

USNC-URSI Executive Council Meeting

Boulder, CO

Friday, Jan. 10, 2025, 06:00 MST – 07:50 MST

AGENDA

1. Call to Order (Simpson)
2. Discussion and approval of the agenda (Simpson)
3. 2025 NRSM: Statistics, Comments, and Suggestions (Simpson)
4. Commission Business Reports (Anderson)
5. Triennium Plans (Simpson)
6. Other Items for Discussion (All)
7. Adjournment

Chair Simpson called the meeting to order at 6:10 am.

John Chisum motioned to approve the agenda, Tom Gaussiran seconded. The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Chair Simpson presented updated registration numbers for the NRSM. This year had 344 total submissions and 382 registrations. A member noted that the registrations were back up to pre-pandemic levels. Another member commented that the high level of participation was encouraging given that we normally don't hold NRSM when there's a NARSM.

Chair Simpson suggested each commission reach out to university and other groups that don't normally attend the NRSM with the hopes of attracting new attendees. The idea is to create a value proposition to attract new members to our meeting and the USNC-URSI.

Ana Ferreras (NASEM) had several suggestions for enticing people to attend the NRSM. She opined that engineers need help to develop their professional networks and didn't really have networking opportunities during the reception. She suggested implementing some type of speed networking event as part of the reception. Such an event would encourage students or early career members to meet someone new. Ana suggested trying to connect with more private industry participation both for sponsors as well as providing mentors for students. She also recommended reaching out to more underrepresented students to improve broader participation and possibly identifying ways of involving high school students.

On the topic of networking, a sprightly discussion was had by many in the room. A member commented that speed networking is often positive; the NRSM could organize something around each commission. Another member commented that the room could be restructured to encourage more mingling and interaction between attendees. Another member commented that mingling should happen naturally through intentional design of the structure of the evening.

Another member commented that professors who bring students often like to have an evening to take their students out to dinner; the reception schedule this year didn't allow that. The member noted that a few people skipped the reception for that reason. Another member noted that in the past the Executive Committee discussed a student reception that convenes students together for light refreshments ahead of dinner. Another member suggested that it would be important for commission chairs to attend such an event. Another member suggested combining the WIRS reception with a student reception. Regarding the WIRS reception, a member suggested increasing the number of people that could attend the WIRS reception; that would expand the event and encourage more networking.

Chair Simpson noted that CU is opening a new Alumni center and hotel that might be an option for a venue for future NRSM's.

Secretary Anderson then presented the Commission Business Meeting results:

- On the question of *Should we make it easier to become an associate member of the commissions by making greater use of the following membership criteria: "Allowances will be made for fewer articles of special significance, or for scientific and research accomplishments of unusual merit.?"* Commissions were unanimous in their approval.
- On the question of *The proposed dates for the 2026 NRSM are January 5 - 7 (Monday - Wednesday) with workshops likely held on Sunday Jan. 4. Does the commission have any feedback on those dates?* Commissions preferred Thursday, many noting that a Sunday start would complicate travel. That kicked off a general discussion on dates and venues for the 2026 NRSM, given that—for the foreseeable future—the CU Boulder academic calendar starts the spring semester a week earlier than previously. Although no formal decision was made, the sentiment of the room was that the Tuesday-Friday dates would be preferred, even if that meant a change of venue.
- Many suggestions were made for workshop topics, special session topics, and several new members were added to commission membership rolls.

Chair Simpson then requested ideas for any activities USNC-URSI wanted to undertake for the remainder of the current triennium. She recommended that Commission Chairs begin thinking about good people that could serve as secretary or vice chair of their commissions. Ideally that person would be involved in reviewing abstracts and organizing sessions for the 2026 NRSM in advance of stepping into their leadership role. Hopefully all commissions have a vice chair in place that will move into the Chair role.

A member suggested inviting all vice chairs to the USNC-URSI Business Meeting as a way of getting them familiar with how USNC-URSI operates. It was noted that in the past, vice chairs were encouraged to attend the Business meeting, and the hope was USNC-URSI could return to that.

Chair Simpson brought up other ideas for discussion:

- Add member lists to the Commission Websites. The major topic of discussion was how individual commissions would keep the list current and updated.
- Commission J has an open officer position that needs to be filled.
- The NASEM website is not being updated on a regular schedule. The webmaster (Flannery) is no longer working full time for BISO – Flannery's hours have been reduced to 30% for all BISO USNC's. Website updates happen on a batch process – Ana implored all commissions to ensure they are responsive to requests for information from NASEM as they wait for all responses before processing a batch update.
- Commission descriptions need to be updated – the descriptions should include how a commission operates, administrative details for how officers are selected/move through the commission, etc.

A roundtable discussion then ensued about the NASEM website and USNC-URSI website regarding who updates each one and the update process.

A member raised a point that ideally USNC should be nominating/voting on the next Secretary/Chair-Elect at the 2026 NRSM and encouraged everyone to consider thinking about possible nominees.

A member raised a question about Vice President for URSI and whether URSI has specific requirements for that position. The response was that the nominee must be a chair for an international URSI commission or chair of a URSI National Committee. USNC-URSI's goal is to put a strong U.S. candidate forward for URSI VP.

Bryan Butler motioned to adjourn. Mike Newkirk seconded. The adjournment was approved by unanimous consent.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53 am.