

USNC URSI Commission J Business Meeting Minutes
July 6, 2020

Items from the USNC-URSI Business Meeting to announce to the Commission members:

- 1) Starting in 2021, postdocs and early career members will now get a discounted registration rate at the NRSMs in Boulder (details TBD).
- 2) At the 2021 NRSM, we will offer a tutorial session on proposal and paper writing for students and early career members. If you know of any volunteers who would like to participate in giving such a tutorial, please contact Jeff Mangum (jmangum@nrao.edu), who heads the NRSM tutorials committee.
- 3) The Joint Meeting Committee (JMC) is seeking proposals for the joint AP-S/URSI summer meeting for 2026 and after 2027.

Items from the USNC-URSI Business Meeting that require Commission discussion and/or input:

- 1) USNC-URSI leadership has agreed to join with IEEE AP-S for the 2021 ICEAA-APWC conference in September 2021, in Honolulu, HI. Please ask your Commissions whether they would like to participate in this meeting, which is two months after the AP-S/URSI meeting in Singapore and a few weeks after the 2021 URSI GASS in Rome, Italy.
 - There was no interest from Commission J in participating in this conference.
- 2) USNC-URSI is considering whether to continue printing programs for the NRSM and distribute only PDF programs. Please ask your members whether printed programs are still desired, and if so would they be willing to pay a \$5-10 fee to cover the printing cost.
 - There were members who expressed a desire to pay a fee for a printed version of the NRSM program. \$10 was not considered to be extortive.
 - As in past years, there was no interest in the program on the USB stick.
 - Several members requested that the online program be made more amenable to printing individual sessions.
 - There was a desire to be able to create a customized online program using an app.
- 3) This year we received only 7 Student Paper Competition entries, and from those only 5 were qualified to be judged. Typically, at least 15 entries are received. Do members have any feedback as to what may be the reasons?
 - It was noted that the advertisement of this year's student paper competition was not sent out properly in fall 2019, and a follow-up announcement was sent in February 2020. By this point it was suggested that response to this year's competition was muted by COVID-19.
 - The consensus was this this year's drop in interest might be due to an unusual notification process in comparison to previous years.
- 4) USNC-URSI is making plans to hold the 2021 NRSM either entirely online, or (if COVID restrictions relax) in person at Boulder with a partial online program. Any comments on this? If we do decide to hold an in-person meeting, what percentage of members will travel to attend?

- There was some desire to hold live sessions in order to allow for interaction between presenters and attendees
 - The current format for the NARSM which used asynchronous pre-recorded sessions was felt to be too disconnected from attendees.
 - There was a suggestion that the presentations/sessions be made available at the beginning of the meeting for viewing by attendees, then hold sessions live with presenter/attendee interaction. I believe that this is a modification of option 1 and 2.
 - No matter what format is chosen, there was a strong desire to have synchronous online sessions to allow presenters and attendees the opportunity to interact in real-time.
 - Even though there was a desire to attend in-person, there was a belief that it would just not be safe to attend in person in January 2021. It was also felt that the number of in-person attendees would be small, diminishing the value to in-person attendance.
 - There was a discussion about registration fees associated with attendees who present. The current NARSM is charging \$199/\$99 for regular/student attendees who present, independent of whether the contributions were one or two pages. For one-page contributions it was felt that the NARSM meeting fees were too high, and might have limited interest in presenting at this meeting. It was suggested that USNC URSI not repeat this model.
 - Regarding whether to charge a registration fee for a virtual meeting or not, it was felt that even a virtual meeting would have added value with a nominal registration fee. Perhaps this nominal registration fee could be used to provide better virtual meeting services (app for session program interaction, online session organization software, etc.).
- 5) John Volakis has a proposal to move the NRSM to Miami, FL, beginning in 2022. (Commission Chairs should have slides from the proposal.) After a site visit and further discussion, we may vote on this proposal during the 2021 NRSM. Are there any comments about the proposal?
- No strong positive or negative response to this proposal.
 - Distance between conference center and hotels was viewed as a negative.
 - There was a question about whether the FIU option would allow for more flexibility in scheduling the January meeting. The NRSM meeting scheduling in early January every year is a constant issue for Commission J given that it often conflicts with the AAS meeting at the same time.
 - Is this a proposal for just USNC URSI or USNC URSI and APS?
 - It is considered a plus for Boulder that CU has a department that conducts radio astronomy research (a very large and active one, in fact). It is not obvious to Commission J that FIU has faculty that conduct research in traditional Commission J activities.
 - The fact that Florida is “off in a corner” while Boulder is more centrally located for attendees coming from all over the country was considered a positive for Boulder.
 - The more adverse weather in Boulder was also considered a positive for more focussed attendance by attendees (fewer distractions).
- 6) Seeking nominations for Secretary and Chair Elect.
- Those interested in running for this position were told to contact Sembiam

Additional feedback from the Commission: There was an interest in developing a special session for the 2021 NRSM by Thomas Kuiper (JPL) and Yahya Rahmat-Samii (UCLA) on the topic of

cubesats/smallsats for astronomy. Tom and Yahya were told that if he wants to actually hold this special session that he needs to organize it by July 17.

There was also a request to get participation information (from measurements of online connection to sessions) for the current NARSM to assess interest in URSI. This could be used as a measure of the effectiveness of the virtual meeting format.

Attendees:

Larry D'Addario

Dave DeBoer

Steve Durand

Alyson Ford

Ken Kellermann

Tom Kuiper

Joe Lazio

Jeff Mangum

Scott Payne

Alison Peck

Marian Pospieszalski

Yahya Rahmat-Samii

Richard Simpson

Nithyanandan Thyagarajan