

## Colorado School of Mines – RESEARCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

December 11, 2:30 – 4:00 pm, Hill Hall 300

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### Attendees:

**Voting Members:** 18 total (10 - majority needed for quorum). Quorum was present

P	Shubham Vyas (Chair)	P	Mike Wakin (EE)		Elizabeth Reddy (EDS)
P	Samy Wu Fung (AMS)		Emmanuel De Moor (MME)		Eric Toberer (PH)
P	Diego Gomez-Gualdron (CBE)		Mark Deinert (ME)		James Simmons (GP)
P	Annalise Maughan (CH)	P	Patricia Andersen (LB)		Xhexuan Gong (PH)
P	Timm Strathmann (CEE)	P	Erdal Ozkan (PE)		
P	Maxwell Brown (EB)	P	Nicole Smith (MN)		
	Hussein Amery (HASS)	P	Eric Roberts (GE)		

### Other Regular Attendees and Guests

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

Special Guest(s):

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### Welcome and Senate Update

Shubham Vyas

Update on letter from Faculty Senate regarding healthcare premiums. S. Vyas asked for comments/feedback from representatives and departments. Premium numbers have not been provided yet but an estimate of 10% has been shared (locked in for 3 years starting in 2026). Senate discussed in their last meeting that there is frustration as there seems to be a lack of collaboration with faculty. Therefore, the Senate is working on drafting an additional letter that is more strongly worded to PCJ and the Board of Trustees only due to concerns of cost risk, benchmark for salaries, and overall lack of response. Senate is also set to meet with the Board of Trustees at their February meeting and PCJ to identify efficiencies to reallocate resources to hopefully avoid the healthcare premiums.

- **Comment:** D. Gomez-Gualdron added that there were concerns from colleagues/departments about what premium options there would be or if there could possibly be a standard cost for all faculty.
- **Comment:** S. Vyas added that currently, the proposed premiums would have four options – employee, employee + spouse, employee + kids, employees + spouse + kids. A big concern is whether premiums will increase every year and how much.
- **Question:** A. Maughan asked, was the issue of the lack of salary raises this year addressed in addition to adding healthcare premiums?
- **Answer:** S. Vyas answered that the Faculty Senate pointed out this as an inefficiency as well as that Mines is paying for over 80 software applications to maintain systems campus-wide (ex. Workday) and increasing the number of staff. Additionally, the Faculty Senate has pushed for salary information to be made available publicly online.
- **Question:** P. Andersen asked, has administration investigated changing insurance providers that may provide cheaper options?

- **Answer:** This was brought up in an earlier meeting. Mines has utilized insurance benefit consultants to help find the best plans. So far, Anthem has been the better option with maintaining benefits at a lower cost.
- **Comment:** E. Ozkan added that this issue should not be at the point of negotiating cost/percentage or provider but instead faculty should say no, this will not work.
- **Comment:** S. Vyas added that the Faculty Senate is pushing to not negotiate costs but instead find ways to reallocate resources so that premiums can continue to be covered for faculty and administrative faculty. Also, the Senate has asked the Foundation if alumni and donors can donate to faculty/staff welfare as this is not currently an option.
- **Question:** N. Smith asked, what happened to the \$500M raised from Mines@150?
- **Answer:** S. Vyas answered that a lot of that money came over the extended period from the past several years toward the Beck Venture Center and Labriola Innovation Hub as well as student services and financial aid.

D. Mehta (Board of Trustee faculty trustee) provided a list of faculty members who left (resigned or retired) last year which was shared with the Research Council.

#### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

Shubham Vyas

**MOTION:** The motion to approve the previous meeting minutes was moved by T. Strathmann and seconded by N. Smith. The motion to approve the previous meeting minutes was unanimously approved with zero opposition and zero abstentions.

#### **Research Council Subcommittees**

Shubham Vyas

##### Excellence in Research Awards

- James Simmons
- Emmanuel De Moor
- Annalise Maughan
- S. Vyas
- T. Strathmann
- E. Toberer?

REI – deans and RTT have been contacted to secure funds for REI awards. B. Dugan has also been looped in. More details to come.

- Eric Roberts
- James Simmons
- Maxwell Brown (?)
- M. Deinert (?)

Research Fusion – what funding is needed? What responsibilities are needed? S. Vyas requested that anyone who served last year provide information.

Research Fusion is typically held in the Spring semester only. RC will reach out for volunteers. It is typically held around lunch time in the Student Center Ballrooms. People were encouraged to give a 5-minute talk on their research. The main challenge RC experienced last year was recruiting. Would it be helpful to have the DH Council provide volunteers for this event? Consensus was yes, this would be helpful. The research lecture series also occurred in the spring. This is usually the previous year's excellence in research awards winners (junior and senior). Both events served food. S. Vyas will contact RTT about the events and funding. Funding will most likely come from Senate.

- D. Gomez-Gualdron
- M. Wakin
- S. Wu Fung
- H. Amery
- E. Ozkan (?)

Memo Committee – this committee will review approved meeting minutes from the AY24-25 council years to draft recommendations to Faculty Senate.

- J. Simmons
- N. Smith
- P. Andersen

#### **Priorities and Planning for 2024-2025**

Shubham Vyas

UG and GR research representatives have presented to the Research Council this semester. Are there others we want to invite to RC such as HPC or RTT? It would be good to have RTT and/or Administration visit to discuss what the future of research is at Mines.

- **Comment:** T. Strathmann added that it would be good to get a visit from ORA to get more established contact information and clarity on the Pre-Award vs. Post-Award teams.

There is now an established benefit pool in Workday for post-docs to report PTO. Post-doc salary will come out of grant, but fringe and overhead will come out of the benefit pool. This has not yet been confirmed, but more details to come.