

Users Executive Committee Minutes, November 16, 2002

UEC Attendees: John Conway (conway@physics.rutgers.edu)
Fernanda G. Garcia (fgarcia@fnal.gov)
Sharon Hagopian (hagopian@hep.fsu.edu)
Leslie Groer (groer@fnal.gov)
Joey Huston (huston@pa.msu.edu)
Rob Plunkett (plunk@fnal.gov)
Paul Sheldon (sheldon@fnal.gov)
Bob Tschirhart (tsch@fnal.gov)
Sherry Towers (smjt@fnal.gov) ,
Chris White (cwhite@fnal.gov)
Eric Zimmerman (edz@fnal.gov)

GSA Officers Attending: Martin Hennecke (hennecke@fnal.gov)
Amber Jenkins (amber.jenkins@ic.ac.uk)
Reid Mumford (reid@pha.jhu.edu)

UEC Absent: Wendy Taylor (wendyt@fnal.gov)
Benn Tannenbaum (tannenba@fnal.gov)

Scribe: John Conway

Guest: Judy Jackson (Fermilab), Mike Witherell (Fermilab)
Homer Neal, Chris Potter, Amanda Weinstein (SLAC Users Org.-SLUO
by phone)

1. Report from the November 6-7 HEPAP meeting (C. White and E.
Zimmerman) *****

*For the Agenda and links to associated talks see:
<http://doe-hep.hep.net/AgendaNov02.html>

The DOE HEP budget is at present slated for an overall
0.9% increase, but the Congress does not intend to pass
the Energy and Water appropriations bill until the new
Congress convenes. Clearly it is another difficult
budget year, with serious consequences for the labs.

Rep. Judy Biggert (R-IL) is launching an initiative to
increase the DOE Office of Science budget by 50%.

The P5 standing subpanel has been formed. The membership
is:

Abe Seiden (chair)
Gene Beier

Gary Feldman
Marc Kamionkowski
Boris Kayser
Bill Marciano
Ritchie Patterson
Tor Raubenheimer
Marjorie Shapiro
Mel Shochet
Elizabeth Simmons
Jay Marx
C. Prescott
Pat Burchat
Dan Green

For slides of the presentation on P5, see the link on the UEC web page:
http://www.fnal.gov/orgs/fermilab_users_org/

The UEC sent a letter to HEPAP, which was presented to Fred Gilman at the meeting. The letter addresses the concerns about the lengthening of the time scales of HEP experiments, and its effect on the community. The letter, which is posted on the UEC web site makes several points, including the effect of the longer approval process, the worry that P5 may add an additional step in approval, the concern that flat budgets are insufficient to sustain the presently approved program, and the concern that funding for a linear collider may threaten the mid-term program.

For a copy of the UEC letter to F. Gilman, see the link on the UEC web page:

http://www.fnal.gov/orgs/fermilab_users_org/

Slides for Chris White's presentation to HEPAP are linked to the HEPAP agenda.

2. Request from HEPAP for information on available physics

data sets, and the sociology of long time scales

Fred Gilman has requested that we bring to his attention any information regarding the demographics of students, postdocs, and professors in the field, and how the fact that experiments' time scales are no much longer affects career paths.

It was noted that the DOE and NSF annually conduct a census of the field, and some basic data are available, but more detailed information about what students work on, where postdocs go in their next career step, etc. is needed.

The committee discussed whether to begin collecting new data from the community, or to wait for a specific request from HEPAP.

3. Sub-committee reports

Users' Meeting

The proposed date of the 2003 Users' Meeting is 2-3 June (Monday and Tuesday) in order to avoid conflicting with NuFAct03 the following week. Next year's meeting will be an important one for the Lab's future, and the committee will discuss the best way to re-format the event for maximum relevance to the community. The web page will be updated in the near future.

Quality of Life

The Quality of Life committee will meet at Chez Leon on 4 December with Kurt Riesselman to discuss new ideas for the reorganization of Fermi News, in order to better serve both the internal and external communities.

Washington Trip - see Section 5

Non-US Users' Issues

Two visa problems are under consideration, the problem that there is no appropriate visa for non-US scientists, and a new problem that people are having trouble getting into the US at all. Letters have been written at various levels; the State Department has not budged so far, but a letter from them indicates that this is hopefully a transient situation, perhaps 6-8 weeks.

Roy Rubinstein has asked that we keep his office current on any information we have, including specific incidents where people are unable to enter the country.

As for the creation of a new visa for scientists, it is difficult to imagine new legislation to create such a visa. However, administrative changes to existing visas such as the J1 may be possible.

Efforts are being made to help people obtain bank accounts without SSNs, and obtaining auto insurance without US drivers' licenses.

4. Visit by Judy Jackson

"If I could have every high energy physicist in the US know just a few things, what would they be?" Judy used the example of the demise of the US fusion community as a cautionary tale for HEP. How do we avoid this scenario? Do we need to re-invent ourselves as a field, as the plasma physicists have done, moving from the goal of a

new energy source to that of basic research?

Judy said that the message high energy physicists are not getting is that as a community, we tend to craft statements about our future without consulting, and incorporating the input from, the intended audience: the funding agents, Congress, and OMB. In addition, we fail to include representatives from other fields, including biology, astrophysics, and even other subfields of physics.

Judy pointed out that at HEPAP, the Washington science lobbyist April Burke drew a message from Hitoshi Murayama's talk which was completely different from that he intended. Whereas his talk was aimed at making the case for a linear collider in the broad context of progress in HEP, April understood that it was arguing for a wider range of smaller scale experiments. We are not the best judges of the effectiveness of our messages on its intended audience (whether it is the public at large, congress, science policy decision makers). We need external participation for this reason alone: otherwise our message is likely to get garbles, misinterpreted, or lost altogether. Effective communication requires outside input.

Other fields of science which have been more successful have involved "outsiders" in the process of crafting their message. They have also put together professional, well-targeted, and well-funded campaigns in Washington. HEP needs to do things in a different way. We need to open up the discussion, not just debate among ourselves the best way to present our message. We need to find out what the people think who make the budget decisions, and how to communicate our present and future needs to them most effectively, as well as how to make our case to other scientists and the public.

"If a path to the better there be, it exacts a full look at the worst." - Thomas Hardy

5. Washington Trip

In a phone conference with Homer Neal, Chris Potter, and Amanda Weinstein, Joey Huston led a discussion about the spring Washington trip.

The 2002 trip was in late April, after Easter. This year Easter is earlier, and the question is whether to go before or after the spring break in Congress. It was suggested that we consult April Burke on the best time to make the trip. We do know that it cannot be the week of 5-9 April (APS/DPF meeting), and an effort will be made to avoid other conflicts.

By December we need to poll the UEC and SLUO regarding districts, representatives, relevant committee assignments,

etc. and begin to make appointments.

By January we will have a preliminary list of assignments, and then begin to make appointments.

It was suggested that the visit with OMB be widened to include as many UEC/SLUO members as possible, in a longer, more formal meeting.

It was also pointed out that the Fermilab Young Particle Physicists (YPP) should be contacted, and invited to be involved in the Washington trip.

Lastly, it was proposed that UEC and SLUO have a joint meeting on an annual basis, in January or February, to allow coordination of the Washington trip and allow people to get to know each other better before the trip.

6. Report from the Director

Mike Witherell reviewed briefly his talk to HEPAP. (Talk is linked to UEC web page.) The Tevatron collider has set a new luminosity record of 3.6×10^{31} , and shows steady improvement. The plan is to integrate a total of up to 320 inverse pb by the end of FY 2003 (200 inverse pb in the base plan). There will be a 3.5 week shutdown starting in mid January, and another in late summer before the Lepton-Photon Conference.

In the longer term, the base plan predicts an integrated luminosity of 6.5 fb^{-1} by the end of 2008; in the "stretch" program this could be as much as 11 fb^{-1} . Achieving the higher number is contingent on funding and the success of R&D, which is ongoing.

The projected Fermilab budget for FY 2003 is \$298.3 million, which represents a roughly \$13 million shortfall given the present program. The collider program has the highest priority; this includes increases in the next year for the Run 2b upgrades.

In FY 2003, the lab will be able to

- keep improving the luminosity and operate CDF and D0 effectively,
- keep NuMI/MINOS construction on schedule and operate MiniBooNE efficiently
- keep US-CMS and US-LHC on schedule
- perform minimal R&D on the LC.

However, the lab will not be able to

- do all the work to support gains in luminosity for FY 2004, and keep all personnel needed to help support collider issues

- provide any additional help beyond the base LHC program
- do LC R&D to keep the US program on schedule
- do R&D and engineering for BTeV and CKM

The lab's goal is to avoid drastic measures such as involuntary staff reductions. There is a new early retirement program, and only a small number of these will be replaced. Vacation accrual and travel will be reduced, as will support equipment such as computers, faxes, copiers, vehicles, etc.

Looking at the national program, meeting present commitments to projects absorbs all available funding, leaving nothing for R&D for the future. Further effective decreases due to inflation will force termination of even ongoing projects, in the long term.

Mike was asked if there is any reasonable prospect for increasing the number of protons on target for the MiniBooNE experiment. He said that there will be short term gains from a soon to be installed power supply and a new MP02 kicker; this will allow a higher rep rate. In the longer term the problem of losses must be addressed, with better collimation and understanding of the nature of losses.

The next UEC meeting is scheduled for December 14.