

School of Energy Resources Update
January 13, 2021

1. SER completed a voluntary strategic review of its academic program, which was used as the basis for the Academic Affairs Accelerated Strategic Review, also completed in December. In the course of the reviews, several reasons were identified for falling enrollment over the last four years, perhaps mostly important was a lack of investment in recruiting and clear marketing to demonstrate the wide array of career options available to SER graduates. Several novel offerings, such as minors and collaboration with other UWyo units, were identified as potential options to grow SER's impact across campus.
2. Phase III of the Wyoming CarbonSAFE project commenced on October 1, 2020. Phase III is a \$19.5 million, three-year project adjacent to project-partner Basin Electric's Dry Fork power station with the objective of characterizing and preparing a CO₂ storage site capable of accepting up to 50 million tons of CO₂. The research team plans to drill the second CO₂ test well later this spring near Dry Fork Station.
3. The U.S./China Clean Energy Research Center (CERC) is in its 10th and final year. SER's participation in the program has supported several visiting scholars, students, joint geologic field trips, knowledge transfer, and most importantly, helped both nations address global challenges related to carbon management.
4. SER's Center for Economic Geology Research (CEGR) has several ongoing projects focused on rare earth elements (REE) and critical minerals. For example, a) CEGR is partnered with the National Energy Technology Lab and the Energy Economic Development Capital in Gillette to build an REE extraction pilot from coal ash in a \$1.62 million project, b) CEGR is partnered with Black Hills Energy, Western Fuels and Kemmerer coal mines to collect coal core for REE analysis, and c) recently CEGR submitted two proposals totaling \$3M to develop coal basin-wide resource and economic development plans to help initiate REE and critical minerals industries.
5. After an extensive selection and review process, Academic Affairs announced the appointment of Professor John Kaszuba to the John and Jane Wold Centennial Chair in Energy. Professor Kaszuba was selected by the committee due to his focus on applied research impacting Wyoming oil and gas producers as well as his dedication to student instruction, which were traits specifically called out in the gift agreement. In addition, SER is working to fill two more endowed chairs:
 - a. SER has released and closed a call for internal nominations for the Occidental Petroleum Corporation Chair in Energy and Environmental Technologies. A committee is actively reviewing nominations.
 - b. SER and the Haub School are collaborating to jointly prepare a call for an Occidental Petroleum Corporation Chair in Energy and Environmental Policies.