

Lincoln D. Carr, Ph.D.
Professor, Humboldt Fellow, Honors Faculty Fellow
Department of Physics

Email: lcarr@mines.edu
Web: <http://inside.mines.edu/~lcarr>
Phone: 1 – 303 – 273 – 3759
Fax: 1 – 303 – 273 – 3919



GOLDEN, CO 80401-1887 USA

To: Dr. Terence Parker, Provost and Executive VP
Dr. Thomas Boyd, Associate Provost
Ms. Debra Lasich, Associate VP for Diversity and Inclusion
Mr. Michael Dougherty, Associate VP for Human Resources
Cc: Dr. M. W. Scoggins, President
From: CSM Faculty Senate
About: Civil Rights, Campus Diversity, and Celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Date: April 23, 2014

The Faculty Senate proposes that the Colorado School of Mines incorporate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (MLK Day) into the academic schedule on its appropriate day of celebration in January. The primary reason we ask for this change is to set up an appropriate tone on campus with respect to diversity. We feel that CSM has made tremendous strides in diversity over the last decade, for instance as part of the President's diversity initiative. Now is the time to take the next step.

Celebrations are important for what is expressed and shared, and serve to socialize our students to important events. The history of race relations in this country makes MLK Day important, and in this era, and in parallel with our desire to further increase diversity at Mines as part of the Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Trustees last year, we need to consider the symbolism associated with not giving students the day to reflect on civil rights. As noted in Bolman and Deal (2013), creating "symbolic frames" in organizations are what infuse an institution with its soul, build shared meaning and vision among members, and provide a strong culture that honors important traditions. Not recognizing and fully celebrating MLK Day at Mines sends a poor message to our students – that the day's celebration of racial equality and civil rights is not all that important, but merely a "day off work" that can be moved to the Thanksgiving break without much fanfare and some small celebrations held on campus in its stead (such as the MLK Day breakfast). By not fully celebrating MLK Day as other schools do, we implicitly tell minorities and those external to the university that Mines does not in fact value the inclusivity heralded in the Strategic Plan, in contrast to our direct competitors both in and out of state.

All Southern universities explored as part of our research in preparation for this Memo (including U. Arkansas, Mississippi State, Georgia Tech, and U. South Carolina) celebrate MLK Day. Currently, the University of Colorado (http://hr.colorado.edu/pages/holiday_schedule.aspx) and Colorado State (<http://www.hrs.colostate.edu/benefits/holiday.html>) systems also offer this holiday (they offer MLK plus other holidays in lieu of the week between Christmas and New Year's). We understand that from an energy perspective, it likely is cost effective for the university to be closed during the week of Christmas to New Year's, a value we share. That said, other universities (like Cornell, for example: https://hr.cornell.edu/policies/all/staff_holidays.html) manage to observe Labor Day, MLK Day, the day after Thanksgiving, and a long Christmas holiday. We hope CSM should be able to follow these examples as well. As an added benefit, this day of celebration will also make it easier on families (thereby supporting diversity) since MLK Day is a holiday in the Jefferson



County school system (<http://www.jeffcopublicschools.org/calendar/2013%202014%20Family%20Calendar%20Revised%20April%2030%202013.pdf>), which means students, faculty and staff must find day care if both spouses are working or if one is a single parent. The burden on mothers of young children (both students and faculty) can be particularly severe, which further impacts diversity at Mines.

We would like to propose that Mines make MLK Day a holiday on the academic calendar at its intended location—to celebrate the true meaning of this day. MLK Day should be a day of service where our students are encouraged to look beyond the walls of the Colorado School of Mines. As Martin Luther King Jr. himself said while a student at Morehouse College: “We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.”

Reference: Bolman, L. G., & Deal, T. E. (2013). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership*. John Wiley & Sons.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lincoln Carr", written in a cursive style.

Lincoln Carr, Physics (Faculty Senate President)
Joel Bach, Mechanical Engineering
Bernard Bialecki, Applied Mathematics and Statistics
Gerald Bourne, Metallurgical and Materials Engineering
Uwe Greife, Physics
Dan Knauss, Chemistry and Geochemistry
Thomas Monecke, Geology & Geological Engineering
Ken Osgood, Liberal Arts and International Studies, McBride
Steve Pankavich, Applied Mathematics and Statistics
Kamini Singha, Hydrologic Science and Engineering
John Spear, Civil & Environmental Engineering
Kim Williams, Chemistry & Geochemistry
Ray Zhang, Civil & Environmental Engineering