

PENN STATE NUCLEAR ENGINEERING SOCIETY

MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 12, 2014 – PSNES Annual Meeting

Participants:

PSNES Officers & Board Participants

Jim Stavely – President (in-person)
James Stover – VP / President Elect (via telecon)
Rick Etling – Past President (via telecon)
Tom Richard – Secretary / Treasurer (in-person)
Arthur Motta – Ex-Officio NE Program Chair (with vote) (in-person)
Catherine Perego – ANS Student Section President (in-person)

PSNES Directors

John Atchison (in-person)
Hilary Neal (via telecon)
Michael Pantano (via telcon)
Joe Sholtis (via telecon)
Jim Tusar (via telecon)
Doug Wood (via telecon)

PSNES Members / Other

Susan Bohna (in-person)

OPENING

Jim Stavely began the meeting at 8:30 am and welcomed everyone for attending the PSNES annual meeting. The meeting was called to order, a roll call was made, and a quorum was confirmed to conduct business.

OLD BUSINESS

The minutes from the previous business meeting of March 7, 2014, are approved.

ANS Student Conference:

Catherine Perego started off with a summary of the ANS student conference held at Penn State, which was an outstanding success. Some quick stats: 535 registrants, 6 panels, 95 student presentations, 48 posters, 27 awards on Saturday. There was great feedback from participants.

Tour and workshop highlights: 68 students went to TMI for a tour of the site. One of the tour guides was in the Control Room during the accident. There was a workshop held by the Institute of Nuclear Materials Management (INMM). Melissa Marshall, a senior lecturer in Penn State's department of communication arts and sciences (also a part of the MNE department), spoke about how to give better presentations. There was a tour of Beaver Stadium and the museum. There were four tours of the Breazeale Nuclear Reactor. There was a Graduate Student workshop. The RadioChem Workshop was led by Dr. Amanda Johnsen, a senior research scientist for radiochemistry here in the MNE department. A workshop on COBRA (thermal-hydraulic code) was given by Doug Miller. A workshop on SNAP (a GUI) was given by the developer. Don Hoffman, the ANS President, had a surprise show for conference attendees with a performance the by The Capitol Steps (skits on "Greece" and Angela Merkel), and afterwards invited everyone for a social at Levels.

Dr. Motta spoke about the technical panels, which were outstanding. Of the highlights I was able to write down... The panel on small modular reactors (SMRs) was moderated by Don Kelly. Ron Gilgenbach moderated the panel on fusion. Dr. Motta continued with a summary of the career fair, technical student sessions, and conference dinner.

The career fair was very successful, with a great turnout by the students. The fair was very well put together and organized. A large number of companies were represented, and the employers were happy with the amount of participation.

Each technical student session had 2 or 3 judges. In summary, there were 14 different tracks and 95 presentations. Penn State students were monitoring the sessions (over 20 volunteers). Rachel Shapiro (grad student in MNE), in addition to her technical session volunteer duties, also helped by driving students to Harrisburg!

The conference dinner had great attendance - there were approximately 600 people – and Jack Brenizer had never seen the room so full! The presenter, Dr. Kate Jackson (senior vice president of research and development at Westinghouse) spoke about innovation, and focused on how it takes a long time for innovation to occur in the nuclear industry. For example, the AP600 eventually turned into the AP1000. During dinner, there were 27 awards that were handed out. And the students put together an a-cappella group performance!

Rachel Baker is working with Catherine to capture highlights of the Student Conference on the website. Rachel took a lot of pictures at the conference, and they going through pictures. Rachel wrote up a story for the newsletter, and Catherine is editing. The next newsletter is in December. So for now, it will be located on the website. It was suggested this can also be put in the College of Engineering letter.

Texas A&M will be hosting the ANS Student Conference next year.

Budget:

Next year, the PSNES Leadership & Service Award will be completely funded by Pat Loftus. Then, once it is approved by the board of trustees, it will be fully-endowed. Next year will be the first award. Once the Award does become endowed, PSNES should close that account and transfer into the endowed account.

Tom Richard reported on the PSNES finances, which he was provided by Rachel Baker. The PSNES General account had a total balance of \$2,470.26, with an income of \$5,440.00 and expenditures of \$2,969.74. The PSNES Undergraduate Awards account had a total balance of \$200.00, with an income of \$6,200.00 and expenditures of \$6,000.00. These balances are based on a time-frame of January / February 2014.

PSNES website:

Joe Sholtis started a discussion on the PSNES website, and we discussed the info and links that were currently on the website, as well as the website items he had discussed with Rachel Baker. Rachel receives all of the membership information directly. It was discussed whether there was an easier way to update the membership list. Also, if we wanted to do an email broadcast, whether the alumni database could be used, and whether it could be done in a timely manner. The alumni database has been handled by the College of Engineering.

Hilary Neal has been maintaining the PSNES LinkedIn website. There are over 80 members on the site. **Joe will take an action to talk to Rachel to put a link of the LinkedIn site on the PSNES website.**

In order to continue promotion of the new website, the next version of the MNE Letter will have a link in the Newsletter. Photos for the website are encouraged, which can be sent to Rachel so they can be added to the website. If you have ideas for the website, please let Joe know. Also, a counter is going to be added to the website to see how many hits the website receives.

There was a discussion on the need to develop a PSNES logo, started by Joe Sholtis. The Breazeale Nuclear Reactor would be a great background. A timeframe for the new logo was discussed. **John Atchison will take the action to develop a logo by this Fall.** Joe Sholtis suggested the idea to have a competition to generate a PSNES logo. Jim Stavelly said PSNES could offer an award for the logo competition. Susan Bohna suggested that we should check with Rachel Baker about the logo, and it is possible that Dana Marsh would want to discuss this as well. This is because the Dean would like to put some funds into it. The new logo could tie-in for the new Fall Semester, where the competition could be started in September, and it could be ready for the November PSNES meeting. Also, it was suggested that a link for the competition could be added to the Angel Site where students access their courses online.

Mentoring Program:

The mentoring program was discussed. During the past year, PSNES tried to assign mentors to students. For the students, our main priority should be to let them know that

mentoring is available, and that they can choose to take advantage of it. Would it be better to get the PSNES members to campus to meet the students? Maybe during orientation for undergrads, we could have PSNES members present to meet students (face-to-face mentoring). PSNES does this already, where they have an event for the students and alumni and some questions (in a game format) to discuss...before getting to the food! PSNES could join this event.

The program goal is to have a larger number of students, but it should remain student-driven. The participation between PSNES members and students from the past year was discussed. It was suggested that a testimonial from Joe's mentee could be given in a video interview.

Do we have a volunteer to take on the PSNES organizing for this August? **Dr. Motta is going to take an action item to see who would be willing to come, and he will ask for a specific date, and will detail the time commitment.** Sunday before classes would be August 24th.

End of old business.

New BUSINESS

Program and Department Update:

Dr. Motta reported on the NucE program and department news, which covered student enrollment, research in the department, distance program, new research opportunities, and other topics. Some notes are below.

The NucE program has large class sizes. Last year the program had 85 students, which was the largest in the country. Michigan was next with 56.

The research within the department is going well, with several large research contract wins. For example, the Nuclear Security program is on its second iteration, and the Radiochemistry program is in its second year.

In the distance program, a Westinghouse employee (Cesare Frepoli) is teaching a new course.

A discussion about changes in PSU leadership and departments was started in order to keep current with personnel changes.

A discussion about research on modular reactors was started. The department has been talking to Holtec and NuScale. The department also put out a proposal for the development of sensors and monitoring devices and the assessment of degradation in dry storage canisters.

For the new Student Lounge, there is no definite schedule at this time.

Dr. Ivanov is putting together a nuclear power plant simulator. It will be a PC-driven simulator. He is also in the works of putting together a computer lab in the Reber Building in order to have a location for running computer codes and the simulator.

Student enrollment was discussed. The NucE undergraduate population is about 250 students. Lab classes for NucE 450 and 451 now have four sections. Each section can only take about 27 students, and that is a tight fit. NucE is not the only engineering department with these challenges. Mechanical Engineering has a limit of 250 students in their Junior Year, and they are expecting 400 students. Enrollment increase at the university is driven a lot by engineering students. There are 13 engineering programs, and 9 are controlled by GPA (e.g., Mechanical Engineering has a 3.0 GPA requirement).

Student Chapter:

Jim Stavely started off a discussion about what PSNES can do to help the ANS Student Chapter. Catherine Perego discussed upcoming ANS Student Chapter meetings in November and December. In order to help keep graduating students connected, Catherine will be sending out an email with a link to sign-up for PSNES. The ANS Student Chapter will continue to be involved with the Time Capsule.

PSEAS has a grant for establishing an “Early Career Award.” This is another angle to keep recent graduates connected with the department. This award is a \$500 grant, and it is set-up for PSNES. Most likely the Early Career Award would be set-up such that the alumnus/alumna would receive the award, and then the money could go to the student (need-based student).

Jim Stavely has also been talking to Rachel Baker about an alumni web-page for news items. For example, graduating students could submit news items about their future plans. The site could post stories and items like in ANS Nuclear News – for example, so and so has been appointed VP of this company. But the site could also share news on students and similar items.

Congratulations to Catherine Perego on her fantastic work as President of the ANS Student Chapter! Matt Wargon will be taking over as the new President of the ANS Student Chapter and will be receiving the baton on Wednesday (i.e., April 16th).

PSEAS Update:

Jim Stavely reported on the Penn State Engineering Alumni Society (PSEAS), and started off by discussing how the alumni programs are all trying to “boost” their mentoring programs. PSEAS does a football tailgate, which PSNES could do as well. This would allow for some face-time with the students. Whenever the ANS Student Chapter has tailgates, they have a great turnout (40-50 students). PSNES could discuss supporting an ANS Student Chapter tailgate with the new President. It was also suggested that PSNES could support the alumni event at the Jordan Center (around November 4th). Also, through PSEAS there are opportunities to talk to the incoming freshmen about attending PSU.

PSNES Priorities:

A discussion on the top priorities for PSNES over the next year was discussed. Historically, PSNES tries to focus on 3 main priorities. The mentoring program and outreach were suggested, where outreach would include expansion of membership and reconnecting alumni - in addition to the PSNES website and LinkedIn group.

Hilary Neal reported on the PSNES LinkedIn group, which is great. The LinkedIn group has been active with discussion topics and news, and it is an easy place to communicate and find alumni on the group-site. Alumni and students are encouraged to participate and join, as the LinkedIn group has continued to grow in membership.

Rick Etling reported on how it was encouraging to see younger alumni join the PSNES board and be involved with the communications. This effort will help continue the focus on outreach and reconnecting alumni. The use of new media for communications has been great – for example, the LinkedIn group that Hilary has been running. As communications for PSNES grows, the group can utilize the media that is best suited, whether it is Twitter or Facebook. It was suggested that the ANS Student Chapter could have a Twitter account for communication outreach.

PSNES Board Change:

Jim Stavely discussed having James Stover transition over to President in the near-term. Someone could backfill James' role as Vice President. They are both in plant outages right now, and will work together for the transition. The timeline for the transition was discussed, whether it would be over the next 3-4 weeks or maybe by mid-summer. **Jim Stavely took an action to send a message out to the group.**

PSU NEWS & EVENTS ROUNDTABLE

Jim Stavely reported on upcoming events and meetings, and opened up the floor to the group.

Tom Richard reported on the good feedback he has received on Meeting Minutes, and said to continue the group effort by providing any feedback and suggestions.

PSNES, as a group, was glad to Susan Bohna in attendance, and the group talked about the overall timing and schedule of meetings.

Doug Wood started a discussion on the Time Capsule. Dr. Motta has the Time Capsule in his office, and it is about the size of 3 or 4 coke bottles. As a result, items need to be a little smaller. Items can be sent to Dr. Motta.

Doug Wood started a discussion on the PSNES focus areas / priorities. He likes the idea of having a third focus area for Membership, since Outreach and Membership is usually divided into two areas.

Joe Sholtis started a discussion about the PSNES strategic organization. He had a suggestion or proposal about whether, from an organizational standpoint, PSNES should have a strategic plan to look at strengths and weaknesses. This would set a path forward to meet our goals and priorities. For example, there are people that do “strategic planning exercises” for a living, and they could cost less than a \$1,000. PSNES decided that this should be an active discussion point for the next meeting, and other example Strategy Plans could be sent out. Also, it was discussed whether PSNES is a large enough group to utilize a strategy plan.

Jim Tusar highlighted that we had a very productive meeting, and shared his thoughts and support on several items.

Joe Sholtis discussed LinkedIn and the PSNES website. He encouraged the group to take photos and send to Rachel (or him) so they can be uploaded to the site.

The ANS Student Conference held at PSU had an “app” for the Student Conference! First to do it!

Jim Stavely and James Stover can work-out a date for the next meeting - possibly a teleconference in another month or two.

The meeting was adjourned at Noon.