

**University of Denver**  
**Faculty Senate**  
**Minutes**  
**May 13, 2016**  
**Room 190, Chambers Center**

**Senators (or proxies) present:**

Shawn Alfrey (proxy for Paul Kosempel), Tess Bruce (also proxy for Scott Johns), Victor Castellani, Kate Crowe, Terri Davis, Jared Del Rosso, Claude d'Estrée, Jennifer Greenfield (also proxy for Julianne Mitchell), Darrin Hicks (proxy for Josh Hanan), Annabeth Headrick, John Hill, Arthur Jones, Megan Kelly (also proxy for Fred Cheever), Michelle Kruse-Crocker, Rick Leaman, Keith Miller (also proxy for Nancy Sampson [herself a proxy for Vi Narapareddy]), Pam Miller (proxy for Aimee Reichman-Decker), Ronnie Pavlov, Rebecca Powell, Chip Reichardt (also proxy for Jack Donnelly), Dean Saitta, Mary Stansbury (proxy for Gloria Miller), Mathew Taylor, Ron Throupe, John Tiedemann, Kate Willink, Joshua Wilson

**Call to Order**

Art Jones, Senate President, called the meeting to order at 1:10 and announced that we have a quorum of senators present.

**Review of the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Divestment Committee Draft Resolution**

From 1:10-1:15, Faculty Senators read the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Divestment Committee Draft Resolution.

President Jones then offered a brief review of the resolution and its purpose. He explained that the first three paragraphs are a preamble to the resolutions. Each resolution then tries to address a different component related to DU's response to climate change.

- The first point affirms the Board's and Chancellor's view of how DU should think about its investments by calling for the creation of an ethical advisory panel styled after MIT's.
- The second point simply affirms DU's efforts over the past few years on sustainability and to create a carbon neutral campus.
- The third point recalls a revolving fund from a few years ago that is now defunct; it asks the university to renew its commitment to it.
- The fourth point addresses social justice issues by promoting reinvestment in renewable energy and those workers and their families whose livelihood would be most threatened by the transition to renewable energy.
- The fifth point affirms the interdisciplinary center on climate change that others have been in conversation about.
- Finally, the sixth point affirms DU's commitment to addressing climate change by integrating sustainability into the curriculum. The point, however, goes beyond existing calls for this by highlighting the need to integrate sustainability into the curriculum for *every* student.

After reviewing the six points of the resolution, Jones then noted that the resolution has to be a symbolic gesture; we don't have the resources or knowledge about the endowment to do more. For this reason, the resolution does not center on divestment. Instead, the Ad Hoc Divestment Committee went beyond its charge to affirm broader commitments and recommendations related to climate change. Ultimately, it is up to Faculty Senate to decide if we want to approve the committee's recommendations beyond its narrower charge around divestment.

## **Discussion of Resolution**

Following the review, Jones opened for discussion of the resolution.

Senator Castellani: I have a serious problem with the fourth point. We have people who have flocked to the state [to extract minerals and natural gas] – and now we're going to benefit them and their descendants. And how are these folks going to document this? Why not put our limited resources into communities who need it more?

President Jones: We have this tragedy – folks who have worked in these industries and are victims of something that isn't their fault ... we can come together as a country around this transition [to renewable energy] to support those who have jobs in these field.

Senator Saitta: I'm not entirely sold on divestment. I am sold on investment and reinvesting in these kinds of [clean energy] technology. Other schools have done the same. They've thought about these workers – e.g., coal miners. We talk a lot about the Arapaho and Cheyenne—that we sit on their land. I was looking for something [in the resolution] that would help another kind of descendant community. And I'm interested in another kind of story – that of these workers. And that we continue to think about on whose back we are built.

So I'm not sold on divestment; I don't know the point of it. But I like to think it can help diversify our community. And I think this [fourth point on the resolution] is consistent with the Evans Committee report and the Impact report about working with external communities.

Senator Keith Miller: Going back to Victor's point – this is not about a descendant community. Youth are choosing to work in fracking jobs because of pay (\$60-75K). It's not necessarily historic phenomena – it's a contemporary phenomenon.

President Jones: As a process issue – we can vote on each individual resolution. It's not an up and down vote.

Senator Crowe: I like the emphasis on reinvestment. And I have similar concerns. But my biggest concern is whether DU is well positioned to do this. It sounds to me like the School of Mines should be doing this. I'm not saying that we shouldn't, but do we have the resources?

Senator Matt Taylor: I think we should undeniably be doing everything in the resolution. We know there is not enough info, though. As faculty, we like to make decisions based on information. We just don't know the impact of divestment on things like scholarships.

President Jones: I think that is what this resolution says. You can make the point that this is a moral issue, but we don't have the info – so it's a symbolic recommendation. The thrust is that if administration and Board decide not to divest then Faculty Senate is pushing them to make other efforts.

Senator Taylor: If that's the case and we say we're behind the idea of divestment – should we push for info?

President Jones: We've pushed. The administration is doing this too. They're hiring a new firm to manage investments. My reading from the committee is that we don't want to invest too much energy in that push because the other issues are potentially more impactful.

Darrin Hicks: The university doesn't have the info either. We have no one on staff who can do this. Which is why the first point is so important – to get a permanent person on the investment committee to review ethical components. I think that has more teeth than even asking them to divest.

Senator Wilson: I like points 1-3. With points 4 & 6...there are some wording issues. We need to clarify [in point four] that we're not talking about executives, lawyers, scientists. Explain what we mean by workers. Also the language around “educated and trained in renewable energy philosophies...” needs to be revisited. Point six sounds like it's creating a new curriculum requirement – which is no small thing.

Senator Castellani: I don't think we have that much voting power – given the size of our investments – to influence fossil fuel companies. And I don't think we're about to join a consortium to increase that influence. So I'm for divestment unless someone can show me that maintaining an investment can allow us to influence anything.

Senator Pavlov: I have a concern about point two. The math related to our carbon footprint doesn't seem to work. Are we proposing a mandate to exceed the pace that we've currently maintained – which we already recognize is ahead of pace? Maybe 2047?

Senator Castellani: 2047! I'll be a 100 years old!

[Laughter]

Senator Powell: As someone involved in that process to reach carbon neutrality, I can say it's not a linear process. Our gains so far have been through efficiency. By suggesting that the university step up the pace, we're putting more pressure or demonstrating additional commitment to looking for solutions other than efficiency, which won't get us to carbon neutrality anyway.

President Jones: Should we add something?

Senator Powell: We could, but I don't know what it is.

Senator Taylor: Maybe that language that Becky just used around efficiency.

Mary Stansbury: There were a few questions from Morgridge. On the sixth point—is this a curriculum requirement? What does this mean for grad and professional schools? Also should there be any connection between this and advancement? We wondered if committee considered this.

President Jones: We didn't.

Senator d'Estrée: I want to go back to the symbolism. Now I don't want to discount symbolic gestures; they're important. But we do have to keep in mind the size of DU's portfolio in relation to the whole portfolio is equivalent to an individual's portfolio to TIAA-CREF's entire portfolio. We have a small endowment. Our ability to have any real control over our investors and money managers is minimal to none.

We're telling the university to divest but we're not having conversations ourselves about our own retirement accounts. But we're willing to tell the university to take a hit and maybe others, such as students. I think we've abdicated our responsibility. I don't think we've done due diligence.

President Jones: Should we put in a statement about that?

Senator d'Estrée: Yes. TIAA-CREF's socially responsible package is only moderately so – and we can't control it. But we should work with the university to increase control over our investments.

President Jones: Perhaps a more general point to say something about faculty responsibility.

Stansbury: What's the evidence and how do we know if the resolution is effective? I read this and hear great ideas. But is it the habit of senate to indicate that in five years were going to say we'll look at this again in five years?

President Jones: So build in assessment?

Stansbury: Yes.

President Jones: Next week, we'll be challenged at our regular meeting for time. We'll have the Athletic Director report, which will involve the AD introducing Rodney Billups [the new coach of the men's basketball team] in ten minutes. We have elections. And we have a second reading on the Student Relations Committee proposal on inclusive excellence. These could go really fast. If that happens then we'll have some time to discuss the divestment resolution. But we shouldn't take a vote on this unless we have adequate time for discussion. There is a possibility this will be carried over into the fall.

Incoming President Willink: And we need any revisions by Sunday.

Senator Keith Miller: It sounds like points two [the pace of carbon efficiency], 4 [scholarships for descendants], and 6 [curriculum on sustainability] may have hiccups.

President Jones: Point six could be softened to just say curriculum should be expanded.

Incoming President Willink: And add what Claude suggested?

Senator d'Estrée: I'm working on language...

President Jones: I'll need that by 2:45.

[Laughter]

### **Adjourn**

President Jones adjourned the meeting at 1:47 p.m.

### **Prepared and submitted by**

Jared Del Rosso  
Faculty Senate Secretary