

Colorado School of Mines – FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
 November 12, 2024, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, Guggenheim 3rd Floor Boardroom/[Zoom](#)

Attendees:

Voting Members: 15 total (8 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)		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)		Colin Terry (Student Life)
P	Sam Spiegel (Online)		Carl Frick (OGS)		Jen Gagne (GA)		Nichole Bigley (AA)
P	Mikhaila Powers (USG)		Megan Sanders (Trefny)		Andy Herring (AA)		Karla Perez-Velez (CASA)
P	Lauren Guido (GSG)		Kathleen Tomon (GSG)	P	Vibhuti Dave (UGS)		Jon Johnson (Online)
	D. Scott Heath (RO)	P	Kristeen Serracino (AA)		Lori Kester (EMLT)		

Special Guest(s): Terri Hogue, Andrea Borrego, Ali Kerr, Sandy Woodson, Scott Houser, Serena Lewis, Thomas Williams

Welcome, Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Brandon Dugan

Services have moved to the Cloud. Registration has begun for the Spring semester. Build and Brew is now open in Labriola.

MOTION: Motion to approve prior meeting minutes was moved by S. Vyas and seconded by J. Spear. The motion to approve prior meeting minutes was approved unanimously with 8 approved, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

Fall Faculty Forum Update

Brandon Dugan

The Fall Faculty Forum on Rethinking Teaching Across Campus was held on October 31st. Attendance included the Provost, Deans, and teaching faculty. There is a quiet but growing understanding that funds are limited, therefore, there is a need to come up with solutions to gain efficiency, save funds, and reallocate resources. Some possible solutions are making more efficient use of classroom space, teaching in other programs, every other year course offerings, non-traditional class times, bigger class sizes while also maintaining what Mines is and where Mines wants to be beyond 150. The overall goal is to come up with some ideas to test out and formalize. A second session was originally planned for Friday, 11/8, but campus closed due to weather. This will be rescheduled for a later time before Thanksgiving Break or before the end of the semester. After the second session, presentation slides will be circulated along with minutes from those sessions. A form will also be provided for faculty to add additional feedback and input. All feedback will be brought to the Faculty Senate in the Spring to draft proposals and recommendations.



- **Comment:** P. Martin added that faculty are starting to think about teaching loads and expectations. The forum did not provide context of what was to be discussed. Once faculty get an idea of what Administration would like faculty to do, there will be more interest in discussions about teaching. In the Handbook, there are guidelines on teaching course loads especially for T/TT faculty.
- **Comment:** B. Dugan added that he will emphasize expectations in future correspondence to encourage faculty to think about what the appropriate teaching load by program is and why. Last year, there was an update in the Procedures Manual about Department Heads and how they can increase or decrease course loads. However, there are a number of places where clarity could be provided.
- **Comment:** R. Holz added it is important to understand that the solution is not one-size-fits-all and will vary by program/department. B. Dugan added it is a goal for the Faculty Senate to come up with ideas that include how to define the optimal load for each program and how it fits into its portfolio and overall institutional mission. It will be important to start thinking about this and talking about it with colleagues, so it is not viewed as a mandate coming from the top down.
- **Comment:** P. Myskiw added that several departments have requested an increase in section sizes to 100-plus. It will be important to keep in mind that Mines does not have a lot of classrooms that can accommodate that size so this will need to be well coordinated. Classrooms that have larger capacities tend to be booked. There is some new space coming to campus but only one is an auditorium that could fit a large class.

Academic Affairs

Rick Holz

R. Holz reiterated that the teaching conversation is faculty-centered and is not a mandate from the Provost or Deans on what teaching is going to be. It is a great opportunity for faculty to discuss/find solutions that are fair and equitable.

A faculty member was involved in an accident on Wednesday night. Legal proceedings are ongoing. The faculty member is on paid administrative leave and courses are being covered by other faculty. Additionally, student services such as counseling are currently available to impacted students.

The first University Budget Committee meeting was held on November 7th. The Governor announced his proposed budget with a limit on tuition increases across the State to 2.25% and a 2.5% salary increase for classified employees. With that, there is no increase in State funding for higher education. Mines ranks 46th in the nation in support for higher education and receives \$30-\$35 million from the State. State funding primarily only goes toward students via COF and student services.

- **Question:** C. Stone asked does Mines plan to increase tuition by 2.25%?
- **Answer:** R. Holz answered Mines will plan to use the full increase since it is tuition-driven. However, it will make for a very tight budget for FY26 as the increase is not significant.
- **Question:** M. Powers asked does the increase apply to both in-state and out-of-state tuition?
- **Answer:** R. Holz answered that it applies to in-state tuition only.
- **Question:** C. Stone asked what is the percentage of Mines' students that are in-state vs. out-of-state? Are there stipulations on this?



- **Answer:** R. Holz answered there is a limit to how many out-of-state students can make up the student population (less than 50%). Last year, Mines had 54% in-state students and 46% out-of-state students. Mines generally tries to have around 50-50. There is emphasis on out-of-state recruiting because out-of-state tuition helps financially cover the cost of the students and the institution. B. Dugan added that the statute in Colorado states that up to 33% of the total student population can be non-resident. Specific institutions such as CU, CSU, UNC, and Mines can go up to 45% non-resident students. For the incoming class in the Fall, Mines was at 49%. Since 2018, Mines has maintained approximately 55% in-state students and 45% out-of-state students.

Registrar's Office

Paul Myskiw

Priority registration for Spring semester started yesterday. There are about 800 transactions per hour. Some students are experiencing issues that are expected (prerequisites and Wi-Fi/campus network issues) and are being resolved. Banner SaaS is also experiencing a few issues that are currently being addressed by AWS.

Undergraduate Council Updates

Ventzi Karaivanov

In the last UG Council meeting, 9 course changes were approved including the FUTURES course which will be part of the Core. During Council discussion, two concerns were brought up – field trip impact on courses especially labs and how the course will be staffed. The FUTURES course was approved through the UG Council with 13 approvals, 2 oppositions, and 1 abstention. B. Dugan added that FUTURES will require two votes from Faculty Senate – to approve it as a course and to approve it as part of the Core.

S. Woodson added that not every field trip will require students to go off campus. FUTURES could also look into having field trips on Saturdays or in the evening so that it does not interfere with labs/other courses. Additionally, excused absences are typically blocked for the whole day, but the field trips do not require students to be gone for the entire day. This may be an opportunity to explore options for excused absences to be requested in shorter time increments. The STEM faculty who have taught this course so far have expressed excitement and a good experience. Many have requested to teach again. Additional compensation is not required as it is part of the teaching load. A. Kerr added that there was a specific Encounter that had an error in the excused absences date which made it seem like the FUTURES course was taking students out excessively. FUTURES has since adjusted and learned to avoid issues like this and has found what labs/courses to be mindful of. There is always communication with the students to find the best availability/least conflict, so they do not miss other classes. An alternative assignment is also always provided as an option for the students. When faculty teach this course, they can showcase their best lecture series over the course of 4 repeated weeks. The remaining weeks are used to help steer students through the course. Many faculty that have taught this course before have requested to teach again under a different theme or have found enjoyment in how their field intersects with the various FUTURES themes (energy, water, time, etc.).

- **Comment:** R. Holz added something that will need to be worked out is whether a department has faculty members that would like to teach FUTURES but cannot due to capacity within their department. It will be important to build capacity so that faculty who would like to teach in FUTURES will be able to do so. To get it started, plenty of departments can free up a faculty member's time through various means to cover the STEM faculty component within FUTURES.



- **Comment:** T. Hogue added it is important to see where there is capacity and find faculty members who want to teach in FUTURES since this is part of a Student Signature Experience. This Spring, faculty from Mining, Petroleum, and Geology are teaching this course. Additionally, two teaching faculty have been hired for the Fall to help support this course.
- **Question:** B. Dugan asked how long will it take to scale this course to 1,600 students? What is the transition plan?
- **Answer:** S. Woodson answered that the plan is to bring the course fully to scale in the Fall 2025 and transition to eight sections per semester.
- **Question:** J. Spear asked how are the credit hours divided?
- **Answer:** T. Hogue answered that the credit hours are divided between the four faculty teaching the course.
- **Question:** C. Stone asked how long will FUTURES be a part of the curriculum?
- **Answer:** S. Woodson answered since the course was piloted well, the plan is to have the course be a permanent initiative to the Core. R. Holz added that when the Core is revised again in 3-5 years, this course can be re-evaluated if it should continue to be offered as part of the Core.
- **Question:** P. Martin asked will this course run in the summer?
- **Answer:** S. Woodson answered that it could run in the summer at some point although it would be difficult to run this course in 6 weeks.
- **Question:** P. Martin asked can a student fail this course?
- **Answer:** S. Woodson answered yes, students can fail the course. B. Dugan added that the assessment structure can be found in the original CIM proposal. This course is primarily written reports and reflections. A. Kerr added that the course is not strictly rubric grading but requires students to be engaged and present through the reflections they submit.
- **Question:** C. Stone asked is there a plan in place in case departments pushback on providing faculty for this course? Will additional course training be provided?
- **Answer:** T. Hogue answered that there have not been any pushbacks from departments. Most feedback from departments includes figuring out capacity so that faculty who want to teach this course can. R. Holz added that there will be a director in place for this course to ensure staffing and oversee course logistics. A stipend will go along with this to possibly provide additional faculty resources such as course training.
- **Question:** S. Vyas asked what is the best way to convey to colleagues the need for teaching this course amongst the conversations about budget issues and limited resources on campus? How can Senators convey that this course is important in the maintenance of student enrollment and recruitment?
- **Answer:** B. Dugan answered at the Global Energy Leaders Summit, conversations with professionals in the Energy sector mentioned that one thing Mines students lack is a broader understanding of where science and engineering fits into a business model and societal framework. When the FUTURES course was mentioned, they were excited about this as the industry is seeking this type of



awareness. R. Holz added that there are possibilities of external funding from the Energy industry and the Foundation to help support this course.

- **Question:** M. Powers asked will HASS215 have prerequisites similar to Global Studies?
- **Answer:** R. Holz answered there will be no prerequisites for HASS215.

MOTION: The motion to approve the HASS215 course was moved by V. Karaivanov and seconded by C. Holles. The motion to approve the HASS215 course was approved unanimously with zero opposition and zero abstentions.

MOTION: The motion to approve the HASS215 course as part of the Core (and replace Global Studies) was moved by J. Spear and seconded by N. Becwar. The motion to approve the HASS215 course as part of the Core was unanimously approved with zero opposition and zero abstentions.

Research Council Updates

Shubham Vyas

The Research Council held their November meeting last Wednesday. The Graduate Dean visited to provide updates on Graduate research accomplishments and challenges. A few unique questions that were brought up included if a student takes medical leave of absence, do we keep track of that student? What if the student does not return? Also, if a student takes medical leave of absence and pays for the Mines student health insurance, are they able to receive care from the Student Health Center while on leave? The Research Council will investigate more about Graduate research and draft a letter of recommendation to the Senate. REI funding has not yet been secured, therefore, there have not been any calls for proposals sent out from the Research Council yet.

CDHE Reduced-Credit Degree Letter

Brandon Dugan

The Reduced-Credit Degree letter was circulated to the Senate for review. The letter states that degrees under 120 credits should not be called bachelor's degrees but something different. These degrees would not be considered a bachelor's degree or an associate degree but something in between. The Senate will vote to endorse the letter as written and can provide additional input on behalf of the Colorado School of Mines. A. Herring added that there was a meeting with the CDHE Academic Council (meets on the second Tuesday of every month) about the reduced-credit degree. This was brought up to address the issue of higher education enrollment dropping to recognize credentials that are less than 4 years. HLC is pushing legislation to write this. All council members agreed that it should not be considered a bachelor's degree or associate degree, but it is needed to give students an additional year of instruction beyond an associate degree. There are some vocations such as nursing and dental hygiene where there is significant ROI in providing the reduced-credit degree. B. Dugan added that so far, UNC, CU Denver, Adams State, Colorado Mesa, CU Boulder have endorsed this.

- **Question:** P. Martin asked, is there anything about a reduced-credit degree happening nationally?
- **Answer:** B. Dugan answered that there a few states like Georgia that are also pushing to offer a reduced-credit degree as well.

MOTION: The motion to approve/endorse CDHE Reduced-Credit Degree letter was moved by P. Martin and seconded by C. Stone. The motion to approve/endorse CDHE Reduced-Credit Degree letter was unanimously approved with zero opposition and zero abstentions.



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3:20 pm

Adjourn – Regular Meeting

Brandon Dugan

Next meeting: November 26, 2024 in the Guggenheim Boardroom. Please send agenda items faculty_senate@mines.edu 1 week prior.



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