

Minutes of the 9 Nov 2007 UEC Meeting

Continuing Resolution in FY08?

The UEC discussed the appropriations for DOE and NSF for FY08. Currently, the Federal Government is in a Continuing Resolution (CR), which funds the government from the Oct 07 start of the fiscal year and extends until early January. There is concern about the likelihood that Congress would extend the CR. Such CR's erode potential increases recommended for DOE-SC and NSF by maintaining funding at last year's levels.

The UEC discussed two mechanisms which will be pursued to encourage action by the House and Senate to enact budgets for FY08. Due to the coming holidays, there was some discussion on accelerating these contacts into December.

1) Visits to Congressional Reps and Senators are being organized by users of various national laboratories. These visits are being coordinated with the UEC's of other national labs. The visits will take place in members' local district offices (thus requiring no user travel to DC) during times when the members are home, away from Washington. A web page has been set up: <http://www.nufo.org/local-visits-2007-2008.html> Users interested in participating in these visits should contact their UEC representatives.

2) Letters are being written to Congressional Representatives and Senators. A web site has been set up to <http://www.congressweb.com/cweb4/index.cfm?orgcode=apspa&hotissue=74>. which will generate a letter to one's Representative or Senator which speaks to concerns about the CR funding.

Presentation from P.K. Williams

P.K. Williams, Senior Program Officer for the DOE Office of Science, talked to the UEC about the DOE's reaction to the recent report from the University Grants Program Subpanel (UGPS). He started by mentioning some of the recent and upcoming changes in the administration. Robin Staffin recently stepped down as the Associate Director of High Energy Physics and Denis Kovar is filling in as the acting Associate Director. Glen Crawford is the new Senior Program Officer reporting directly to Kovar. Eli Rosenberg will be coming in later as Randy Johnson's tenure ends.

(UEC) What is DOE doing with the UGPS recommendations?

(PKW) A modest increase of 8-10M in the university grants was requested in the UGPS recommendations, but it is hard to do instantly as that money will have to be removed from somewhere else in the program. Moving any money from laboratory programs or operations is difficult in a climate of flat funding and increasing power costs. Such an allocation might be possible for the 2010 budget.

Dr. Williams discussed some of the specific UGPS recommendations like the need to retain research scientist positions. Approximately one third of the HEP FTEs are postdocs and research scientists with a ratio of about 2:1. The ration of experiment to theory postdocs is also about 2:1, but there are (with the exception of one) no research scientist positions in theory. It is often the case that a postdoc will be elevated to the position of research scientist which has the undesirable consequence of reducing entry-level positions.

In addition, the UGPS report highlighted some other concerns for the university groups. We need to reverse the decline in phenomenology and theory students. Universities have lost a lot of their technical infrastructure and have been supporting engineering and staff on project money, but it looks like the project money is running out. Dr. Williams pointed out that out of the \$110M university grant program only \$3M was spent on equipment last year. The UGPS report also recommended DOE increase support for mid-size experiments. Scientific Assessment Groups (SAGs) should report to P5 not HEPAP to coordinate projects earlier. An increase in travel funding in the LHC era is needed, and in general the recommendations from the Committee of Visitors (COV) should be implemented.

Dr. Williams pointed out the HEP component of University funding has remained flat since 1992, resulting a 30% decline in inflation-adjusted dollars. The overall university budget in 2007 totaled \$115M, of which \$95 goes to base university grants. Particular interesting line items include \$2.8M designated as 1-shot (non-renewable), \$1.7M for LHC travel help, a woefully small \$0.5M spent on ILC detector R&D, \$2.4M on the LHC-Net transatlantic communication. A total of \$0.3M was put towards DUSEL R&D with \$0.4M budgeted in 2008, which is quite small compared to \$3M spent by NSF. Only \$3M went to funding equipment.

Equipment money (\$M)

ADMX 0.12

EXO 0.30

MEG 0.15

Super-K 0.24

T2K 0.63

S-CDMS 0.81

Comp./Misc. 0.75

The Presidential Request Budget for 2008 has a 3% budget increase for HEP, but that number was 6% for 2007. ILC detector R&D might be centralized which means that the \$0.5M currently planned would not have to come from the university budget.

(KP) If there is an overall increase to HEP of 6% where does that money go if the university funding was flat?

(PKW) It largely went to ILC, NOVA, and to cover power cost at FNAL and SLAC.

Based on a decadal survey of PIs, the fraction of university dollars spent in various areas of research is expected to follow the trends:

2006 2010 2015
ASTRO/COSMO 15% 15% 20%
Babar 15% 10% ---
CDF/D0 20% 15% ---
CMS/ATLAS/LHC 20% 30% 45%
ILC --- 5% 10%
Neutrinos 7% 5% 5%
Theory 23% 20% 20%

(SK) When was the survey done because the landscape might have changed with time?

(PKW) This was the best guess at distribution based on a PI survey led by Chip Brock a couple of years old. A new P5 survey will be launched to see how this might have changed. Indeed with Ray's announcement these charts could be substantially different.

(KP) Has the fraction in the university budget declined relative to the overall HEP budget?

(PKW) The Office of Science and Energy is on track for doubling over the next 7 years, but it is not clear to what degree HEP budgets will be included in that.

Government Relations Summary

Planning for March trip is underway with various jobs assigned. Meetings will be Thursdays at 1:30. Have been in contact with SLUO and USLUO. No DC trip designates yet, but they are working on it. Useful to distribute the list of UEC participants to see which Congressional offices still need coverage. Likely to be a recess likely 3/17-3/21, leaving dates around 3/3 or 3/10. Keep dates clear. Proposing January

Local meetings are being encouraged again this year. A list of people at various universities that have been contacted exists. That list will go to NUFO to try and organize with the other national lab users. Goals for this year will be to try and provide some stronger encouragement to get the meetings scheduled, and follow up to see how many actual visits occurred and how those meetings went. The goal of these visits is really to emphasize generally how the national labs are used by the local research groups.

Chat with Deputy Director Young-Kee Kim

Deputy Director Kim phoned in from her recent trip to Germany. It has been a critical time for our colleagues at DESY as the accelerator has been shut down, the current director is retiring, and the research director is taking the position of Director General at CERN.

While in Europe, Prof. Kim gave a series of presentations on the steering group's report at Manchester, Liverpool, Cockroft, and DESY. In general, she was met with a very positive response to the Project X roadmap, which was felt to be a wise approach. Related to the report, there was a PAC meeting on Nov 1-3 with a draft, but the report is not yet publicly available.

The PAC commended the lab and the Steering Committee on a comprehensive plan for the FNAL future that included scenarios with the ILC on and off a technically-driven schedule. The Project X proposal could provide an exciting interim program.

Deputy Director Kim reported that the Japan B-factory will run through the end of next year to attain an integrated luminosity of 1 inverse attobarn. Their plan is to shut down for 3 years of upgrades, and come back an order of magnitude higher in luminosity. It looks like they will commit to upgrading KEK-B program. An upgrade to J-PARC would then come after the B factory upgrade.

(UEC) Any followup on Orbach's recent visit?

(YKK) It was stressed that the GDE will have to start taking into account the procedure and rules for obtaining needed support in the US. The rules are different for different regions and this is one of the challenges for any international project.

(KP) Any early reading on the change in leadership at DOE and what that will imply?

(YKK) Certainly Denis Kovar is looking at the budgets seriously and has been communicating with the laboratories already about options under various budget scenarios. He understands quite well how to run a laboratory, which helps remove any language barrier. He is quite sensible and reasonable. As for his exact views on ILC or Project X, we do not know yet. In the coming year, two thirds of P5 will be turning over. Mel Shochet is working on assimilating all of the information into an overall updated HEP roadmap. By March or so next year, we need a clear plan for FY2010 budgets. Denis would like a plan by February, but this is tough to do on a short timescale especially since we would need input from the community.

(UEC) Is the APS meeting the right time and place to gather that input?

(YKK) Unfortunately that is not until April and Denis and the DOE need the information before that.

Proposed Dates for Future UEC Meetings

December 7, 2007

Submitted by: Chris Polly, UEC Secretary