



Fermilab Users Executive Committee meeting minutes January 18th, 2019

Agenda: <https://indico.fnal.gov/event/19553/>

The meeting began at 8:30 am CT.

Attendees

UEC: Gavin Davies, Leo Aliaga, Fernanda Psihas, Kirsty Duffy,
Saptaparna Bhattacharya, Cindy Joe, Oli Gutsche, Jiyeon Han

Directorate: Not present – conflicting PAC meeting

Washington: Ben Kallen

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

Global Services: Griselda Lopez

Fermilab LDRD coordinator: William Wester

Chair's Report

Gavin Davies reported.

- UEC wishes everybody a Happy New Year 2019!
- Monthly rotation established for secretary duties: Kirsty Duffy this month
- Today we had a special guest: William Wester, Fermilab's LDRD program Coordinator
- UEC meet-and-greet event co-hosted with FSPA January 18th (post-meeting) from 3-5pm. Huge success with approximately 150-200 attendees that enjoyed expanded food and drink selections on top of the regular Friday wine and cheese. Generated good discussions, more feedback, ideas for Users Meeting etc and 50 entries to the raffle. Winners announced here: <http://news.fnal.gov/2019/01/and-the-uec-meet-and-greet-affle-winners-are/> for some pretty great prizes.
- UEC thanks everybody that helped make the event a success, notably attendees, FSPA, Kim Pearce, Griselda Lopez (Global Services), Dawn Staszak from the Conferences & Events Office, Eric Nafziger and Leticia Guzman from Fermilab Dining Services (Fresh Seasons Cafe-Taher Inc.). We also thank the JETP seminar organisers for allowing us to share the wine and cheese slot
- The next UEC meeting is February 8th, 2019.

Report from Quality of Life SC

Oli Gutsche reported.

- Housing Allocation Committee report – comments on distribution of 50% of dorm rooms (other 50% are first-come-first-serve). Directorate defines prioritization. An 80% occupancy rule will now be enforced more strictly. If you manage a house in the village you need to keep it above 80% occupancy for the year to retain extensions.
 - o **January 22**: new requests for dorm rooms for 2019 accepted
 - o **March 1st**: deadline to request houses for the summer
- A lot of user feedback items have been closed out and summaries/responses to users will be posted to UEC website [Details at next meeting]. Slides summarise some of the current work on feedback issues.
 - o Users can submit feedback via [webform](#) or send to uec-feedback@fnal.gov
- Reminder Fermilab Statement of community standards
 - o Available under policies webpage:
<http://news.fnal.gov/fermilab-at-work/policies/>
 - o Direct link:
<http://directorate-docdb.fnal.gov/cgi-bin/RetrieveFile?docid=174>

Report from Users Meeting SC

Leo Aliaga reported.

- 52nd Users Meeting dates: **June 12th – 13th, 2019**
- Discussed theme ideas and will confer with Communications Office on final decision [I won't spoil the surprise]. Important to get feedback from users that typically think the Users Meeting is not for them
- Suggestion that tours of lab area might be of interest to expand audience
- Working on URA Travel funds for graduate students and event advertising
- Communicate with experiment spokes and encourage to not have meetings during users meeting, to ensure that people don't have schedules.
- Another sticking point for some employees: will employees have a time code for attending the user's meeting? To look into and discuss with management.
- The Users Meeting is for **everyone** in the user community

Special item: Fermilab LDRD program

William Wester reported.

- An excellent overview of the Fermilab Lab Directed Research and Development (LDRD) program
- Idea is to fund proposals from lab scientists for new R&D programs outside current lab program (you can't put in a proposal for an upgrade to your current experiment, but you can put one in for R&D that, if successful, might be adopted by and benefit your experiment)
- Proposal process: submit 1-page initial proposal (typically receive about 50),

about 15-20 are shortlisted and invited to submit a full proposal. Roughly 9-10 projects funded per year. Committee tries to give feedback to unsuccessful proposals and often proposals can be resubmitted and may be successful next year.

- Projects expected to take 2-3 years
- Spread across the lab: PPD, neutrino accelerator, technical, computing divisions.
- Funding comes from “LDRD tax” of about 1.6% on each experiment at the lab – in comparison to other national labs, similar size program to SLAC but much smaller than e.g. Argonne and Savannah River
- Lots of opportunity to involve university groups
- Requires lab employee or joint appointment to serve as PI (any employee), but collaborations with universities are welcome and encouraged - LDRD can provide funding as any other lab project, and university members may participate. Rules: project has to be stand-alone (LDRD has to provide all the funding required), but there are often related opportunities. However, universities should be mindful about the expectations of their own funding bodies (e.g. they may not be happy if they fund you to work on neutrinos and you join an LDRD on dark matter).
- LDRD-fest JETP seminar usually in late spring - highlight four recently-finished LDRD projects.
- What does LDRD usually fund? Roughly 1/3 goes back into overhead pool. Remaining 1/3 usually salaries and 1/3 materials. Can go into Fermilab scientists' time or hiring a grad student from a university (typical), or funding a professor's summer salary (hasn't happened but technically allowable). Or for example, university group with special DAQ system - could be subcontract to that group to buy that DAQ component. Can also be used to fund travel - e.g. PI going to a university to meet/collaborate with someone and then coming back to the lab with newfound knowledge. Or paying travel for a student/someone from a university to come to the lab. Restriction: try not to use LDRD funding to go to conferences to present results. Review of proposals may consider how much money is leaving the lab (don't want to fund a project entirely at a university)

Report from Education & Public Outreach SC

Saptaparna Bhattacharya reported.

- Working on training for DC trip. Plan to have fewer training sessions than last year, but make use of existing materials as much as possible. Current proposal:
- Possible formats in progress [may change] but training sessions to include:
 - o demystifying the trip. Basic introductions to the trip and the structure of congress, logistics for the trip, how to contact a Congressperson/Senator's office.
 - o conducting a successful meeting. Structure of a typical meeting, role plays, demos of materials.
 - o other specifics of the trip. Go over budgetary aspects, what "the ask" is, role play/recordings of examples of a good and bad meeting.

- Finalising schedule for training early February.
- Plan to include a volunteer sign-up session at the Users' Meeting.

Report from Government Relations SC

Fernanda Psihas reported.

- Washington D.C. trip dates: **March 18th – 22nd, 2019.**
- Budget has been approved for this year's DC trip - UEC will be able to fund 36-39 attendees this year (because of the success of the 2018 trip). This year we have an opportunity to cement that support
- Thanks to the Office of Communications, will have enough packets to deliver to 100% of Congressional offices.
- UEC members are attending ongoing meetings to develop materials: community effort with others in the US HEP community through usparticlephysics.org. Drafts of materials are out for feedback and to be finalized with layout mid-Feb
- In 2019 we visited 85% (69.8%) of all Senate (House) offices with 54 attendees (including other users organisations, not just UEC). Combined total of 72.5% of Congress. This year we have more connections and more improvements in the strategy - our goal is to make contact with 100% of Congressional offices. If we don't have a connection ourselves to the office, see if we have connections constituents outside the group that could call for us and request that they meet us. If we can't meet with an office, we will try to at least deliver a packet of materials. New visitors on the trip will be vital for improving our coverage of connections!
- Main additions to training for this trip - how to handle the materials, how to interact with staffers and meeting etiquette
- Improvements to WHIPS: enhancement of "primary" assignment algorithm, and dynamic assignment reshuffle - both planned to ensure that we don't miss out on offices that we have coverage for because the person that is assigned to that office doesn't have enough time.
- Efforts to reduce costs of the trip, in order to be able to bring more attendees (saving ~\$100-200 per person would allow us to bring 3 more people): Share hotel rooms, use the metro fares for transportation and more

Report from FSPA

Andy Furmanski reported.

- First annual holiday party was a resounding success - approx. 75 attendees, 18 litres of mulled wine, international holiday food
- **SuperBowl Sunday** was hosted at the Pub in the User's Center! **February 3rd** - \$10 food buffet, alcohol for sale. Used as a test for opening the pub up more for special events like this in the future. FSPA Frontier Pub co-hosted event. Our condolences to LA Rams fans and congratulations to Patriots supporters.
- **Chinese New Year party on 8th February**
- Ramping things up for DC trip, New Perspectives, and planning for careers events

Report from Washington

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

Outlook for Final FY 2019 Appropriations

- Seven out of 12 FY 2019 appropriations bills remain unresolved, and the agencies under their jurisdiction (including NSF) have been shuttered since December 22, 2018. The protracted shutdown is now the longest in U.S. history.
- A swift resolution is unlikely at this point, as President Trump has not backed down from his request for \$5.7 billion for a physical barrier along the southern border. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) has been equally unyielding in her opposition, leading the House to pass numerous bills that would reopen the government but that cannot pass the Republican-controlled Senate, where Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) has refused to consider any legislation that does not have the President's support.
- Still, lawmakers in both chambers continue to attempt to craft bipartisan compromises that President Trump could support. While the Senate was unable to pass two competing funding packages, the high-profile legislative failure has further underlined the need for congressional leadership in both parties to actively work toward a bipartisan solution.
- As part of efforts to end the shutdown, the House recently passed a compromise FY 2019 "minibus" appropriations bill that includes full funding for NSF for the remainder of FY 2019.
 - o This package represents the House-Senate agreement struck last December on FY 2019 funding prior to the shutdown.
 - o Should this bill pass, NSF would be funded at \$8.08 billion in FY 2019, constituting an increase of \$308 million or four percent above the FY 2018 enacted level.

[Note: Since the UEC meeting the situation has evolved. Congressional leaders and President Trump reached a deal to temporarily reopen the government on January 25, putting an end to the longest partial government shutdown in U.S. history. The short-term spending package funds operations at the affected federal agencies through February 15. The three-week window will be used by a bipartisan conference of Members of Congress to develop a compromise spending bill for the Homeland Security Appropriations bill, which is the measure that has primary jurisdiction over border protection. If and when this bill is enacted, Congress will then also be able to pass the other six appropriations bills that remain unresolved, including the one that funds the National Science Foundation.]

Impact of the Election on Relevant Congressional Committees

- With a new Democratic majority, Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY) will become chair of the full **House Appropriations Committee** while Rep. Kay Granger (R-TX) will become ranking member.
 - o The Energy-Water Appropriations Subcommittee will also have new leadership. Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) will become chair while Rep. Mike Simpson (R-ID)

- o will become ranking member.
 - o After former Rep. Culberson's loss, leadership of the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) Appropriations Subcommittee has passed to Chairman Jose Serrano (D-NY). He is joined by Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL), who will serve as ranking member.
- The **Senate Appropriations Committee** will remain fairly unchanged. Senators Richard Shelby (R-AL) and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) will keep their positions as committee chair and ranking member, respectively.
 - o Senators Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) will remain chair and ranking member, respectively, of the Energy-Water Appropriations Subcommittee. Notably, Senator Alexander has announced his intention to retire in 2020, meaning that this Congress will be his last. Senator Alexander has been a staunch supporter of the National Laboratories and DOE's research enterprise more broadly.
 - o Senators Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) will continue to serve as chair and ranking member, respectively, of the CJS Appropriations Subcommittee.
- The **House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology** has entered a new era in the 116th Congress following the retirement of former Chairman Lamar Smith (R-TX). Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX) is now chair while Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) is ranking member.
 - o The new Democratic majority on the Committee is preparing an ambitious agenda that will include a renewed emphasis on climate science, addressing sexual assault within the scientific community, and authorization bills for programs within NSF and DOE among other agencies.
 - o This could include a new COMPETES/Advancing Innovation and Competitiveness Act (AICA) bill to authorize NSF and STEM education programs as well as DOE-focused bills aimed at supporting Office of Science research infrastructure and programs within DOE's applied energy offices.
 - o The Committee may also turn its attention to emerging areas like artificial intelligence (AI)/machine learning.
- While Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) is retaining her position as chair of the **Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources**, the position of ranking member has passed from Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) to Senator Joe Manchin (D-WV).
 - o In the 116th Congress, the Committee may consider companion legislation for the Department of Energy Science and Innovation Act, 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 LBNL/DUNE.
- The **Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation** has seen a major change in leadership in the 116th Congress following the defeat of former Ranking Member Bill Nelson (D-FL) and the departure of former Chairman John

Thune (R-SD), who is now serving as Majority Whip. Senators Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Cantwell will serve as chair and ranking member, respectively.

- o Similar to its House counterpart, this Committee may also take up a new AICA bill authorizing programs at NSF.

LBNF/DUNE/PIP-II

- LBNF/DUNE/PIP-II continues to progress thanks in large measure to strong bipartisan congressional support and a growing list of international partners. Over the next year, site preparation projects, such as the rock handling system, necessary for ensuring a safe and reliable work environment, will be completed in South Dakota. These projects set the stage for starting the excavation of the four large underground caverns in early 2020 that will house the neutrino detectors.
- Civil construction will also begin at Fermilab to prepare the neutrino beamline (PIP-II). This will become official at the PIP-II groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for March 15, 2019.

Agency Personnel

- The Senate confirmed Dr. Kelvin Droegemeier to be the President's Chief Science Advisor and Director of OSTP. Dr. Droegemeier was formerly the Vice President for Research at the University of Oklahoma and Vice Chair of the National Science Board.

UEC Advisory

- The UEC is planning its visit to Washington, DC for the week of March 18, 2019.
- The science advocacy community has coalesced around a request of \$7 billion for the Office of Science in FY 2020, representing roughly four percent growth plus inflation.
- A request for HEP is being developed and should be finalized by mid-February.

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

Regular reminders & useful links:

- Security awareness: [http://securityawareness.fnal.gov \(on-site, or VPN required\)](http://securityawareness.fnal.gov (on-site, or VPN required))
- 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>