

COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES
FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
January 27, 2009 - 2:00pm
Hill Hall Room 300

ATTENDEES: Collins, Davis, Drewes, Jesudason, McKinnon, Sacks, Steele, Voorhees

APOLOGIES: Dorgan, Ganesh, Hitzman, Martins, Petr

GUESTS: Andrew Aschenbrenner – President, Sigma Lamda
Tom Boyd – Dean, Graduate Studies
James McNeil – Professor, Physics
Rambert Nahm – Representative, ASCSM
Chester VanTyne – Professor, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering

McKinnon, Senate President, called the meeting to order and welcomed the guests.

COMMENTS FROM GUESTS:

- A. Aschenbrenner – Aschenbrenner discussed the upcoming Safe Zone training available on campus. (See New Business, Section F)
- B. Boyd – Boyd reported that the Governor has increased budget rescissions to the school but that the loss can be covered by increases in enrollment, especially non-resident enrollment. The Governor will be on campus today to discuss next year's budget, and more cuts are expected and it is possible that faculty hires will be affected. It was decided that the Senate would inform Guggenheim that there is concern regarding conducting interviews for new hires that may not be funded and that perhaps new hires should be prioritized.
- C. McNeil – McNeil gave a presentation regarding the upcoming changes to the Energy Minor. (See New Business, Section C)
- D. Nahm – Nahm reported that David Lee with Academic Computing and Networking met with ASCSM to discuss the possible outsourcing of undergraduate email traffic to Gmail. There are issues regarding the legality of such action and Nahm will keep the Senate posted on new developments.
- E. VanTyne – VanTyne reported on the plus/minus grading system. (See Old Business, Section B)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Several copies of previous minutes need to be approved. These minutes will be marked on the blackboard site for the Senators to review.

OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Volk Gymnasium – Several faculty members have requested additional access to Volk Gymnasium but Tom Spicer has warned that increased access has associated liability issues as well as extra costs. The Senate decided that Davis would contact Spicer requesting the official policy of off-hour use and liability issues.
- B. Plus/minus Grading System – The Undergraduate Council has worked for some time to create a plus/minus grading system to be implemented for undergraduates. The Senate was prepared to approve this proposal at the last meeting, but many undergraduate students attended the meeting and expressed their displeasure at not feeling as though they were properly informed or consulted regarding this major policy change. Therefore, the proposal was tabled and an ad-hoc committee was formed consisting of students, the registrar, and faculty members to resolve the issue. A system will likely be put into place

soon, but compromises ensuring that the policy is grandfathered in and the possibility of including an A+ grade are still being discussed. (The original arguments can be found in the minutes of the November 25, 2008 meeting)

VanTyne reported that the original policy submitted to the Senate was acceptable and would have many benefits. Although students might not approve of it now, in the long-term it addresses several issues. The new policy would allow for the undergraduate and graduate grading systems to be consistent with one another as well as the majority of peer institutions. It is his opinion that the Senate approves the original proposal. Regarding the possibility of the compromises, he stated that grandfathering in the change could have issues for administrative personnel and that an A+ grade is unnecessary, especially with the recent decision to allow students to repeat courses and only receiving the later grade.

The ad-hoc committee will meet Friday at 2:00 PM to further discuss this issue and report back to the Senate at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Pets on Campus – The Senate acknowledges that they have reviewed the new policy. ([ATTACHMENT A](#))
- B. Dick Lamm Lecture – The next Forum will be on March 2nd.
- C. Energy Minor – McNeil gave a presentation regarding the upcoming changes to the Energy Minor. The current minor has prerequisite requirements that are unrealistic and the program will be altered to make it a more viable degree. The new minor will require 18 credits from several trees related to energy. Most of the courses already have instructors that have committed and the minor should be offered by the Spring 2010 semester. The program will also have a director, and advisory board, and a faculty curriculum committee.
- D. Class Work Make-up Policy – Davis submitted a revised policy ([ATTACHMENT B](#)). The new policy will be posted in the procedures manual after approval at the February meeting.
- E. Professional Consulting Policy at CSM – This issue currently is unresolved and further work needs to be done regarding this policy. ([ATTACHMENT C](#))
- F. Safe Zone – Aschenbrenner discussed the upcoming Safe Zone training available on campus. The program is an educational event regarding sexual diversity on campus. It also involves marking specific areas as official “Safe Zones” where anyone can feel safe and discrimination of any type is not tolerated. McKinnon will email an announcement regarding the training to faculty members.
- G. Health Coverage During Transitional – Was not discussed due to time constraints.
- H. Teaching Productivity Metrics – Was not discussed due to time constraints.
- I. Change in Senators – John Steele and Jorg Drewes will be replacing Mooney and Figueroa, respectively, as they have conflicting obligations.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- A. Undergraduate Council – Jesudason reported that he has a scheduling conflict with the council’s regular meeting time. It was decided to ask Sacks to serve in his place, and if Sacks cannot then a call will go out to the other Senators for a replacement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- A. The next Senate meeting will tentatively take place on February 10, 2009 in Hill Hall room 300.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

ATTACHMENT A

Policy Regarding Pets on Campus

1.0 BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Colorado School of Mines is committed to providing a safe learning, working and living environment for its students, faculty, staff and visitors. As part of this commitment, the presence of animals on campus must be carefully considered, balancing the needs of all members of the campus community. While many are comfortable around pets, others are not. Some individuals are fearful of large animals or certain kinds of animals, others are allergic to a variety of animal or pet associated substances, and others may have illnesses or conditions that are intensified or aggravated by the presence, or past presence, of animals. Animals may also present maintenance and facilities management challenges for the campus community if reasonable care is not taken to ensure the animals do not create unclean or unsanitary conditions.

2.0 POLICY

Animals shall not be permitted in Colorado School of Mines student residential, administrative, service, academic, and research buildings or facilities, including classrooms, faculty and staff offices, libraries, laboratories, residence halls, food service areas, playing fields, and public access areas ("Facilities"), unless necessary and required for authorized teaching, public service or research activities of the School, or to aid persons with disabilities, or as otherwise specifically authorized by the School. In order to promote the safety of persons on campus, and to help assure the well being of animals that are authorized to be in campus facilities, the presence of these animals must be registered with the Department of Public Safety **IN ADVANCE** of the animal's presence on campus.

3.0 PROCEDURE

3.1 As a general rule, pets are not permitted in Colorado School of Mines facilities except:

- Animals used in approved teaching, research, and clinical activities
- Assistive animals for persons with disabilities, or those being trained for such a purpose
- Police dogs on duty

3.2 For the safety of both humans and animals, pets are prohibited from kitchens, laboratories, workshops or other areas housing hazardous materials or machinery.

3.2 Except for trained service dogs and fish and turtles under the conditions specified in Paragraph 3.3 below, no pets or animals may be brought into the student residence facilities.

3.3 Aquariums no larger than 30 gallons containing fish or turtles are permitted. However, these must be maintained in a clean and sanitary manner.

3.4 Any animal brought to the campus grounds must be under the close control of the owner. The City of Golden has a strict leash law. Dogs must be on a hand-held leash at all times or the owner may be ticketed.

3.5 Service animals present in campus facilities on a recurring or continuous basis must be registered with the Department of Public Safety or, in the case of student residence facilities, registered with the Department of Student Housing.

ATTACHMENT B

The Class Work Make-up Policy at CSM

Interpretations offered by the Faculty Oversight Committee on Sports and Athletics on

Nov. 4, 2008 and revised Jan. 20, 2009.

The Bulletin states that students (not just student-athletes) who miss class activities while representing the institution will be allowed the opportunity to make up the work. As the Senate has noted, this statement is vague and subject to alternative interpretations and implementations. The intent of the policy is very clear, however, as it emphasizes the importance of extracurricular activities to the overall educational experience of CSM students.

There are no formal guidelines for implementing the make-up policy. Accordingly, the FOCSA offers the following interpretations of the policy that are based on involvement with it over the past 10-15 years.

- 1) The intent of the policy, as the FOCSA interprets it, is to give students who have excused absences the opportunity to complete missed assignments **without penalty**. A penalty in this context would arise when the student loses a grading opportunity that wasn't lost by all students in the class. As examples, requiring that the student take no grade for a missed assignment would be unfair because it results in greater weighting of other assignments in the final grade determination; or requiring that a

student use an optional drop for a missed exam would unfairly penalize the student because of the lost opportunity to personally select the optional drop. Of course, the student could opt to use the optional drop in lieu of making up a missed assignment.

- 2) Student-athletes are expected (by their coaches and the athletics program) to notify their professors of scheduled missed class absences on the first day of class or the first day the student enters class. This is an essential component of the make-up policy, in the opinion of the FOCSA, as it allows a process for making up missed work to be developed in advance of the absence and it emphasizes the shared responsibilities of both the student and the professor. Failure of the student to alert the professor in advance could, arguably, be grounds for disallowing make-up work as it unfairly penalizes the professor. In the case of non-scheduled athletic events, including competitions that are rescheduled due to inclement weather and some post-season play-off and championship competitions that may coincide with end of semester activities, the FOCSA recommends that the AD anticipate the potential for missed classes and notify faculty at the earliest reasonable time of these possible conflicts.
- 3) The FOCSA does not interpret the policy as obligating the professor to deliver a personal lecture covering missed material. The professor should, however, provide the student with missed hand-outs and be disposed (e.g., during office hours) to answer questions regarding the missed lecture material. An approach to reconciling a student missing lecture material due to an excused absence would be to have the student arrange in advance for a classmate to take and share notes from the missed lecture. If, after this has been done, the student has questions, then it would be the student's responsibility to seek out the information during scheduled office hours.
- 4) The mechanics of making up missed work should be agreed upon prior to the absence. As in other matters pertaining to class work requirements and deadlines, the instructor has discretion in determining how and when the missed work will be made up. A number of options are available, including, for example, coaches administering exams during the campus absence. Unfortunately, the FOCSA has become aware of make-up arrangements that could be construed as punitive (e.g., taking an hour exam at 6 AM prior to team travel). Hopefully, this type of make-up activity would be a last alternative.
- 5) The matter of a student-athlete missing a class activity where attendance is required (e.g., a team presentation to a client) may cause some ambiguity with respect to make-up. In a scenario where the student-athlete has conflicting obligations (e.g., to a class and as a representative of the school on an intercollegiate team), forcing the student to make a difficult decision is unfair to the student and all parties should work to find an acceptable solution to the conflict. No single approach may satisfy the requirements or the parties involved. In those rare cases, the student-athlete should work in concert with the faculty and coaches to understand the consequences of her or his decision. The FOCSA is also available to advise about various options the student-athlete has. These rare opportunities provide faculty, coaches, and advisors with an opportunity to serve as role models by supporting the student-athlete through these difficult decisions that may also arise in his or her personal and

professional lives. This scenario is, perhaps, a good example of the need for faculty and coaches to embrace the bigger picture of the academic experience.

- 6) There are two mechanisms currently in place for resolving disputes concerning implementation of the absenteeism policy. The first is an informal approach intended to defuse situations prior to their becoming contentious issues. This approach involves the Compliance Coordinator for the Athletics Program and, if necessary, the CSM Faculty Athletics Representative contacting the parties involved in the dispute and facilitating an understanding of the absenteeism policy. The second mechanism is the formal grade appeal process that is presented in the Undergraduate Bulletin. The first mechanism has worked effectively in the past and formal grade appeals have been unnecessary. With the forthcoming clarifications to the absenteeism policy the informal approach to conflict resolution should remain equally effective.

ATTACHMENT C

Proposed Change to Faculty Handbook Section 6.4.1, “Categories of External Work and Activities Subject to This Policy,” item A, “Professional Consulting.”

Background

Over time, faculty have expressed some confusion and concern over the above *Handbook* section that specifies: “Professional consulting is the provision of professional advice or services to external constituents with *or without* remuneration,” [Emphasis Added], and further noting, “Employees must disclose and obtain institutional approval of any professional consulting pursuant to the procedure outlined in Section 6.4.3 below.”

Most recently, Professor John Dorgan has pointed to the lack of clarity in the existing language regarding non-remunerated advice or services, observing that it is a normal part of a faculty member’s professional, academic responsibilities to be responsive to a range of queries from academic and professional colleagues and from the community at large.

In the extreme, this lack of clarity in defining what precise circumstances necessitates a formal approval process before a faculty member may respond to the public’s questions or provide advice, could dampen faculty willingness to provide such helpful advice/services to citizen-taxpayers of Colorado or elsewhere in the U.S., as well as to others in the international community. As such, this could interfere with normal expectations of a faculty member’s engagement in community service or even with their academic freedom. Additionally, in the absence of clearer language, it is possible, if not likely, that faculty will simply ignore the “or without remuneration” provision of this section.

In his correspondence about this issue, Professor Dorgan has distinguished between the provision of non-remunerative advice/services that are non-confidential vs. advice/services that are confidential, noting that the provision of confidential advice/services is different in kind than non-confidential advice/services, and observing that the former often is a precursor to remunerative services by a faculty member.

Proposed Modification to Section 6.4.3 A

Professor Dorgan has thus offered the following suggested definitional language modification to **Section 6.4.3 A**, which is herewith submitted for consideration by the Handbook Committee:

"Professional consulting is the provision of professional advice or services to external constituents with or without remuneration. It excludes unpaid, non-confidential, communications conducted in the normal course of performing research and teaching as a faculty member."

(The Committee should perhaps consider whether or not the word "information" needs to be included along with "advice" and "services".)

"Professional consulting" as so defined would set in motion the need to secure the required approvals. Other communications would not require such approvals.