
P	Cadi Gillette (IGP)		Rachel McDonald (IGP)				

Special Guest(s): Christina Leedham, Katy Armstrong, Qihua Huang

Welcome

John Spear

Graduate Council will be utilizing the consent agenda to approve meeting minutes. Minutes will be available on Canvas for review but will not be a separate council voting item.

Briefings and Information Items

Office of Graduate Studies

Jenny Briggs for
Carl Frick

OGS is promoting the use of advisor-advisee agreements more widely across campus in the year ahead. A few years ago, Graduate Council created a subcommittee that developed a suggested template for advisor-advisor agreements. However, this template is currently not readily available (<https://www.mines.edu/cpe/advisor-student-agreements/>). OGS is hoping to encourage more communication on the expectations between advisors and students in advance to prevent any misunderstandings. The templates are highly endorsed and promoted, especially at graduate orientation. J. Briggs requested a flash poll from the graduate departments to see if agreements are currently being promoted and used by faculty.

- **Comment:** T. Voelker (CH) added that the agreements have been advertised in her department, but she is not sure if they are being used. Would it be beneficial to give Graduate Councilors a few weeks to discuss with their department to get more accurate data?
- **Comment:** L. Tunstall (CEE) added that the agreements were promoted in her department but was unsure how many faculty use the agreements. One of the hesitations in using the agreement template is how contractual it feels and the concern of the legality of it. Does a lawyer need to review this if it is a formalized, written document?
 - **Comment:** J. Briggs added that when the GC subcommittee created the template, they were careful to call it an agreement. The document just states that signing attests that both parties discussed the contents of the document. The intent was not to be a binding agreement but a guide for consistent communication between the advisor and student. It is also intended to be fairly flexible so it could not serve as a basis for a lawsuit. J.



Briggs was not sure if the General Counsel office reviewed this document when it was created.

- **Comment:** J. Shragge (GP) added that part of the departmental expectation in his department is to use the agreements. Some faculty call them memorandum of understanding. Some faculty prefer not to have any signatures to make it feel less contractual. J. Shragge agreed that it may be beneficial to hear more about the potential legal aspects of the agreement.
- **Comment:** Y. Phal (EE) added that starting this semester, the EE department is planning to incorporate the agreement into the contract so any faculty who are graduate student advisors must sign the agreement at the beginning of the semester.
- **Comment:** R. Venturelli (GE) added that some faculty use the agreement, and some do not. For departments that made the agreement mandatory, what was the process of making it a departmental requirement? Were there things that worked and did not work? Was there resistance to this idea?
 - **Comment:** J. Shragge answered there have not been any significant issues or pushbacks. He will collect information on the process and share it at a future GC meeting.
- **Comment:** K. Findley (MME) added his department provides a graduate student guide that is introduced when students begin. However, after a while, students tend to forget about the guide. Are there best practices for these agreements so that advisors and students can go back to them or properly use them over the long-term?
 - **Comment:** J. Briggs added that there is no right or wrong approach or optimal use of the agreements but agreed that they should be revisited periodically. This could possibly be revisited at the beginning of each term when the RA/TA contracts are signed. OGS has received feedback from students that if they receive unsatisfactory from their advisor, they tend to be surprised or have not received direct feedback along the way from their advisor. OGS feels that having the agreements and a cycle for review/re-discussion may help with this issue.
- **Comment:** J. Spear added the progress unsatisfactory grade does have a follow up that must happen through Academic Affairs which is also a nice checkpoint built into the grade portion of this.
- **Comment:** J. Shragge added that the agreement in his department has a 1-year periodicity and serves as an organic document since the relationship between advisor-advisee changes as the student progresses.
- **Comment:** K. Tomon added that GSG had an informal discussion in their previous general council meeting regarding this issue. The students who have these agreements with their advisor feel better about expectations. The agreement is revised as the student progresses, which has allowed for more flexibility if roles change and more conversations with the advisor to occur more smoothly. Students who do not have the agreements expressed how much they wanted them to maintain communication and know what the expectations are. One of the biggest feedback that GSG receives from students is not knowing what is expected of them.

Registrar's Office

No updates as this time.

Paul Myskiw

Graduate Student Government

The tentative date for GRADS is April 1-2 (the Wednesday and Thursday after Spring Break). GSG welcomes faculty participation as judges. GSG has also finished processing Quality of Life data that was collected at the end of the Spring semester and asked if the Grad Council would like that information

Kathleen Tomon



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presented in an upcoming meeting. Lastly, K. Tomon provided more detail on what GRADS is. It is the Graduate Research Symposium dedicated to graduate students where anyone doing research on campus can present an oral session or poster session. There are typically additional speakers that participate.

- **Comment:** J. Spear encouraged GSG to share Quality of Life data at the next Grad Council meeting scheduled for October 2nd and invite any additional GSG members to attend/share.
- **Question:** J. Spear asked how big was GRADS last year?
- **Answers:** K. Tomon answered there were around 100 for the poster sessions and around 200 oral presentations. K. Tomon will get exact numbers and share them at the next meeting.

Don't Cancel Class

Katy Armstrong
Christina Leedham

The VIP (Vallejo Irvine Program) for Professional Development and the Career Center host requested workshops as part of the Don't Cancel Class initiative to provide a resource to faculty if they are traveling or are sick. The workshops cover a variety of topics such as preparing for a conference, An Awkward Person's Guide to Small Talk, etc. Please see the link below for the VIP Program page which overviews the workshops that can be provided and has the form request. Please see the link below for the Career Center which lists their workshop offerings such as resume building, interviewing tips, etc.

<https://www.mines.edu/vip/workshops/>
https://www.mines.edu/careers/workshoprequest/#gf_12

- **Question:** J. Spear asked what other entities on campus utilize this initiative? How big could this rollout become? How much interest do you foresee?
- **Answer:** C. Leedham answered that student organizations and faculty are the main entities that utilize this initiative. VIP started participating in the initiative last Spring and has received 3-4 requests throughout the semester. The Career Center typically has 6-10 requests per semester. There is not a goal to grow this initiative so much as to create more awareness across campus that this is an option that exists for faculty.
- **Question:** T. Voelker asked if content is adjusted if it is for a graduate-level course?
- **Answer:** K. Armstrong answered that content is adjusted based on what is requested by the faculty. Historically, workshops adjusted for graduate courses have the same overarching concepts but are more specific in the application to a particular situation. C. Leedham added that the more time notice is given, the more the workshops can be specifically tailored in content.
- **Question:** J. Spear asked how many people are engaged in the process? What happens if there are a lot of requests?
- **Answer:** K. Armstrong answered that the Career Center has a core team of 5 that support the initiative. If additional help is needed, the larger Career Center team is utilized which is comprised of 11 staff members. VIP works very similarly in that there is a core team of 2 and a larger team of 5 that can be used if needed. There are some limitations but so far, every request has been met.
- **Question:** J. Briggs asked if there are any statistics on how many graduate students attended

Career Days last week?

- **Answer:** K. Armstrong answered that data can be provided. The Career Center is currently compiling a report about Career Days, including demographic information and graduate/undergraduate attendance.
- **Question:** K. Tomon asked how are AI tools incorporated in the workshops such as filtering resumes at the beginning of the job search process? Is ChatGPT incorporated in any of the workshops?
- **Answer:** K. Armstrong answered that AI is a topic that is discussed in the workshops. There is also an undergraduate course, CSM250, that discusses the use of AI in the classroom for assignments related to resume and cover letter building. The Career Center also provides a resource to students called Jobscan which is a resume AI tool. It has features that provide AI-friendly resume templates, suggests keywords from a job description to include, and allows students to upload a job description and compare how well they are tailoring their resume to a job description. AI is a topic that is also discussed one-on-one with students especially how it is a beneficial tool and how to use it ethically.
- **Question:** M. Belviranli asked if there is a flyer to distribute to departments about Don't Cancel Class?
- **Answer:** C. Leedham answered that there is a one-page handout to distribute. Please see attached PDF at end of minutes.

Continued Business (from previous council year)

1.1

EE

Yamuna Phal

[CIM 3/29]

1 new course:

EENG585: AI FOR POWER AND RENEWAL ENERGY SYSTEMS

This course "AI for Power and Renewable Energy Systems" has been selected for on-line certificate program in the power and energy system area to be offered in this coming Fall. It was first offered in person in the Fall semester of 2023. It received very good feedback and course evaluations (attached). AI is regarded as a transformative technology for power and renewable energy systems, and there is high demand of such a course in the industry. Thus, assigning a permanent number to this course (a requirement for having this course in the on-line certificate program) will help promote and increase enrollment of our on-line program.

This agenda item was introduced in the previous council year and was tabled due to the copyright issue with regards to online programs. The online program for the Electrical Engineering department has already been approved and is launching this semester. This course will be a part of the program. It has been offered once and the course proposal was meant to give the course a permanent course number. This is the only course that has not been approved.

- **Question:** J. Spear asked is this course online or in-person?
- **Answer:** Y. Phal answered that this course is fully online.
- **Comment:** J. Spear added that the copyright issues will be taken up by the Senate. For now, Graduate Council will move forward with all online curriculum to keep workflows going.
- **Comment:** U. Greife suggested an alternate title for the course by removing AI. J. Spear added



that AI is something that broadly concerns various tools that are part of making AI such as machine learning and statistical learning. Q. Huang added that the term AI has been well accepted in the industry regarding its usefulness. The main objective is to introduce statistical machine learning and the tools that apply to the industry. Online students that have taken the course have provided good feedback regarding this class and find it very useful.

- **Question:** J. Spear asked are there any other classes on campus that have AI in the title?
- **Answer:** Q. Huang answered that there are other courses named Advanced Machine Learning. A. Osborne added that there is a Machine Learning for Nuclear Engineering course. T. Voelker added there are several courses that have AI in the title such as CSCI404 and CSCI571 which are both titled Artificial Intelligence. K. Findley added that there are also several research projects on campus that have AI embedded in the title.

MOTION: The motion to approve the new course EENG585 was moved R. Venturelli and seconded by Y. Phal. The new course EENG585 was approved with 13 approved, 1 opposed, and 1 abstention.

4:35-4:40 pm **New Business**
2.1 **ROBOTICS**
[CIM 9/4]
1 new course:

Cadi Gillette

ROBO554: ROBOT MECHANICS: KINEMATICS,
DYNAMICS, AND CONTROL

Cross listing with CS courses.

- **Question:** J. Spear asked how many students are in the course?
- **Answer:** C. Gillette answered there are currently 31 students in the course.

MOTION: Motion to approve the ROBO554 course was moved by K. Findley and seconded by M. Belviranli. The motion to approve the ROBO554 course was approved with 12 approved, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

4:40-4:45 pm **Adjourn**

John Spear

Next meeting:

October 2, 4:00-5:00 pm via Zoom. Please send all agenda items to John Spear (jspear@mines.edu) or Kristeen Serracino (kristeen.serracino@mines.edu) 1 week in advance.

Consent Agenda The following proposals will not be discussed unless specifically requested by the Council. Please review the following items. With no objections, approval is implied, and items will be processed accordingly.

3.1 Approval of Previous Minutes – September 4, 2024

John Spear

Don't Cancel Class

When you must miss a class for something planned, don't cancel, ask for a workshop!

The **Career Center** and **VIP program** (Vallejo Irvine Program for Professional Development) will work to accommodate the request to provide a workshop on a topic beneficial to your students.

VIP Topics:

- An Awkward Professional's Guide to Networking
- An Awkward Professional's Guide to Small Talk
- Conversational Control
- The XYZs of Professional Storytelling
- Advocating as a Young Adult
- Elevators to Doors: Following Up After the First Conversation
- Navigating a Conference
- Team Collaboration and Communication

Career Center Topics

- Resume 101: Basics to Building a Resume
- Advanced Resumes & CV's
- Job Search Kickstart
- Personal Branding/LinkedIn
- Preparing for Career Days
- Developing an Elevator Pitch
- Interviewing
- Offer and Salary Negotiation
- Building a Professional Network

How to submit a request:

VIP: Fill out a form through mines.edu/vip/workshops

Career Center: Fill out a form through: mines.edu/careers/workshoprequest/

We ask that forms are submitted with 2 weeks' notice, but we will try to honor any requests if we can accommodate them. Please allow us 48 hours to confirm