

**PENN STATE NUCLEAR ENGINEERING SOCIETY**  
**Meeting Minutes – September 24, 2017 – PSNES Teleconference (11am – 1pm)**

**Participants:**

**PSNES Officers and Directors (with vote):**

Doug Wood - PSNES President  
Hilary Neal - Secretary/Treasurer  
Arthur Motta - NucE Program Chair  
Jim Tusar - At-Large Director  
Duane Karchner - At-Large Director  
Michael Pantano - At-Large Director (with proxy for Director Matt Ellis)  
John Atchison - At-Large Director  
Jeremy Barnhart - At-Large Director  
Hamilton Gubanc - At-Large Director  
Matt Wargon - At-Large Director  
Rick Etling - Immediate Past President

**PSNES Board Members (ex officio members without vote):**

Emily Humes - PSU ANS Student Chapter President

**PSNES Members**

Pat Loftus  
Joe Sholtis

**Other Attendees**

Kerry Smalec - PSU Women in Nuclear Student Chapter President  
Candace Davison – RSEC Assistant Director of Operations

**Note: The meeting notes follow the order of the agenda rather than the actual order, which was dictated by the availability of attendees.**

**Opening**

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am by Doug Wood. Including the 1 proxy vote, 11 voting members were present. A quorum was confirmed (8 or more voting members) for conducting official PSNES business.

**Old Business**

**Approval of August 20, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

The minutes were approved for the August 20, 2017 meeting, with changes as noted by Pat Loftus and also provided separately by Kenan Unlu (RSEC Update portion).

**Constitution Change Status and Summary** (Pat Loftus)

Pat Loftus distributed and summarized the latest draft changes to the Constitution, including but not limited to

- Adding WIN, INMM, and Alpha Nu Sigma student presidents as non-voting members of our Board (similar to ANS)
- Restructuring the President and Vice President as separate offices and terms (eliminate the 6-year commitment for the VP/President/past president progression)
- Eliminating term limits for At-Large Directors

The Committee (Etling, Loftus, Wood) requested further suggestions and comments from the Board by October 23 to support formalizing and approving the proposed changes before asking for general membership approval.

**2017-2018 Beecher-Loftus Service & Leadership Award Selection Status**

Arthur mentioned that Angie Lesko, who had originally been handling this has transferred to another position, resulting in the need for him to personally coordinate with the graduate office to ensure that things remain on track. Arthur will provide another update at the next meeting.

**2017-2018 PSNES Outstanding Early Career Award Website Changes and Selection Status**

Matt Wargon presented proposed changes to the PSNES website that improve the description of the award and the process of selecting the winner; the Board agreed these changes should be made to the website. In addition, Matt and Michael Pantano have rewritten guidance for the process to select the winner in response to previous feedback. Arthur Motta reported one submission has been received so far this year, and observed there appears to be a need to include additional guidance on the application regarding the type of information needed about the nominee, the level of detail expected, and selection

criteria for a successful nomination. For example, is a paragraph enough, do we want to see a resume, etc? Also, do we need criteria for who is on the selection committee and why? In simple terms, the objective is to develop guidance appropriate to determine whether a submitted nomination should be accepted or rejected. **ACTION:** Matt, Mike, and Arthur to work on answering some of these questions.

### **WIN Region I Workshop at Penn State – Report** (Candace Davison & Kerri Smalek)

Of the ~70 registered attendees, 20-25 were undergrad students and the rest were professionals. Since there were fewer students than expected, the revenue collected was sufficient to cover costs due to the higher non-student registration. The day went very well due to good support, and the participant comments were very positive. The workshop was attended by students from RPI, Bloomsberg University, and Penn Tech, as well as Penn State.

## **New Business**

### **2017-2018 PSNES Strategic Planning** (Neal, Wood)

**[Note – This agenda item as documented here was intentionally an open dialog on the strategic direction of PSNES going forward, rather than a reiteration or confirmation of previous objectives and priorities. The discussion is intended to be the basis for planning the PSNES path forward, which will take place “offline” with a smaller group.]**

Why are we active in this society?

- Feeling of wanting to “give back” to the nuclear engineering program at Penn State – PSNES provides an outlet to do this
- Having the ability to connect with alumni and have that network of people that can help you
- The importance of networking and industry connection really does depend on where you are at in your career and how much value you place on that aspect

Issues

- Lacking a mechanism to communicate with new grads and with graduating students – how do we reach out and engage with students who have graduated and may be interested in reconnecting with the program? Joe Sholtis has ideas for a “sample email communication” as a blast to those on the call if there is interest.
- Some new grads feel that an officer role might be too much commitment – can we get them involved in smaller projects?

Ideas

- Can we market our PSNES mentorship services to graduates in the industry who might be losing their job or finding the market shrinking and not really knowing what their next step is?
- During the PSNES Spring event (see next meeting topic), can have one of the talks be on the importance of networking and utilizing career services – can we incentivize students to attend the topic in some manner? **ACTION:** First step is to reach out to Emily and Jeremy to see if this kind of idea would fit – if they agree, then Dr. Motta would need to appeal to the faculty to see how they might consider supporting this (asking faculty to offer bonus points to students as part of a class for student participation in such an extracurricular event is not an option – Motta)
- Regional events? Is there a way we can better promote existing opportunities and events to cross-promote PSNES in the sections?
- Senior capstone project involvement – fashion a do-able project, get committed resources, get faculty approval;
- Serve as a “coordinator” between HR offices of hiring companies and high potential students

### **Spring PSNES/Student Career Development and Social Event** (Jeremy Barnhart & Emily Humes)

Jeremy Barnhart and Emily Humes led the discussion of this event, which is still in the early planning stage. They have already confirmed student interest in a career/mentoring event. Key discussion points as follows:

- Proposed date January 22 or 23, 2018 (the same weekend as student career fair)
- Reber eKnowledge Commons preferred venue
- Theme - networking/workshop, where PSNES engages with student body and MNE department to provide mentorship and support to students for what they can do to prepare for their careers
- Goal - make it an annual event, timed right before the career fair
- Format and approach – ideas include
  - series of short talks with cross-functional alumni speakers covering a wide range of topics such as resume building, interviewing, state of the industry. Sholtis - Covering non-traditional nuclear areas will widen student understanding of where they can seek employment to

- improve their chance of success (quality assurance, equipment operators, risk analysis, nuclear fire protection, etc.)
- “Speed Dating” session – have a roundtable where PSNES mentors sit down with students who attend and just have informal talk. PSNES mentors list their strengths in advance (or on stand-up cards); students who are seeking to improve that particular skill come to them
  - Serve refreshments and extend into evening to maximize student turnout
  - Consider option to link remote alumni panelists
  - PSNES speakers tentatively available, depending on specific date/time: Karchner, Neal, Wood, Gubanc, Atchison, Tusar, Sholtis (if Skype available)

The Board agreed PSNES will continue planning for this event and discuss at next meeting (confirm date and venue, identify alumni speakers and areas of expertise, develop/approve budget and identify source(s) of funding).

#### **Student Mentoring Discussion** (Emily Humes)

Emily Humes made a suggestion about adding a request link where students can ask for a mentor or ask about a specific subject vs. only having instruction as to how PSNES members can become a mentor; Doug Wood also mentioned PSEAS mentoring program and some of the struggles they have been going through in terms of driving a sustainable mentorship program – needs to be student-driven; **ACTION:** *Emily and Pat to further look into potential connections with career services and what are our best platform options to connect? Also will look into potential connections with PSMES, PSEAS, etc.*

#### **PSNES “Business Card” Reprinting** (Wood)

A motion was made and unanimously approved to print an additional box of PSNES Business Cards (same vendor, same design as previous box) using PSNES funds.

#### **2018 is an Election Year – Interest in Nominating Committee** (Wood)

Matt Wargon is interested in leading the Nominating Committee and will take the first initiative to identify positions up for election in 2018 and candidates

#### **Next Meeting Date and Time**

The next teleconference will be October 8 at 11am. This will be a special purpose meeting with limited attendance (quorum not needed unless funding needs are identified) for the sole purpose of planning for PSNES support of a Multi-Program reception at the ANS National Winter Meeting in Washington DC on the evening of October 30, 2017.