

# Spring 2025 Joint Colloquium

## Materials Department & Materials Research Laboratory

Mike Mullane, PhD  
NASA Astronaut

Friday, April 18, 2025  
11:00 am | Elings Hall 1601



Stories from the Space Shuttle missions, lessons derived from the Challenger and Columbia space shuttle disasters, future plans for manned spaceflight, and my life journey to reach the astronaut title

**Bio:** Colonel Mullane was born September 10, 1945 in Wichita Falls, Texas but spent much of his youth in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he currently resides. Upon his graduation from West Point in 1967, he was commissioned in the United States Air Force. As a Weapon Systems Operator aboard RF-4C Phantom aircraft, he completed 134 combat missions in Vietnam. He holds a Master's of Science Degree in Aeronautical Engineering from the Air Force Institute of Technology and is also a graduate of the Air Force Flight Test Engineer School at Edwards Air Force Base, California.

Mullane was selected as a Mission Specialist in 1978 in the first group of Space Shuttle Astronauts. He completed three space missions aboard the Shuttles Discovery (STS-41D) and Atlantis (STS-27 & STS-36) before retiring from NASA and the Air Force in 1990.

Mullane has been inducted into the International Space Hall of Fame and is the recipient of many awards, including the Air Force Distinguished Flying Cross, Legion of Merit and the NASA Space Flight Medal.

Since his retirement from NASA, Colonel Mullane has written an award-winning children's book, Liftoff! An Astronaut's Dream, and a popular space-fact book, Do Your Ears Pop In Space? His memoir, Riding Rockets: The Outrageous Tales of a Space Shuttle Astronaut, has been reviewed in the New York Times and on the Jon Stewart Daily Show. It has also been featured on Barnes and Noble's 2010 recommended summer reading list.

Host: Annika DeVol, Josh Baston, MSA Professional Development Committee