

**Department of Earth and Space
Sciences Meeting of the Faculty
Friday, 11/14/25, 2:30 pm in JHN 026**

OPEN Minutes

[Attendance: Buick, Catling, Christianson, Condit, Crider, Denolle, Duvall, Fudge, Gorman-Lewis, Huntington, Koutnik, Krissansen-Totton, Lipovsky, Mehra, Muth, Roe, Schmidt, Teng, Tobin, Waddington, Winebrenner; Bernard-Kingsley, Caton, Dakins, Manos, Lindquist, Jensen]

Call to Order - Open Session (2:30 PM)

Announcements

- ESS alumna (PhD 2019) Julia Kelsen recipient of the GSA Donath Award.
- Best wishes to Grad students, including most if not all of the first years, who have submitted their GRFP applications.

Standing Committees Announcements

Graduate Program (Teng) - Update (10 min)

- The UW Graduate School has recently outlined five degree pathways of PhD students through graduate programs. Of these pathways, the grad school now provides a new pathway, termed an **Accelerated MS**, where a student may elect to exit the PhD program due to a change in funding/research landscape that prevents the completion of their intended path. The purpose of articulating these five pathways is to ensure all programs across campus use the same process/wording.
- Grad School will meet with department Chairs and GPCs in Dec to discuss. Then they plan to modify the Graduate Student Handbook.

Admissions (Gorman-Lewis) - Update (2 min)

- No information regarding funding guarantees in graduate student offers for next academic year. Assume that the College will require language for a one-year commitment in letters of grad admission, though they haven't confirmed.
- Instructions for grad admissions will be sent in the coming weeks. Encourage Zoom meetings with prospective students now. Applications close on 12/1. Ensure your recruitment status is updated accordingly. If you're recruiting new grads and haven't entered data on the spreadsheet, contact Noell.

Colloquium (Steig, Caton) - Update Mindlin Lecture (3 min)

- 2025-2026 Mindlin Lecturer - Dr. Chris Glein (Host: Journaux) Principal Scientist at Southwest Research Institute. This year's AGU Carl Sagan Lecturer. Both Dr. Glein and planetary folks are excited about the visit.
- Date: February 25-26, 2026
- Public Lecture on Wed 2/25, 6:30-7:30 pm. Technical Lecture: Thur 2/26, regular colloquium slot. Meetings available Wed-Thur.

Computing (Mehra) - Update (5 min)

- Discussed how future IT support will be funded and organized. To fill the empty IT position, ESS must either raise 1 FTE through fees, or find an external service provider. Current level of classroom IT support remains unchanged.
- **Three areas of support to maintain:** (1) Research computing (continued/regular hardware and software support for servers and workstations), (2) group member support (i.e. new grads and other community members), and (3) one-off projects (specialized hardware and software support that does not repeat)
- **Two possible models:** (1) Charging per-server, per-user, and per-hour rates to fund 1 FTE and keep support within ESS; (2) Offloading support services to an external provider (i.e., ATMOS)
 - It is hard to quantify how many hours each workstation actually requires.
 - Atmos already has billing infrastructure and predictable upfront pricing. Atmos IT believes they have the capacity. Depending on how many people join Atmos for support, rates may go down. Some Atmos faculty have commented that the IT support is expensive.
 - Current ATMOS IT rates: ~\$17/month to maintain 1 workstation; \$44/month for users. Within \$200-\$300 per user or workstation a year. \$102 hourly rate on special projects.
- Either model requires us to start paying fees for many IT services. The Computing Committee is seeking a solution that will only charge you or your group if you receive IT support. Fees to be both transparent and predictable. The committee is confident that it can find reasonable fees (that are transparent, predictable, and capped at a set max cost per user per year) if kept in house.
- **Committee needs to know how many people will participate** – they may contact you to get details about your computing needs. **If you anticipate wanting/needing IT support or you would like more information, please reach out (Akshay, Bob H., and Henry) ASAP.**
- Possible to try the Atmos model and change our mind, moving support back in house. It may not be as easy to join the Atmos system later. Atmos has infrastructure and is able to help now, while in-house support will take longer to establish and get up and running.

Curriculum (Denolle) - Update (5 min)

- DOJ deadline on digital accessibility April 2026. All digital academic course content (e.g., Canvas materials, slides, documents) to meet accessibility guidelines. Initial 80% compliance – number will increase over time.
 - Remove outdated or unused materials; use accessible document formats; provide alt text for images; use accessible slide design; caption videos and lectures; structure content accessible in Canvas; use built-in accessibility checkers (Ally Course Accessibility Report, TidyUP)
 - For **slides**: alt text to images, reading-order within the slide specified, slide titles specified and distinct. **Word/Google/Pages docs**: heading structure is in place. **PDFs**: text can be read by a screen reader.
- **Resources**: [Making Course Materials Accessible, key points and recommendations](#); [Canvas accessibility, best practices for creating accessible content](#); [Making Course Materials Accessible](#) page on [Teaching@UW](#)
- **Get Help**: [UWIT Accessible Technology](#), submit Accessibility Consulting Request form (mostly answering questions, providing resources); Digital Document Remediation (will remediate a limited number of digital documents without charge, could be helpful as example).
- Undergraduate Course updates are advancing, which are required to install the new undergrad curriculum. **Next step** is to clean up pre-reqs given that course numbers have changed.
- Committee goals for 2025-2206 include: Finalizing undergrad and grad course catalog clean up; Supporting faculty transition to accessible materials; Explore new model for ESS 594.

Executive (Schmidt) – Met earlier this week to discuss various things happening in Dept and University.

Faculty Senate (Walters) - Update (5 - 10 min)

- Summarized the Faculty Legislative Priorities. (1) State funding for UW; (2) support faculty (salaries); (3) defend intellectual freedom; (4) medicaid support.
- OAP is now the Office of Academic Personnel and Faculty (APF). More direct pathways to resources, development, and policy support.
- Legislation: In 2021, faculty code was inadvertently amended to apply hierarchy to P&T council (voting). This can cause difficulty. Proposed legislation reverses this change, allowing the school or college to choose whether to apply hierarchy in P&T council. Also allows each faculty member to vote only once: at faculty-wide level or in council.

GeoClub (Stone)

- Alison and David met with GeoClub leadership to discuss plans and funding.

Inclusive Excellence (Tobin)

- Meeting on Friday 11/21 to address immediate compliance matters (e.g., DEI statement, DLS policy). Will coordinate with the policy committee where appropriate. Reach out with any support requests.

Policy (Montgomery)

- The committee is simplifying the peer teaching evaluation process. They are updating the evaluation template to include language from the revised faculty code on effective teaching as part of the evaluation. A proposal will be ready for the December faculty meeting. Suggestions are welcome.

Scholarships and Awards (Montgomery, Gorman-Lewis) - Update (2 min)

- Currently revising application forms; announcements on applications and deadlines will be sent in early Dec. An info session is planned for early Winter Quarter.
- Committee will consider adding a checkbox for good academic standing on application forms. See grad and University policies on academic standing.

Business

N/A

Adjourn to Executive Session (3:37 PM)