

Minutes of the UEC meeting of 1 Feb 2003

--> Special Joint meeting with the SLAC Users Organization (SLUO) <--

Present: Chris White UEC Chair
Eli Rosenberg SLUO Chair
John Conway UEC
Fernanda Garcia UEC
Leslie Groer UEC
Sharon Hagopian UEC
Martin Hennecke GSA-FNAL
Joey Huston UEC
Amber Jenkins GSA-FNAL
Reid Mumford GSA-FNAL
Rob Plunkett UEC
Paul Sheldon UEC
Benn Tannenbaum UEC
Wendy Taylor UEC
Sherry Towers UEC
Bob Tschirhart UEC
Jun Zhang GSA-FNAL
Eric Zimmermann UEC
Chris Potter SLUO/GS
Stephen Sekula SLUO/GS
Gabriella Sciolla SLUO
Amanda Weinstein SLUO/GS
Michael Wilson SLUO/GS

Guests: Chip Brock, Sekhar Chivukula, University reps. to HEPAP
Mike Witherell, Fermilab Director
Bruce Chrisman, Fermilab Assoc. Director for Administration
Roy Rubinstein, Fermilab Assis. Director
Judy Jackson Fermilab, Head of Public Affairs
April Burke URA lobbyist
Neil Calder SLAC Director of Communications
Patrick Fulton Stanford lobbyist
Robin Erbacher Fermilab UEC Emeritus member
Herman White Fermilab UEC Emeritus member

1. Chip Brock - University Representatives to HEPAP

A committee, consisting of Hank Sobel, Sarkar Chivukula, and Chip Brock has been appointed by DPF to be University Representatives to HEP. This committee is supposed to represent the University HEP community vis a vis HEPAP in the same way that the Lab Directors (or their representatives) represent their laboratories in that forum. They will address grant support, personnel, lab/national program, HEP political, and academic issues. Currently they have been asked to assess the status and demographics of the field.

There was discussion about the declining rates of graduate student application and enrollment. Admissions standards are dropping, and the best schools are competing for the very small pool of talented applicants.

The issue of the long time scales of experiments exacerbates the problem of attracting students and postdocs, and makes it very difficult for students and postdocs to have both detector hardware and physics analysis experience.

Chip asked whether there was growing concern that there may not be enough people in the field to commission the LHC detectors. Are enough people turning their attention from present projects to ATLAS and CMS? For example computing for LHC experiments, which has a long lead time, is understaffed. These activities may collide with bringing the Run 2b upgrades on line.

The question of how projects are funded led to the observation that the pendulum has swung so far in the direction of the labs that electronics and mechanical shops at the university departments are closing at various institutions. The change in how LHC projects are funded is perhaps an indication that this will not be such a problem in the future.

2. Bruce Chrisman - New ID Badges Needed by April 5, 2003

New ID badges must be issued to all Fermilab users and onsite residents, including children age 16 years or older. Current badges will be valid through 4 April 2003. U.S. citizens can go directly to the Key/ID office to obtain a new ID card. No new photograph is necessary. Non US citizens will need to go to the Users Office to provide the additional information on passports and visas before being issued a new ID. They may also have to fill out a questionnaire. The length of time that an ID is valid has been shortened for those from "sensitive countries". (For a list of sensitive countries, see the official DOE web site: http://www.ch.doe.gov/insidech/org_offices/oci/SensitiveCountries/index.htm) People from countries on the list of "State Sponsors of Terrorism" must have prior DOE approval before coming to Fermilab. (See DOE list at: http://www.ch.doe.gov/insidech/org_offices/oci/TerroristCountries/index.htm) Physicists from European Union countries, Japan, or other countries participating in the Visa Waiver program, who have 90 day IN-94 forms, must renew their ID badges every 3 months. (See list of participating countries

at: <http://travel.state.gov/vwp.html>.) Permanent Residents of the US must present their passport and green card to receive a new ID card. Non-US Fermilab employees must also get new ID badges. The Users Office has a sign-up sheet for times to come there and apply for a new ID badge. (See <http://www.fnal.gov/pub/forphysicists/users/schedule.html>) After April 4, old ID badges will be confiscated by Security Guards.

A memo with details was distributed to the Fermilab community. It can be found at: <http://www.fnal.gov/pub/forphysicists/users/memo.html>

3. John Conway - URA Board of Presidents meeting

John reported on the URA Board of Presidents meeting, at which representatives from all URA institutions met at the National Academy of Sciences on 30 January. The program included special talks from Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY, Chair, House Science Cmte.) Rita Colwell (Director of NSF), Jack Marburger (president's science advisor; Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy), and Robert Card (Undersecretary of Energy).

The message that balance needs to be restored between the physical sciences and biological/medical research has clearly been heard in Washington, and all the speakers mentioned this in one way or the other. The President's FY04 budget will be announced on Monday 3 Feb. (See <http://www.mbe.doe.gov/budget/04budget/> for the DOE proposed FY04 budget.) The as-yet-uncompleted FY03 budget is expected to have a decrease in support for the physical sciences. (The present omnibus bill incorporating the 11 remaining appropriations bills will hopefully be enacted by 14 Feb., the ending date of the current continuing resolution.)

The various speakers all emphasized the need to articulate the case for high energy physics at all levels of government. Perhaps the most pointed remarks came from Mr. Card, who asked what is lost if the HEP budget were to be cut by 10%? He emphasized that the case has not been adequately made, and a major change in communication needs to happen in order to get the DOE/SC budget out of the \$3.2-3.5G range. The community needs to build support for the physical sciences and for the DOE office of Science.

For a summary of Chairman Sherwood Boehlert's remarks, see: <http://www.aip.org/enews/fyi/2003/011.html>

4. Joey Huston - Washington trip planning

Joey Huston will coordinate the 26-27 March trip to Washington, DC. Initial assignments for office visits were made at this meeting. Appointments should be in by 1 March if possible. There will be a special UEC meeting on March 22 to finalize assignments for the DC trip.

Benn Tannenbaum, who is serving in Washington as an APS Congressional Fellow in a congressional office, made the point that we definitely need a one-page message, and need to get it to the staffers beforehand by E-MAIL and FAX. We must not approach increases in science funding as as any sort of entitlement, but we should emphasize the dire need for an increase.

April Burke spoke about her view of how one should approach the visits to congressional offices, and some basics of how the yearly budget process works, and the role of the various committees and organizations. HR-34, introduced by Representative Judy Biggert (R-IL), proposes an increase in funding for the DOE Office of Science. This is a good starting point in discussions with House of Representative members and their staff.

(See <http://www.aip.org/enews/fyi/2003/005.html>)

April also handed out very useful packets personalized for each person going on the Washington DC trip, containing lists of Members of Congress serving on key congressional committees, congressional biographies from their home state, sample questions and sample meeting evaluation forms and suggestions for the one-page message.

Judy Jackson reminded us that when a group receives a grant renewal from the DOE or NSF, they should write a letter to their local congressional Representative, telling of their grant and thanking them for supporting science and the funding agency.

There was discussion involving April Burke (URA lobbyist) Pat Fulton (Stanford lobbyist), Neil Calder, (SLAC Dir. of Communications and Judy Jackson regarding the political dimensions of the problem of crafting our message for the Washington trip.

Discussion of the message concluded with some major themes:

- The DOE Office of Science is a gem buried in the vast DOE, and provides 43% of physical science funding.
- Professors, graduate students and postdocs from all over the U.S. as well as other countries do research at the national laboratories supported by the Office of Science.
- Congress is the sole source of support for physical science research, via DOE/OS and NSF.
- Balance needs to be restored between the physical and biological sciences in the national research portfolio, as emphasized by PCAST in its letter o the Office of Science. (See <http://www.aip.org/enews/fyi/2003/007.html>)

- High energy physics in particular has received flat-flat funding, effectively cutting the budget by 25% in the past decade.
- To improve the economy, must continue investment in science now. Need to capitalize on previous investments and get money's worth out of facilities already constructed.
- These are tremendously exciting times in high energy physics, with new discoveries in neutrinos, b quarks, and a wide range of studies at the highest energy accelerator in the world, with amazing links to the origin of our cosmos and the structure of matter, energy, space, and time.

5. Mike Witherell - state of the Lab

The present shutdown is going well, and improvements to the luminosity are expected upon restarting the machine. Tilted quads were identified and will be corrected in the next shutdown. A plastic cap was found in the AP1 antiproton transfer line - it has been there presumably since 1985. It has been removed, which should reduce the line emittance.

The total change in HEP funding from FY 2000 to FY 2003 HEP has been 2-3%.

The funding in constant dollars, using the Employment Cost Index, has decreased by about 18% since 1996.

Mike emphasized that we cannot go to Congress and claim any sort of entitlement to funding, but should rather emphasize the great work that we can do even with a modest set of increases.

This having been said, the increased effort to improve Tevatron performance has cost money that has come from the rest of the research program. Again this year funding is being redirected, largely by internal transfers.

Other one-time steps to reduce costs include the early retirement plan, slowing down replacing those who retire, reduction of vacation accrual, reduced travel, delaying vehicle and office equipment replacements.

There will be a review of CKM, BTeV and the Run2b D0 and CDF upgrades for FY04 by a DOE/NSF HEPAP Subpanel - the Particle Physics Project Prioritization Panel (P5). See <http://doe-hep.hep.net/P5/>

6. PAC nominations

This agenda item was deferred to an email discussion.

7. Sherry Towers - Quality of Life

Sherry reported on the state of affairs regarding health coverage for non- and under-insured users (mainly graduate students). To obtain quotes on a group plan, the demographics of the insurees needs to be established, which will happen in the coming weeks. Once this information is available, as the result of a survey, the information will be given to the insurance companies by Bruce Chrisman and quotes requested.

8. Wendy Taylor - Inreach

Plans are underway for a possible career night combining both HEP and external career paths. Dates in May and July are being considered. Fernanda is looking into getting an outside speaker.

9. Robin Erbacher and Herman White - Discussed past experiences from visits to DC and led in role playing and practice for DC interviews and meetings.

The next UEC meetings are scheduled for March 1 and March 22.