

USNC-URSI
Executive Council Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2019
Boulder Residence Inn Hotel
Boulder, CO



1) Call to Order and Introductions (Sembiam Rengarajan)

Sembiam Rengarajan, the Chair of USNC-URSI, called the meeting to order at 8:15 am MST. The following Members of USNC were present at the Executive Council Meeting:

USNC-URSI Officers

Sembiam Rengarajan (Chair)
Michael Newkirk (Secretary and Chair-Elect)
David Jackson (Immediate Past Chair)
Gary Brown (Accounts Manager)

National Academies Staff (non-voting)

Ana Ferreras

Commission Chairs (or Vice Chairs/Secretaries)

Jamesina Simpson (Commission B Chair)
Eric L. Mokole (Commission C Chair)
Jonathan Chisum (Commission D Vice-Chair)
Thomas Hanley ((Commission F Vice-Chair)
Attila Komjathy (Commission G Chair)
Robert Moore (Commission H Chair)
Jeff Mangum (Commission J Chair)
Majid Manteghi (Commission K Chair)

USNC-URSI Member-At-Large

Wayne Scales

U. S. Officers of URSI

Ross Stone (Assistant Secretary General - Publications & GASS)

2) Approval of the Agenda (Rengarajan)

The agenda for the meeting was discussed and approved (M: Newkirk; S: Brown).

3) Approval of the Minutes (Rengarajan)

The minutes of the January 2018 Executive Council Meeting in Boulder, CO, were approved (M: Stone; S: Brown).

4) Comments from Commissions about the 2019 NRSM (Rengarajan)

- Sembiam showed final registration data that indicated the number of attendees was down from the last two years (365, vs. 420 in 2018 and 426 in 2017). Possible reasons include the partial government shutdown affecting NASA and NIST and related contractors, as well as the timing of this year's meeting (it is later than normal and some universities have already started their spring semester).

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- The number of papers and sessions was also lower than in previous years, in line with the reduced number of attendees (341 papers, vs. 416 in 2018; 46 sessions vs. 59 in 2018). The reduction in submitted papers was similar across the Commissions.
- With regard to scheduling of the Commission business meetings, one Commission elected to start their meeting immediately after their session was over, which was earlier than planned, to avoid losing potential attendees. They have found that if they wait, a substantial number of people leave and do not return. Commissions C and E have similar membership, but asked if the order of their meetings could alternate each year so that E does not always get the most people attending. It was suggested that perhaps food and beverage could be provided to keep people at the meetings.
- With regard to room assignments, the Commission F session on Small Satellites had standing room only conditions, as some were sitting on the steps. Other Commission F sessions were a bit crowded as well, so a larger room for those sessions would be helpful in the future.
- With regard to parallel sessions, there were no significant issues raised.
- The day of the week was printed on the top of each page in the program this year. Everyone agreed this was good and did not feel that adding the day to the session names was needed.
- For the post-conference survey, questions related to interest in short courses, workshops and tutorials will be added. No other suggestions were provided.
- There was a suggestion to add a listing of post-doc positions or research collaboration opportunities in the program or on the conference site. Ana mentioned there are post-doc opportunities available through the National Academies. She will work with Chelsea to make these more apparent on the USNC-URSI site. Jeff Mangum asked if the presentations could be uploaded in advance to a network drive accessible from each laptop so that loading files before each session would not be required, thus saving time. Christina will be asked if that is possible.
- Sembiam reported that all invited speaker talks (Historical, Plenary, Liebe) were recorded and will be made available on the USNC-URSI site in the near future, along with the speakers' presentations.

5) Commission Business Reports: Update on Officers and New Members (Newkirk)

- Mike noted that all USNC-URSI Commissions now have their full slate of officers.
- There were 13 new members elected into the Commissions this year, one of which was an Early Career Member. The Committee was reminded that the next in-person Business meetings will be held at the 2020 NARSM in Montreal, but if new members are elected by email voting, pass along the new member details ASAP so that NAS can issue a welcome letter.
- It was noted and appreciated that some Commissions had provided Special Session topics in their reports; however, given the length of time until the 2021 NRSM, they were not reviewed in detail. Commissions are encouraged to review each other's topics

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in case there are opportunities to organize joint sessions. We will need to finalize the Special Sessions in May 2020.

- There was a request to provide action items to the Commissions farther in advance so that they can better plan their meetings. Furthermore, any advance material (such as those provided by Ross about URSI-related meetings) would be helpful to the Commissions.

6) Commission Business Reports: Feedback from the Commissions (Newkirk)

- Feedback on advance download of NRSM Abstracts and Summaries:
 - The general consensus is that attendees liked this, but not all were aware the files were available. In the future, we will send an announcement email to all registered attendees as well as Commission Chairs. There was a request to make the files available earlier, so we will investigate that possibility.
- Interest in still getting the USB drive with registration?
 - Most Commissions said no, but some still like having both at least until a few more years of online availability is proven.
 - There was a question about whether the CNC needs to agree to doing this in the future. USNC-URSI leadership will check.
- Participation in the 2021 Singapore and 2022 Denver AP-S summer meetings?
 - All Commissions that typically participate in AP-S summer meetings said yes.
- Interest in using a conference app instead of the traditional printed program
 - General consensus was that this was not worth pursuing. If one was used, most still wanted a printed program. It was agreed to table this idea for a few years and see how the capability evolves.
 - A related comment: please add complete presenting author names to the session chair checklists to help the session chairs with introductions.
- Suggestions for USNC-URSI annual awards?
 - Commissions were generally in favor, and there were many ideas. The next likely step is to form an Awards Committee that can manage this activity.
- Participation on committee for short courses, tutorials and/or workshops
 - General positive interest. The exploratory committee that is being formed (per 2019 Business Meeting Minutes), can take these ideas and any received from the survey to make recommendations. Adding one or two students to this committee was suggested.
- Social Media Committee participation
 - There was general support and a few names mentioned as possible members. Emphasis on students and early career members was recommended.
 - It was noted that the new National Academies site should have some capability to support social media presence.

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- Women in Radio Science Chapter interest
 - Commissions were strongly in favor of starting this chapter and a few names were provided. USNC-URSI will be starting the Chapter and will start with the names provided.
- 2021 Plenary Session suggestions
 - A few ideas were provided. It was also mentioned that USNC-URSI leadership could form the Plenary session, as has been done roughly every five years.
- Support for reduced registration rate for post-doctoral attendees
 - All Commissions were supportive, but suggested that reduced registration be provided also for early career members. A question will be added to the general survey to determine how many would be eligible.
- Other topics of discussion:
 - It was suggested that the call for papers and website be more clear about applying for both the student travel grant AND student paper competition to encourage better participation. Also be clear on how the processes work.
 - It was suggested that authors be allowed to archive their presentations with the abstracts. There was some discussion about available options, including a site called “ArXiv.” USNC-URSI will investigate this as part of relocating the abstract archive.
 - Commissions are advised to start thinking about finding officers for the next triennium (2021-2023) to be elected at the 2020 NARSM.
 - It was suggested to add formatting/font size guidelines on the web site.
 - Commission J asked if break-out rooms could be made available for groups to meet since they are gathered. USNC-URSI will ask if Christina can arrange for this on a request-basis.
 - CNC-URSI is very interested in future collaborations with USNC-URSI. Commissions are encouraged to reach out to their CNC counterparts to see what can be done and contact USNC-URSI leadership if any assistance is needed.

7) Discussion of the 2020 NARSM in Montreal, Canada

- USNC-URSI will support student travel at \$800/student.
- There will be a student paper contest held jointly with CNC-URSI. Five cash prizes of \$1000, \$750, \$500, \$250 and \$150 will be awarded.
- CNC is interested in working with us.

8) Additional action items for Commissions

- At the end of 2019, international URSI Commissions will be asking for Vice-Chair nominees. USNC-URSI Commission Chairs or past-Chairs are strongly encouraged to get nominated, since we will only have one international Commission Chair from USNC-URSI in the next triennium.

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- At the same time, nominations will be sought for Early Career Representatives (ECRs) – we should nominate a strong candidate from each Commission.
- In the summer of 2019, USNC-URSI will be seeking nominees for junior and senior URSI awards. Identify and nominate strong candidates. Awards and respective criteria are provided on the URSI website.

9) Discussion of the 2021 NRSM in Boulder: Plenary Sessions (Rengarajan)

- A list of past Plenary sessions and unused ideas from the past four years was again provided for review. Commissions will be contacted by email in early 2020 to solicit and finalize the Plenary topic for 2021.

10) Discussion of the Commission Websites (Rengarajan)

- Commissions are again reminded to update their sites by February 28, 2019 with the help of Chelsea Bock.

11) Discussion of Commission Membership Lists

- Each Commission is to update their membership list with any new members' information and any changes for current members, then send to Michael Newkirk by February 28, 2019.
- New members will receive a letter from the National Academies welcoming them as USNC-URSI Commission members.

12) Other items for Discussion

- There was a question on how an Early Career Member (ECM) or Associate Member (AM) can be elevated to the next level. ECMs and AMs should ask a member to nominate them for higher level memberships once they have satisfied the criteria for higher level memberships. Commission Chairs will be reminded to tell these members about this at their next Business meetings.
- There was also some discussion on how new members apply. The instructions on the web site will be reviewed and updated to be clear on what the nominee needs to do and what the nominator must do.

13) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:40 am MST (M: Newkirk; S: Mokole).