

COMMITTEE ON FACULTY GOVERNANCE

Annual Report for July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

Members for 2024-2025:

Agricultural Sciences: Sastry Jayanty
Health and Human Sciences: Brett Brown, Vice-Chair
Business: Gina Slejko
Engineering: Steven Reising, Chair
Liberal Arts: Marcela Velasco
Natural Resources: Sarah Hart
Natural Sciences: Anne Cleary
Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences: Claudia Gentry-Weeks
University Libraries: Michelle Wilde

The Committee on Faculty Governance met on Zoom on the following dates: 9/6/24, 9/20/24, 10/4/24, 10/25/24, 11/8/24, 12/6/24, 2/14/25, 2/28/25, 3/28/25, 4/18/25 and 5/2/25. During the first meeting of the academic year, the charge of the committee was discussed in detail. In addition to these committee meetings, the CoFG Chair met one-on-one with the Faculty Council Chair to discuss pertinent issues. The CoFG Chair attended most of the monthly Standing Committee Chairs Meetings led by the Faculty Council Chair. During the Standing Committee Chairs Meeting on 11/21/24, the CoFG Chair presented “Procedures for Replacement and Temporary Replacement of Faculty Council Standing Committee Members” to remind the other Standing Committee Chairs of the proper procedures for this, including for sabbatical and other leaves. The CoFG Chair attended the Executive Committee Meeting on 4/22/25 to present a Code change motion to be added to the Faculty Council Meeting agenda, as well as ballots for Faculty Representatives to Standing Committees and to the University Benefits Committee. The committee also conducted a great deal of business through e-mail discussions and votes on nominations. At the last meeting of the academic year, CoFG elected Steven Reising (COE) as the Chair, and Brett Brown (CHHS) as the Vice-Chair, of CoFG for the 2025-2026 academic year.

The following Code change was considered by CoFG, and was approved by Faculty Council in May:

- Changes to Section C.2.3.1 of the Manual in subsection d. College of Engineering: (1) to add the Systems Engineering Department, and (2) to change the Chemical and Biological Engineering Department to the new School of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering. First, on adding the Department of Systems Engineering, this department was officially formed in the College of Engineering back in 2019. It was an oversight that this department was not added to this section of the Code at that time. Second, on the formation of the School of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering, the School of Biomedical Engineering (SBME) became a CIOSU in 2007 and then converted to a Special Academic Unit (SAU) in 2014. The Department of Chemical and Biological Engineering (CBE) is an academic department dating back to the 1970s. It began as Agricultural and Chemical Engineering, adopting its current name in the early 2000s. Both units have always had significant overlap in students, faculty, and academic engineering excellence. For example, almost all of the current CBE tenured/tenure-track faculty have appointments in SBME.

WSCOE has proposed merging the SBME SAU and CBE academic department into a single new academic department called the School of Biomedical and Chemical Engineering (SBCE) to be administratively housed within WSCOE. The existing Department of CBE and the existing SBME SAU, both currently administratively housed within WSCOE, will be merged in the summer period between AY25 and AY26, including faculty, staff, and academic programs. There will not be any changes to the academic programs. The current budgets will be combined in the new department. Additional faculty are identified from other departments who are prepared to transition via MOU to the new School. There are >21 tenured/tenure-track faculty who will have their academic home in the new School, with ~5 to 10 additional CCAF. Faculty currently affiliated with the existing SBME will have the option to be affiliated with the new SBCE department (e.g., courtesy faculty appointments).

Both CBE and BME offer undergraduate and graduate degree programs. There are currently 200 undergraduates in the CBE major and 334 undergraduates in the BME major (all with required double major). The SBME program currently includes a total of 63 graduate students (36 MS, 27 PhD) and CBE has 23 graduate students (12 MS, 11 PhD).

Biomedical engineering departments maintain a specific mindset and diverse culture that differs from other disciplines in engineering, with a focus on human health and well-being. Therefore, values around research and teaching differ greatly, and correspondingly tenure and promotion expectations can differ from other engineering disciplines. Currently, as an SAU, SBME has no ability to hire tenured/tenure-track faculty, making it challenging to develop strategic directions. It has also limited our institutional competitiveness. For example, there has been a decline in student enrollment in BME since CU Boulder launched a Biomedical Engineering Program. It has limited our ability to systematically evaluate and update our curriculum to best support student success (for example, the current BME degree is a five-year additional major while many students have expressed interest in a standalone four-year degree). It has limited our ability to offer courses, including a robust Master's program. It has impacted our ability to recruit and retain biomedical engineering focused faculty. It has limited the growth and impact of biomedical engineering focused research. While biomedical engineering has grown significantly as a discipline worldwide, CSU has begun falling behind other institutions. A challenge associated with CBE is the strain on the small faculty, resulting in diminished national rankings due to constraints on teaching and research efforts and an overload in service. The combined SBME and CBE teams along with additional faculty via Dean invitation has a synergistic advantage to enhance student success, teaching effectiveness, research impact, and efficiency of resource utilization.

The process to evaluate and then develop an implementation plan for a proposed new department was conducted by two sequential ad hoc committees created by the WSCOE Dean's Office. The committees consisted of faculty and staff from across the university, including WSCOE, CNS, and CVMBS; multiple briefings from the dean to the WSCOE Executive Committee, CBE department, BME staff, and the Provost; and discussion with SBME Executive committee comprised of the deans who oversee the SAU. The WSCOE dean also conducted over 35 1:1 meetings with faculty from chemical and biological, mechanical, electrical and computer, clinical sciences, biomedical sciences, chemistry, MIP, and

mathematics.

The first committee reviewed the status of biomedical engineering at CSU and recommended the realignment of CBE into a new department with SBME and to include other faculty from across the college and university. Following this recommendation, the WSCOE dean gauged interest from faculty across the three colleges on their likelihood to move to this new department with over 90% expressing intention to change their home department. Based on this overwhelmingly positive response, the dean charged a second committee to lay the groundwork to create a new department to launch on July 1, 2025. This committee has drafted a department code, a policies and procedures handbook, new organizational chart, advisory board guidelines, and a transition document as well as other documents needed for a smooth transition for faculty and staff. No resources are needed from the University to support this merger.

CoFG took the following actions regarding elections:

- Conducted annual apportionment based on faculty counts in each College and the Libraries to determine changes in numbers of at-large representatives to be implemented during annual elections.
- Collected nominations and conducted elections for departmental and at-large representatives to Faculty Council.
- Collected nominations and conducted elections for members of Executive Committee.
- Made nominations and conducted elections for Faculty Council officers at the March meeting of Faculty Council.
- Made nominations for representatives of all Colleges and the Libraries to serve on Faculty Council Standing Committees.
- Made nominations for faculty representatives to serve on the University Benefits Committee.
- Made nominations for faculty representatives to serve on the University Policy Review Committee.
- Made nominations and conducted elections for members of the Faculty Grievance Panel.
- Appointed substitutes for temporary vacancies on Faculty Council and its Standing Committees.