

**APS Forum on Education  
Executive Committee Meeting (teleconference)  
Wednesday, May 19, 2004  
Minutes and Notes by Ernie and Gay**

**Thanks to Gay for sending excellent notes. Makes writing up the minutes much easier!  
And thanks to Peggy for setting up the conference call.**

*Voting Members Present:* Wolfgang Christian, Karen Cummings, Paula Heron, Ramon Lopez, Ernie Malamud, Peggy McMahan, Gay Stewart, Larry Woolf

*Voting Members Absent:* Robert Ehrlich, Paul Grant, Michael Zeilik, Pete Zimmerman

*Non-voting Members Present:* Beth Cunningham (CoE), Charles Holbrow (AAPT)

*Non-voting Members Absent:* Tom Rossing (Newsletter Editor), Fred Stein (APS Director, Education and Outreach Programs)

Meeting was called to order by Gay at 9 AM PT. We were able to muster a quorum so this was an official FEd Executive Committee meeting.

Minutes of our last official meeting, October 25, 2003 were approved (sorry to the new people; thanks for the trust).

### **Education Award**

Motion was made and approved to match the lead gifts received to date. If we run out of match money, we can go back to APS and ask to use more of our funds. Our goal is to have a \$100,000 endowment by June 2005. Progress towards that goal will be shown on our web site and in our newsletter. We will check with APS on their policy of listing donor names on our web page and in our newsletter. The sentiment in the meeting was to recognize their generosity by listing their names (but not the amount donated).

### **FEd subcommittees for the current year (by Gay)**

Education Award Fundraising Subcommittee: Wolfgang (Chair), Joe Redish, Ernie.

Program Subcommittee: Ramon (Chair), Peggy, Gay, Tom Rossing

*We felt it might be a good tradition to have the past and future Chairs of the Program Committee on this subcommittee.*

Nominating Subcommittee: Peggy (Chair), Paula Heron

*APS (Judy Franz) will appoint additional APS and AAPT people to this subcommittee.*

Fellowship Subcommittee: Wolfgang Christian (Chair), Duncan McBride, Jack Hehn, Bob Hilborn.

*The Chair of the Fellowship Subcommittee will serve as the FEd representative to nominate for the Nicholson medal.*

### **Helen Quinn's Long Range Planning Work**

Ramon has distributed a well thought out document on physics education. After more input it will be forwarded to Quinn's committee via Gerald Mahan, the education representative on Quinn's committee. All Executive Members are asked to read Ramon's document and make suggestions to him.

### **Member Survey**

The last survey done is summarized in the Spring 2001 Newsletter:

<http://www.aps.org/units/fed/newsletters/spring2001/survey.cfm>

Peggy volunteered to update that survey. Members should contact Peggy with ideas for the survey,

### **PER Conference (Paula)**

Tentatively this will be a one week conference held in summer 2005 and will be for a small number of participants who are active in the field. Preliminary discussions with the NSF have been positive. APS approval will be sought. The FED might be able to put in some money (primarily to help support graduate students attend the meeting.) Following the successful model of Fred's Physics on the Road workshop, the FED newsletter following the conference could be guest edited by Paula or a designee, and would be basically a proceedings of the conference.

### **Programs**

Gay will send the notes from the programs subcommittee April meeting to Ramon, and he will then revise and circulate that information to the Executive Committee.

In the March and April 2005 meetings there will be PER focus sessions.

At the March 2005 meeting there will be a session "How to present current research to undergrads" organized by David Ehrenstein, similar to the very successful session he ran at the Denver meeting. Ernie has volunteered to organize a physics demo session, similar to the successful session at the Philadelphia meeting.

At the April 2005 meeting there will be a session on teaching classical mechanics and one on Einstein Physics (celebrating WYP).

For the 2005 March meeting if there is not a Nobel Prize session, Gay will request that slot for an additional FED session.

Also, note, that with the new definition of sessions at the April meetings, the 4 sessions, each with 4 invited talks, will change to 5 sessions, each with 3 invited talks.

We are still trying to get a plenary talk on education at either the March or April (2005) meeting. Several names were suggested. Ramon will follow up.

### **Changing the number of sessions at meetings**

The current split of FEd sessions between the March and April meetings is 2/4. (as noted above the April meeting format is being changed but for the following consider the current format). One can look at FEd sessions in two ways:

- (1) a concentrated set of sessions at one of the two major meetings aimed primarily at those working in physics education so those people choose this meeting to attend
- (2) have FEd sessions “sprinkled” throughout the meeting to attract other physicists who might drop in to hear an education talk or two.

An argument to change the split to 3/3 is that attendance at the March meeting is much greater (10,000 vs. 1,000 – 2,000 at the April meeting). Another argument for this change is that it gives more room in the April meeting for focus sessions. (contributed papers). However, a concern is then there are not a sufficient number of sessions left in April to form a critical mass for PER community.

Historically, the April meeting had more FEd session slots because they filled in sessions that had been AAPT slots in the days of joint AAPT/APS meetings.

After discussion a motion was made and approved for Gay to request of Judy Franz that one invited session be moved from the April meeting to the March meeting. Based on Judy’s remarks at the Denver meeting the earliest that this could take effect, if approved, would be 2006.

Another idea that was voiced during the discussion (but not formally acted on) was to hold a one-day pre-conference or post-conference meeting (in conjunction with either the March or April meetings) on physics education.

### **Support of CCLI**

CCLI is under discussion in higher levels of NSF. There is some movement towards larger and fewer grants. It was emphasized that many smaller grants have made huge changes in careers and resulted in substantial positive gains in physics education. The program has been very important in building capacity and community for education research and reform in physics. Gay will circulate a draft letter of support for CCLI as it is currently functioning. This letter is drawn from the AAPT letter of support, provided to Gay by Charlie Holbrow. The sense of the discussion was that it would be best if this were a joint letter from FEd and CoE.

### **Outreach Handbook**

Tom Rossing has proposed such a handbook, which could be very valuable. We are looking forward to an outline of the proposed handbook. Ramon found the booklet we were interested in looking at as one model for an outreach handbook. Once Ramon unpacks (from his move from Texas to Florida), he will get this information to the committee.

### **Teacher Licensure Action Plan**

Ted Hodapp’s “action plan” is to get two weeks of an APS staff person to get a “phone tree” system going. The staff person would query each state board of education to find out the status of teacher licensure and then contact appropriate FEd members in those states where involvement by a physicist in the process might be beneficial and could influence the outcome.

Larry pointed out that teacher licensure was only one of a whole host of complex state education issues. The feeling is that teacher licensure is one place to get started and involve interested FEd members who if the timing of their involvement is right could have an important impact.

A motion was made and approved to support this plan and if necessary expend up to \$5,000 of FEd funds to get this going. Ideally, the staff member can be shared between APS, AAPT and AIP and also ideally the request for APS resources would come from CoE. The next step is for Gay to discuss this with Ted.

### **Next Meeting**

It is likely that there will be enough FEd Executive Committee Members at the July 31 – August 4 National AAPT Meeting in Sacramento to hold a FEd Executive Committee meeting during that conference.

In addition, Charles stated that he would like to organize a get together of the AAPT Board of Directors with members of the FEd Executive Committee during the Sacramento meeting. This will be a wonderful opportunity to share ideas and plans with the AAPT.

The majority sentiment was to hold a FEd Executive Committee meeting at the March meeting (March 21-25, 2005 in Los Angeles) rather than at the April meeting (April 16-19, 2005 in Tampa). Members of the Executive Committee who were unable to participate in today's meeting should let Gay or Ernie know their preference.

### **Agenda Item not covered**

Proposed strategic planning conference on undergraduate physics education. (Ramon)

Meeting was adjourned ~ 10:30 AM PT.