



Fermilab Users Executive Committee meeting minutes November 2nd, 2018

Agenda: <https://indico.fnal.gov/event/18552/>

The meeting began at 8:30 am CT.

Attendees

UEC: Gavin Davies, Leo Aliaga Soplin, Fernanda Psihas, Kirsty Duffy,
Jiyeon Han, Brian Nord, Saptaparna Bhattacharya, Cindy Joe, David Martinez

Directorate: Tim Meyer, Alison Markovitz

Washington: Ben Kallen

FSPA: Karl Warburton, Mike Wallbank, José Palomino, Barbara Yaeggy, Andy Furmanski

Users Office: Kim Pearce

Global Services: Griselda Lopez

Chair's Report

Gavin Davies reported.

- The UEC website has been updated to reflect the new membership of the committee and will be updated with subcommittee membership information
- Future meeting dates, for 2019, will be decided via doodle poll soon.
- The next UEC meeting is December 7th.
- Notes from the Quality of Life SC will appear in the December minutes
- These minutes include a special line item on a proposed *Safe & Respectful Environments* initiative.
- The Report from Washington is an extended synopsis and insight from our friends at Lewis-Burke Associates, LLC after the US Midterm elections.
- On Nov. 15th there was a "*Best Practices for Non-binary Inclusion in the Workplace*" webinar from the Out & Equal workplace advocates presented by our Employee/User Assistance Program. For those that could not attend the following information has been made available:
 - o [Out & Equal guide: Non-binary inclusion best practices](#)
 - o [Webinar slide deck](#)
 - o [Webinar recording](#)

Report from Directorate

Tim Meyer reported.

- We're in fiscal year 2019. LBNF/PIP-II flagship influence funding decisions. Working on a baseline to agree on cost, scope, and schedule.
- General terms of Office of Science stance on international users still to be fully illuminated but includes additional screening to verify status through DOE. Tours are considered outreach effort not business and are not in the same category.
- Had an All Hands meeting. Described the Lederman legacy of 3-4 decades for outreach; there are now 76 different programs. Currently in a transition period, identifying new objectives. Saturday Morning Physics (SMP) is canonical, iconic.
- A reshuffle in the organization chart to move Office of Education and Public Outreach to Communications is a statement of coordination.
- Looking to hire a new Director of Communications.

Report from Government Relations SC

Fernanda Psihas reported.

- Announced Kirsty Duffy as Deputy of the subcommittee (SC)
- Sought perspectives and feedback on the training: coordinating with Education & Public Outreach SC.
- Washington D.C. trip dates set for **March 18th – 22nd, 2019**.
- Working on details for budget request.
- Suite of improvements for the WHIPS system underway: details to follow as they are completed.

Report from Education & Public Outreach SC

Saptaparna Bhattacharya reported.

- Announced David Martinez as Deputy of the subcommittee (SC)
- Held first SC meeting and agreed to continue training development/support for DC trip and science communication initiatives started at the Users Meeting last year.
- Discussed new initiatives that will take more concrete form over the coming months, including a focus on "in-reach" efforts, volunteer database, and science communication club

Report from Users Meeting SC

Leo Aliaga Soplin reported.

- 52nd Users Meeting dates: **June 12th – 13th, 2019**
- Had first meeting which was largely organizational, setting out plans and action items for coming months: decide a theme, setup meetings with Conference Office to discuss budget and coordination, contact vendors.

Special item: Safe & Respectful Environments initiative

Fernanda Psihas, Leo Aliaga Soplin, and Karl Warburton reported.

- Propose to form a joint UEC-FSPA initiative. An evolution of existing UEC and FSPA efforts.
- Motivated to promote an environment of respect and understanding, promoting behaviors conducive to improving work environment.
- Goals are to:
 - o develop and maintain an in-reach program (akin to the “take-5”) campaign promoting kindness and correct approaches when encountering disrespectful behavior. Collaborate with Communications Office.
 - o Survey users on general climate and environment of Fermilab community.
 - o Act as a hub for users with concerns of work environment and provide feedback to the lab.
 - o Expand on campaign initiated by FSPA of speaker series supported by Fermilab TA, D&I office: talks to possibly rotate on time-slots of existing seminar series.
- Many talking points discussed and next steps include discussing with Fermilab D&I, Communications Office, identify existing efforts etc. Will continue to report monthly.

Report from FSPA

Mike Wallbank reported.

- Met with Tim Meyer to discuss and approve budget with commitments to continuing initiatives from 2017/2018: career events, community awareness. Requested funds for possible affordable cultural events for students/postdocs. Details to follow in the future.
- Planning joint events and coordination with Tania in Frontier Pub.
- Held successful annual Halloween Party in collaboration with Global Services: over 200 attendees, lots of family-oriented activities, pumpkins, face-painting etc.
- Post-meeting, held Thanksgiving Pot Luck in Users Center on November 20th.
- Planning Holiday Party in Users Center in December.

Report from Washington

Ben Kallen (Lewis-Burke Associates, LLC) reported.

Overall Implications of the 2018 Mid-term Elections

- As anticipated by a majority of polls, Democrats took back the majority in the House of Representatives and the Republicans made gains in the Senate in the mid-term elections on November 6th.
- With many moderate Republicans losing in the House and several moderate Democrats losing in the Senate, finding areas of common ground may be even more difficult in the next Congress as the House and Senate set up dueling agendas in the months ahead.
- With a divided Congress beginning next year, the House is widely expected to use subpoenas, oversight hearings, and investigations to examine issues in the White House and among the federal agencies.

- In addition, with its expanded Republican majority, the Senate is expected to focus on confirming federal judges, newly nominated political appointees, and replacement Cabinet officials, such as a new Attorney General.
 - o Nominees for OSTP Director (Kelvin Droegemeier) and DOE Office of Science Director (Chris Fall) remain unconfirmed. It is possible that the Senate may move forward with their nominations during the lame-duck session, putting them on track to be in their position by the end of the year.

Impact on Science Champions

- One of the chief concerns for the research community will be to rebuild some of the key champions who will vacate committee posts, who lost in swing districts, or who participated in bipartisan caucuses around top issues (e.g. almost half of the House climate caucus Republicans lost).
- Science champions such as Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman John Culberson (R-TX) and House Science Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman Barbara Comstock (R-VA) lost their races along with champions such as Rep. Randy Hultgren (R-IL), Rep. Kevin Yoder (R-KS), and potentially Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL), whose race is undergoing an automatic recount as of the time of this writing [Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL) subsequently conceded to Gov. Rick Scott (R-FL) after the recount]
 - o Perhaps most impactful from an HEP perspective was the loss of Rep. Hultgren, who was a major champion for the National Laboratories and DOE research more generally.
- New champions often emerge in situations such as these, which could create new opportunities for bipartisan compromise.

Outlook for Final FY 2019 Appropriations

- With one month until the current fiscal year spending resolution expires, congressional leaders have not signaled how much they intend to accomplish before adjourning for the year and ending the lame-duck session. The highest priority issue is resolution of the final seven appropriations bills, which include support for NSF as well as several other science agencies.
- The fate of these appropriations bills may be tied to a broader discussion about immigration.
 - o With President Trump determined to receive increased funding for a border wall, it remains to be seen if the still all-Republican Congress can secure support for the wall from the Democrats in exchange for votes to finish FY2019 funding before the new year.
 - o Another possibility could be a lame-duck deal on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) in exchange for border wall funding.
- If no deals are made the possibility of a partial government shutdown may be heightened based on the elections results and a determination by both sides to be tough negotiators.

Relevant Committees in the 116th Congress

- The House Appropriations
 - o With a new Democratic majority, Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY), currently the ranking

- member, will take the helm as chairwoman.
- o The upcoming retirement of the current chairman, Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-NJ), opens the door for a new top Republican on the panel starting in January. Six Appropriations Members have announced their interest but Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX) is most likely to become the new ranking member.
 - o Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) is likely to be the new chair of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee. The current chair, Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID), the current chair, may remain as ranking member but he is also interested in becoming ranking member of the full committee.
 - o Rep. John Culberson (R-TX), the current chair of the CJS Subcommittee and a major NSF champion, lost his re-election bid. It is unclear at this time which Republican will take his place as ranking member during the next Congress and whether Rep. Jose Serrano (D-NY), the current CJS ranking member, will assume the chairmanship.
- Senate Appropriations
 - o In the Senate, Senator Richard Shelby (R-AL) is expected to remain chairman and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) is expected to remain ranking member.
 - o Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) are likely to remain chair and ranking member of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee, respectively.
 - o Senators Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) are likely to remain chair and ranking member of the CJS Subcommittee, respectively.
 - Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
 - o While Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) is likely to retain her position as committee chair, it is possible that the current ranking member, Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA), will opt for the same position on the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation (CST) instead. This outcome is ultimately contingent upon Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL), the current CST ranking member, losing his re-election bid.
 - o Possible replacements include Senators Martin Heinrich (D-NM) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), both of whom have National Laboratories in their states and would likely be strong champions for research activities at DOE.
 - o In the 116th Congress, ENR may consider companion legislation for the Department of Energy Science and Innovation Act (H.R. 5905), which passed the House in June 2018 and would provide an updated authorization for Office of Science programs, including additional support for fundamental research across all six Office of Science program areas and authorization of funding for large-scale scientific facilities and experiments including LBNF/DUNE.
 - o Quantum information science (QIS) is likely to be an area of continued focus for ENR in the 116th Congress. ENR is currently drafting a DOE-specific QIS bill that would be combined with a measure focused on NSF, NIST, and OSTP that was recently approved by the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee. In contrast to its House counterpart, which for DOE only focused on large-scale QIS research centers, the ENR bill will likely seek to promote

smaller-scale research centers and single-investigator grants across a wide variety of QIS-related areas to ensure a more holistic approach to QIS research and development.

- House Science, Space, and Technology Committee
 - o House Science is set to enter a new era in the 116th Congress, with current Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX) retiring and the House flipping control to Democrats. Current Ranking Member Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) is expected to become chairwoman while Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) is likely to become ranking member.
 - o Membership on the committee is set to dramatically change with several key Republican Members losing or likely losing their seats, including Research and Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman Barbara Comstock (R-VA) and senior Members like Randy Hultgren (R-IL).
 - o Democrats are preparing an ambitious agenda related to authorizing key programs at NSF and DOE among other agencies, including through a potential new COMPETES/Advancing Innovation and Competitiveness Act (AICA) bill to authorize NSF and STEM education programs and support for DOE Office of Science research infrastructure and authorization of individual applied energy offices.
 - o The committee will likely also push for inclusion of support for scientific research infrastructure and workforce investments in any congressional infrastructure package.

- Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee
 - o Senate CST Committee is likely to see a major change in leadership in the 116th Congress. With current Chairman John Thune (R-SD) expected to become Majority Whip, Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS) is expected to take on the chairman role. With a focus on telecommunications issues, Senator Wicker would emphasize measures to increase consumer data privacy, rural connectivity, and regulations affecting the media industry.
 - o In addition, Ranking Member Bill Nelson (D-FL) is likely to lose his re-election to Florida Governor Rick Scott (R) (Sen. Bill Nelson conceded to Gov. Rick Scott after the recount). It is unclear which Democratic senator would take his place in the next Congress, though Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) are strong contenders.
 - o Similar to the House Science Committee, Senate CST Committee may also take up a new AICA bill authorizing programs at NSF.

UEC Minutes drafted and signed by **Gavin S. Davies**.

Regular reminders & useful links:

- Users are requested to participate in the [PRD journal survey](#)
- FNAL Housing options: <https://fermipoint.fnal.gov/service/TravelSystem/SitePages/Lodging%20Near%20Fermilab.aspx>
- Offsite housing: [Candlewood Suites Hotel reservation \(Warrenville, IL\)](#)
- Frontier Pub: <https://www.facebook.com/thefrontierpub/>
- Frontier Pub new menu: https://fermipoint.fnal.gov/organization/os/FESS/web_docs/Shared%20Documents/FrontierPubMenu.pdf
- Rental car information: <https://get-connected.fnal.gov/users/services/>
- UEC user feedback form: <http://uec.fnal.gov/uec-feedback-form/>
- Fermilab Users Slack: <https://fermilab-users.slack.com>