

USNC-URSI
Executive Council Meeting Minutes
14 January 2023
Hybrid Meeting



1) Call to Order and Introductions (Michael Newkirk)

Michael Newkirk, the Chair of USNC-URSI, called the meeting to order at 8:06 am MST. The following Members of USNC were present at the Executive Council Meeting:

In person:

Gary Brown, Branislav Notaros, Michael Newkirk, Jamesina Simpson, Alyson Ford, Ana Ferreras, Thomas Hanley, Jonathan Chisum, Sembiam Rengarajan, Zoya Popovic, Chris Crabtree, Thomas Gaussiran.

Online:

Asimina Kiourti, Ross Stone, Gregory Huff.

2) Approval of the Agenda (Newkirk)

The agenda for the meeting was discussed and approved.

3) 2023 NRSM: Final Statistics, SPC, Comments and Suggestions (Newkirk)

- A few people switched last minute to be online.

4) Commission Business Reports (Simpson)

- We should do a better job of advertising the workshops.
- It's beneficial to have the reception earlier. It's also helpful to have the business meetings hybrid and earlier (so people on the East coast are not calling in late; also people at the conference can get up earlier more easily to attend sessions the next morning).
- We need more transition time in some places.
- We might consider having a buzzer to let people know their time is over in the plenary introductions, questioning time, etc. so people get to the sessions on time.
- Moving the workshops to Wed. will increase the number of attendees at the workshops. However, if workshops are held during the middle of the conference, people who don't attend will have a wide chunk of time with nothing to do. We decided to keep the workshops on the day before the conference.
- Having in person plenary speakers is better, but getting great speakers virtually is a fantastic option.
- Maybe keep Math 100 hybrid so plenary can still be available as a recording later, and we can have virtual speakers as needed.
- We got fewer questions from virtual attendees this year, and about 10-20% of attendees were online.
- In some rooms, passing the microphone around was awkward for questions during sessions.

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- At the reception, late arrivals had a hard time finding a place to sit except along the outside of the room. Maybe we can try to have more high-top tables and spread the regular tables out in the room more. It was also recommended to have more options for vegetarians (or less pre-assembled items so people can pick and choose). Maybe have a popcorn machine? The beer selection was lacking even though it was lacking even more last year.
- We had 48 people show up to the WIRS reception, but we only had 27 paid attendees. Should we lower or drop the fee? We need better messaging (we need to make sure people know the WIRS reception is hosted by WIRS and is not only for females). We need a sponsor for the WIRS reception. We need a bigger room for the WIRS reception. The WIRS reception could be organized more by WIRS chapter. The idea came up to include speed networking, but we want people to feel like they can have a good time and not have homework. Maybe include something fun like a Smith Chart coloring contest?

5) Commission Business Reports (Simpson)

- All commission chairs should look at the list of special sessions and see if it makes sense to organize a joint session.
- For the workshops next year, we should include “How to write a good technical paper and go through review process.”
- We should have the workshops in person. There are too many webinars and some people think we don’t need more.
- We need to ping early career members to become full members. People can only be early career members for five years.
- ECRs are working out really well at the URSI level. We discussed whether we should have ECRs at the USNC-URSI level. There was a lot of support for this. We can also have commission-by-commission decisions on ECRs.
- For voting within commissions, a Google form is very useful. Make sure they put their name and email in the form so you know who voted and whether they are permitted to vote.

6) Student Program Discussions (Newkirk)

- We will use a double-blind review in future SPC’s. We can look at the Portland IEEE AP-S / USNC-URSI website for ideas on how to implement this. Our software is already set up to do double blind reviews.
- This year all the student support came to \$50,400. It’s generally capped at \$60k.
- We increased travel support to \$800. Should we increase it more? It probably isn’t enough to cover the travel costs, but it helps the advisor out and the advisor probably brings more students. We voted to table the motion to increase the student support from \$800 to \$1k to next Jan. (2024).
- We need to make sure local students know they can get free registration. We can clarify that students in Boulder can also get free registration. Maybe we should call it Student Support instead of Student Travel Support?
- Can we get students to be able to stay in dorms at Boulder? However, dorms are probably only available in summer since most students don’t move out in December.

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7) 2024 NRSM Planning (Newkirk)

- There were 43 attendees in the workshops. Proposal writing was the most popular.
- If we don't have a hybrid meeting, we will need each commission to set up their own Zoom link for their commission meeting.
- Maybe have Math 100 be hybrid so we can have more options for speakers. Those in attendance were supportive of this during the discussion. Maybe people can pay to just attend the plenary if it's hybrid. We could use a Webinar license and rent it for the day?

8) Plans for Commission Websites and USNC Archive (Newkirk)

- We should Cc Ana when we want changes to the website so she is aware we are requesting changes.
- Send updates for the NASEM website to Jamesina by the end of January so we can send all of the changes together.

9) Commission Membership Lists

- All Commissions should send their membership lists to Jamesina Simpson so they can all be consolidated (hopefully using Google forms). We don't need mailing addresses anymore. We just need name, affiliation, email, and a phone number.

10) Sponsors and Exhibitors

- We need more sponsors and exhibitors. We need to actively recruit sponsors and exhibitors.
- We should get a report on what the sponsors and exhibitors committee is doing to recruit sponsors and exhibitors. They should probably make phone calls to potential sponsors and exhibitors. (It was noted that since we don't deal with hardware, etc., some companies have been reluctant in the past.)
- Maybe get a sponsor to support the student mentoring luncheon. They get a few minutes to discuss their company. Make sure sponsors know that the conference is highly attended by students.
- The Sponsors/Exhibits committee should update the advertisement to potential sponsors and exhibitors?
- We should get panelists from industry on the student mentoring luncheon.

11) FIU Proposal

- We made a motion: "Based on feedback from the Commissions, we should discontinue consideration of the idea of moving the NRSM to FIU." The motion passed.

12) Other items for Discussion

- There is interest in holding the NRSM in 2025. For the North American Radio Science Meeting, all commissions participate. For the summer meeting, traditionally, only some commissions participate. If we don't skip it, then we have two all-commission meetings 6 months apart (this was historically why we skipped the Jan. NRSM in the year of the North American Radio Science Meeting). We decided to wait until next year on whether to have a 2025 NRSM meeting.

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- Mike thanked Christina, Colin, Michelle, and Lance for their help in organizing the conference.
- Next year is the 50th anniversary of the conference! Should we have a plenary on the history of the NRSM? Have a banquet or luncheon with a meal and presentation during dessert? The conference began in 1956, but it started in Boulder in 1974. The head of DARPA is a Colorado School of Mines person who might be willing to visit the NRSM.

13) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:57 pm MST (M: Notaros; S: Chisum).

DRAFT