

Colorado School of Mines – RESEARCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
 October 2, 2:00 – 3:00 pm, Hill Hall 300

**Attendees:**

**Voting Members:** 18 total (12 - majority needed for quorum). Quorum was present

P	Shubham Vyas (Chair)	P	Mike Wakin (EE)		Elizabeth Reddy (EDS)
P	Samy Wu Fung (AMS)		Yvette Kuiper (GE)		Eric Toberer (PH)
P	Diego Gomez-Gauldron (CBE)		Kenneth “Xerxes” Steirer (PH)		James Simmons (GP)
P	Annalise Maughan (CH)	P	Emmanuel De Moor (MME)	P	Patricia Andersen (LB)
	John Spear (CEE)		Xhexuan Gong (PH)	P	Erdal Ozkan (PE)
P	Maxwell Brown (EB)		Mark Deinert (ME)	P	Nicole Smith (MN)
	Hussein Amery (HASS)				

**Other Regular Attendees and Guests**

P	Barb O’Kane		Lisa Kinzel (RTT)	P	Runeem Al Abssi (GSG)
P	Ellie Miller (USG)	P	Kristeen Serracino (AA)		

Special Guest(s): Lakshmi Krishna

**Welcome and Introductions**

Shubham Vyas

Introduction of Research Councilors

For the AY24-25 Research Council, various presenters will visit the RC meeting to help identify accomplishments and challenges of research on campus. Any issues that arise can then be presented to Faculty Senate and higher to identify steps to take.

**State of Undergraduate Research at Mines**

Lakshmi Krishna

Undergraduate Research supports students and faculty to help facilitate successful research experiences. It is housed next to the Writing Center. Undergrad Research serves as a hub on campus with the goal to assist, enhance, and promote UG research across all academic disciplines and supports students through different programs – FIRST, MURF, IMURF, SURF. Any questions can be directed to L. Krishna. Additional funding sources include RM-AMP, ARCS, NNSS. Another goal of UGR is to showcase UG research through the UG research symposium (hosted twice every year, started in 2018), UG research journal (Reuleaux, which welcomes students to publish and spotlight faculty research), award travel awards (awarded up to \$10k to students, encourage students to apply), provide letters of support for external grants and research activities. Professional development host emerging scholar seminar series, URSSO; URA, URS Distinction.

- **Question:** D. Gomez Gauldron asked is there any faculty involvement in the application of awards for students?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered that UGR tries to award most of them. It is starting to get competitive. The student applies (nothing from faculty).

In the past 5 years, although there are more research programs, funding has not increased so that is a challenge. The budget for UGR has remained the same since 2018. To date, over 1,000 students have presented at the research symposium. For Reuleaux, students can apply for a \$5,000 Reuleaux Writing Grant and travel grants. Since 2023, 25 students have received funding

from URS to present at national conferences. All awardees have worked with their mentor for a minimum of 2 years. The Emerging Scholars Seminar Series offers weekly seminars on various topics every semester. FIRST is specifically for first-year and transfer students awarding up to \$1,000 stipend for conducting research. There are currently 40 students in the cohort. Students then go to apply for additional awards.

Vertically Integrated Projects Model in Experiential Research (VIPER) – faculty led with large student teams. Students can also receive 1-2 credits each semester. A great way to engage students early on. Great opportunity since budget has not increased. Open to all majors. Requirement – must engage for 3 semesters. Faculty can apply for seed grants for mentoring student teams.

L. Krishna requested volunteers and faculty feedback for Mines Undergraduate Research Advisory (MURAC) Committee. The goal of the committee is to advise the office of RUS in establishing policies and procedures for funding UG research proposals.

- **Question:** M. Wakin how does UGR currently get input for MURAC?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered there is no current feedback mechanism, but UGR meets with faculty to receive input.
- **Question:** S. Vyas asked how does UGR select which UG research get each award?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered MURF awards 120 students (out of 200 applications). Faculty will choose their own mentee. First-year students get precedence. There are other factors used to choose students.
- **Question:** D. Gomez Gauldron asked are academics considered when choosing students?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered none of the application processes ask for GPA therefore academics are not a factor.
- **Question:** R. Al Abssi asked for URS Distinction, do students have to be in MURF?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered no, they do not.
- **Question:** E. Ozkan asked what is the budget and per student cost?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered \$200k per year. 120 MURF students are awarded \$1,500. The remaining goes to other programs. Deans are asked to contribute.
- **Question:** Do you work with the Foundation at all to contribute to UG Research?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered that NNSS is through the Foundation and UGR receives some funding to run the symposium. UGR is currently working on forming more partnerships for additional funding.
- **Question:** S. Vyas asked for MURAC, what are the challenges?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered that it was poor timing with starting around COVID. A significant challenge is finding good representation and determining what that looks like plus getting both portfolios represented. Additionally, the logistics of meeting with several faculty members has been a challenge.
- **Question:** Are there ways that the Research Council provide support for UGR?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered it would be nice to have an RC members as part of MURAC

Committee to meet monthly for input.

- **Question:** Is there a way to not award stipends for students doing research activities to help with the budget issue and instead award in learning experience, time of faculty or grad students, or use of research equipment.
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered the stipend sends a message to students that research is important. MURF is awarded \$1,500 for both semesters so the award is minimal (below minimum wage). MURF also looks good on resumes for students.
- **Question:** Is there a lot of volunteer research for UG students on campus? What are the legal implications of this?
- **Answer:** L. Krishna answered that many faculty do have volunteers, but UGR does not have a way to track it. There is some liability and risk associated with volunteer research. Those that are awardees are added into Workday and are technically hired as student employees.

### **Priorities for 2024-25**

Shubham Vyas

RTT and the Deans have been reached out to in order to secure funding for the REI awards. What other things does the Research Council want to discuss?

- Distinction of prescribed duties (REI, REA, RF) and open-ended
  - REI – once or twice? S. Vyas suggested once. Twice would allow resubmissions and improvement and may help to get more funding. Total \$100,000 but must be raised. \$60,000 from RTT and \$40,000 from Deans. Since it is already October, it may be too late to do REI for the Fall.
  - How do you want to define stipulations for REI? Prioritize needs of instrumentation and resources. Exclude recent REI awardees (last 3-5 years).
  - Utilize RC Canvas page to get feedback on REI from all RC members.
- UG Research, Grad Research, Faculty Research (TT/T, Research)
- REI awards, Research in Excellence Awards, Research Fusion
  - How can we improve Research Fusion and Research in Excellence - last year, there was a lack of attendance and lack of marketing. Maybe ask the Deans to provide speakers or utilize speakers from the FUTURES courses. Maybe implement flash talks to allow more speakers to present. Maybe use this event as an opportunity to introduce new faculty members. When should we hold Fusion (in fall, in spring, or both)?
- Research Computing, Instrumentation Upkeep

### **Questions for Graduate Dean**

Shubham Vyas

Next Meeting; Carl Frick (Graduate Dean) is visiting to talk about accomplishments and challenges associated with graduate student research at Mines.

Next meeting: November 6, 2024 in the Hill Hall 300. Please send agenda items to [vyas@mines.edu](mailto:vyas@mines.edu).