

3/05/2021

# Physics DEI Committee: Meeting Minutes

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## Agenda: Discussion Topics

- 1) Introduction - All **(5 mins)**
  - 2) Approve previous minutes ([2/19](#)) - All **(5 mins)**
  - 3) Announcements & Matters Arising **(5-10 mins)**
    - a) [RSVPs](#) for CRLT Workshop: 3/24/21 3:30-5 pm
    - b) Updates on "Picture a Scientist" screenings through department and SLC
    - c) Website updates
      - i) Posting demographics
      - ii) Undergraduate alumni student bios
      - iii) List any further recommendations [here](#)
  - 4) Update from Outreach Committee **(5-10 mins)**
  - 5) Breakout sessions (All) **(30-40 mins)**
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## Meeting Minutes

### Attendance

**Present:** Jennifer Ogilvie (chair), Rachel Owen (DEI GSSA), Vanessa Sih, Leo Pando Zayas, Cagliyan Kurdak, Roy Clarke, Ana Austin, Johnathon Jordan, Kevin Zvonarek, Monique Wheeler, Emily Crabtree, Liam Blanchard, Nora Sherman, Emery Trott, Nathaniel Wetter, Chris Meiners, Ashlee Wolff, Laura Zichi, Anwasha Saha, Shailaja Humane

**Absent:** Alec Tewsley-Booth, David Gerdes, Marina David, Yin Min Goh, Bing Zhou, Karen O'Donovan

### Meeting Minutes

- Introductions
- Previous minutes approved
- Announcements, Feedback, and Matters Arising
  - U-M bought screening rights for Picture a Scientist
    - i) LSA holding [screening, discussions, and a workshop March 24th](#)
    - ii) Can watch asynchronous with screening

- iii) Contacted facilitator for Physics & Astronomy specific screening event
  - Only graduate student demographics are easily available. Input requested from DEI Committee offline about putting demographics on website and revisit next meeting
  - Check in with CRLT organizers about recording teaching workshop
- Outreach Subcommittee Updates
  - Jalen Rose Academy
    - i) Helping High school teacher Calvin Nellum with physics hands-on teaching activities
      - (1) Current theme: Cosmology with Gus Evrard's support
      - (2) Providing textbooks and textbook licenses
      - (3) SPS students helping with mentoring programs (e.g. host break out rooms, review PHET simulations, etc)
    - ii) Currently on pause due to in-person transition
    - iii) SPS students making videos about being a physics major for high schoolers
    - iv) Developing program where high school students can shadow an upperclassman undergrad
    - v) Plan to extend similar program to Ypsilanti High School in the future
  - Currently trying to initiate a collaboration with Howard by
    - i) Inviting speakers for colloquia/seminars
    - ii) Funds to support sending/hosting a visiting grad student or postdoc
    - iii) Shared interest in clean room, seeking faculty with research overlap
  - Community outreach presentations
    - i) Saturday Morning Physics talks on topics such as "[Physics of Basketball](#)," "[Science behind Covid-19 vaccine](#)"
  - Long-term future plans: Take part in University initiative to build outreach center at the Detroit Center for Innovation (delayed due to pandemic)
- Subcommittee breakout sessions, see notes below

## Subcommittee Notes

### Outreach Subcommittee: Breakout Session

#### Link to Notes:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W0ukqD8l-3nLG\\_jlmkFLUuvx9fGA-Q32Sb3yyJYR1J4/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1W0ukqD8l-3nLG_jlmkFLUuvx9fGA-Q32Sb3yyJYR1J4/edit?usp=sharing)

### Research Subcommittee: Breakout Session

## Link to Notes:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EgVvQfyXEgmij26MZOXU9YNlj43zHK8io1em4SLxWCA/edit?usp=sharing>

- Undergraduate research opportunities
  - Preparing a document outlining tactics for getting research opportunities
  - Estimate for expected number of students interested in department sponsored undergraduate research grant: 25-40 (SPS president estimate)
  - Will review as applications come in
- Annual progress report
  - Prepare a new draft of progress reports for next meeting (Rachel)
  - Get feedback from Representation Subcommittee on implementing some requested survey data into progress report
- Update on other University physics department qual/prelim testing
  - Information gathered on website or through future scheduled meeting
  - Trends from comparable Universities:
    - i) Most tested core knowledge following grad classes
    - ii) Most were oral-based exams
    - iii) Wide range of preliminary (pre-defense) exam (2nd-4th year)
    - iv) Some institutions had strict deadlines
    - v) University of Berkeley had the most extensive information available on their website
    - vi) One school had an additional meeting with the thesis committee
- Discussion of our current qualifying exam
  - Major change to the qualifying exam in 2018: eliminated requirements for students have background knowledge in speciality physics courses (e.g. particle, solid-state, etc)
  - Now used as as diagnostic tool:
    - i) Moved first exam to fall to place students in correct courses
    - ii) Second exam is in the spring
    - iii) Students who exhibit lack of course preparation are given advice about undergraduate courses
    - iv) Undergraduate courses count towards their 13 credit requirement
    - v) Graduate Associate Chair provides feedback to students who do not pass the exam
    - vi) Students are provided with information on what to expect in the exam

- Since the revision, there has only been the one year to test the efficacy of the new exam
- Action Item: Improve transparency of current exam status by updating the website. Can use UC-Berkeley as a template. (Rachel will work on)
- Follow-up with Roy Clark and Kim Lewis about Howard research collaboration

## Teaching Subcommittee: Breakout Session

### Link to Notes:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Bfw6iGcOjcS6wU-AWCYSwU\\_tCXUoJ8jdbhDCrQQvIv4/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Bfw6iGcOjcS6wU-AWCYSwU_tCXUoJ8jdbhDCrQQvIv4/edit?usp=sharing)

- Ask Ashlee about asking instructors to post the slides on their canvas sites
- Putting up the slides on the DEI website, the physics website
  - Featuring some of the physicists from underrepresented groups as their own thing on the website, not buried in too many levels
- Add similar slides from instructors
  - Check with lectures from intro courses
  - Jennifer is sending emails to some of the faculty members that might have some slides
- Jennifer mentioned a graduate student handbook, there used to be one, but we are not sure if there is one currently
- Criteria for lectures outdated
  - Such as DEI
  - Check with other departments for language

## Representation Subcommittee

### Link to Notes:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b1GJy5so8pERMSO9YFQTZGx-oGcKF\\_vo\\_WQzUQUFrwk/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1b1GJy5so8pERMSO9YFQTZGx-oGcKF_vo_WQzUQUFrwk/edit?usp=sharing)

- Exit Surveys
  - Undergraduate survey nearly complete
  - Graduate survey getting additional feedback from graduate students
    - Now an exit survey, not part of yearly progress updates, per discussion with Ashlee Wolfe
    - Can we add demographic information collection to the yearly progress updates?
- Revisit the big-picture things
  - Removing the GRE
    - On hold but there is department support. Revisit with Rackham next semester

- Faculty hiring and promotion policies
- Setting inclusive tone in the classroom
  - Faculty and GSI training
  - Materials/resources from teaching subcommittee
- Outreach with other departments (Astronomy, Chemistry, etc.) to share best practices
  - Still lots of women being pushed out of physics due to sexism