

Meeting Report to the Forum for Graduate Student Affairs APS April 2003 Meeting

Philadelphia, PA
April 5, 2003 – April 8, 2003

Submitted by: Deborah Chang, Secretary

Purpose:

The APS April meeting is a joint meeting of several units of the APS. The APS divisions involved include: Nuclear Physics, Particles and Fields, Astrophysics, Physics of Beams, Plasma Physics, Computational Physics. Forums involved include: Education, Physics and Society, International Physics, History of Physics, Industrial and Applied Physics. Topic Groups involved include: Few-Body Systems, Precision Measurement and Fundamental Constants, Gravitation, Instrumentation and Measurement Science, Plasma Astrophysics, Hadronic Physics.

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1.0 FGSA Student Reception (April 4, 2003, 8:00-10:00 PM)

Judy Franz, Executive Officer of APS, was supposed to open the reception with a welcome, but she wasn't able to attend. Instead, Karsten Heeger, FGSA chair, and I welcomed everyone and provided information about what the FGSA has done in the past year and how and why they should join. Joe Formaggio, the chair of Young Particle Physicists (YPP), also said a few words about his group. Then, I asked everyone to write down the issues that they would like the FGSA to address on some poster boards that I provided. I only got one response, from Gary White who is the director of the Society of Physics Students.

We started the trivia quiz at this point. People were asked to make groups of five. They worked on it for 20 minutes and then turned them in for me to grade. Pieter Mumm, FGSA webmaster, bought prizes for the first place and last place teams.

Although the reception was not poorly attended, I think we would have had better attendance if it were not scheduled to be on the Friday before the meeting started. Many people were just registering or had not even arrived in Philadelphia when the reception started. This may not be an easy problem to solve, however, because of the scheduling constraints for all of the events at the meeting

2.0 Programming meeting (April 7, 2003, 7:30-9:30 AM)

Judy Franz and Donna Baudrau led the first meeting of the Program Committee for the April Meeting 2004. FGSA has half of session for this meeting, but we will effectively have a whole session to plan ourselves. (See below) A session consists of four 30-minute talks. I received a planning schedule for the 2004 April Meeting. The key dates that we need to remember are September 13, 2003 (the April Program Committee meeting at APS), January 17 (the Sorters meeting at APS), and January 26 (the name of an expert and a topic are due for the Students Lunch with Experts). Usually, a representative from each committee is sent to these meetings.

I also learned that evening sessions do not have to come out of our allotted sessions. Evening sessions usually have nonscientific topics, like public policy, for example.

3.0 Informal meetings

3.1 Programming

Gay Stewart, program chair of FEd, has donated half of one of their sessions to us, and has given us leave to organize the whole session ourselves. She said that it would be nice for them if the topic of the session had something to do with education, but that it is not necessary.

3.2 Society of Physics Students

I spoke to Gary White at the FGSA Student Reception. He is the director of the Society of Physics Students at the AIP. He wanted to know if there were some way that we could informally poll and document the pass rates for qualifiers at various graduate programs and the best and worst programs in terms of faculty diversity and related items. The SPS is mostly made up of undergraduate physics majors, so he was interested in topics that would help undergraduates decided on which graduate programs to attend.

3.3 Committee on the Status of Women in Physics Networking Breakfast

Sherry Yennello, Texas A&M University, was the speaker for this event. She gave a talk call, “We CAN Encourage Women to Thrive in Physics.” We all also received several brochures on topics related to women and physics. Of particular note was the brochure about the online APS Women Speaker List and the APS Minority Speakers List, which can be found at www.aps.org/educ/women-speaker.html and www.aps.org/educ/minority-speaker.html, respectively. I think that it might be worthwhile to utilize these lists to find speakers for our session next April. Although she was not present at this event, I was given the contact information of Margaret Murnane, who is the program chair of CSWP.

3.4 AIP Career Services

I spoke to Greg Carfine of the AIP Career Services who was running the Job Fair at the meeting. His organization has many resources that may be of interest to our membership. He said that the Career Services would be able to provide career workshops for us, which may be something else we can do at next year’s meetings.

This report was written by Deborah Chang for the Forum for Graduate Student Affairs.