

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

Governance Document

December 10, 2005

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I. Physics Department Overview

A. Physics Department Mission

The general goals of the Illinois State University Department of Physics are to:

- provide a high quality undergraduate physics experience, offering physics and physics teaching degrees as well as innovative programs in computational physics and physics/engineering.
- exhibit leadership in education, curriculum development, and instructional technologies on a national level, with a particular emphasis on computational physics education.
- carry out research and scholarship that are recognized on a national/international level and that provide a supportive learning environment in which undergraduate students are active participants.
- establish and maintain the preeminent undergraduate physics teacher education program in Illinois.
- develop and maintain effective courses that support the University-wide commitment to general education.
- provide a strong outreach program that extends to members of the campus, the wider community, and the profession

B. Physics Degree Programs

The department of Physics seeks to provide a high quality undergraduate physics program with national visibility and recognition. To accomplish this overall objective, the department maintains a strong set of degree sequences and general education courses, fosters excellent teaching, provides a superior learning environment, supports quality research and scholarship, offers meaningful public outreach activities, and strives to increase access to its programs for students throughout Illinois. The Bachelor of Science in Physics includes three four-year, degree sequences:

1. **Physics:** This program is designed for graduate or professional school-bound students as well as those desiring a rigorous foundation in physics and applied physics for industrial employment.
2. **Computer Physics:** This innovative program integrates a solid background in physics and modeling with current computer simulation expertise. Students are prepared for a variety of careers involving numerical simulation of complex systems, from engineering and science to the financial world.

3. **Physics Teacher Education:** This program educates students to become effective physics teachers at the high school level. The ISU PTE sequence offers significantly more physics content and graduates more teachers than any other program in the state.

In addition, the department offers an **Engineering Physics** program, a five-year, dual degree plan of study available to students under the umbrella BS in Physics sequence. This Engineering Physics plan of study is shared with engineering programs at other universities, primarily the College of Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and is designed to graduate engineers with a flexible foundation in physics.

C. Physics Department Quality

There are a number of indicators that demonstrate the quality of the physics program at Illinois State:

- Undergraduate physics majors have high ACT scores with an average ACT composite of 27.
- The department ranks as one of the top two producers of physics BS degrees in Illinois and in the top 10 of all 500 physics bachelor's-only departments in the nation.
- Faculty and staff are highly successful in obtaining external grants from major national agencies such as NSF, NASA, and DOE and in publishing scholarly works that support the student learning environment. Our average publication rate is nearly four times the national average as determined in a 2001 study by the Research Corporation.
- Undergraduate physics majors participate in faculty research programs, present at many conferences, and co-author publications in major scientific journals. Our students have been awarded many regional or national awards for research, including the top national award, the Apker award, and prestigious Goldwater Fellowship awards.
- Program alumni are successful in entering graduate and professional schools and in finding a wide variety of technical employment.
- The department has received two national awards from the U.S. Department of Energy for its Computational Physics sequence: one for a course in the sequence (1995) and one for the entire degree sequence (1997).
- The department's Physics Teacher Education program has received national attention in an American Association of Physics Teachers white paper entitled "The Preparation of Excellent Teachers at All Levels," which states that the ISU program is "*considered one of the most innovative and the largest in the nation*" (Reference: Lila M. Adair and Christopher J. Chiaverina, AAPT Planning Meeting, July 27-28, 2000, Toronto, Ontario, Canada). We were invited to join the national PhysTEC teacher education coalition group

in 2003.

- The department serves as a model for undergraduate physics programs on a national level: The department was a case study at a national conference on *Revitalizing the Undergraduate Physics Curriculum* in 1998 and again in 2000 at a national conference for physics department chairs. Several individual faculty have been invited to speak on our undergraduate research program and our computational physics program, as well as the solar car project.
- Two department faculty received the *APS Prize to a Faculty Member for Research in an Undergraduate Institution* in 2006 recognizing nationally the department's program of research with undergraduates.
- A student in the department's Physics Teacher Education degree sequence was awarded the *Barbara Lotze Scholarship*, representing national recognition from the AAPT.

In an article devoted to strategies for building successful physics programs, a nationally known author cites the physics program at Illinois State for its “*dedicated faculty*” with “*an almost unbelievable level of faculty activity and co-authored published papers by undergraduates*” (Reference: Robert Ehrlich, *American Journal of Physics*, Vol. 66, pp. 79-86 (1998)).

D. Physics Research

The physics department carries on state-of-the-art research in the following areas:

- *Intense Laser Physics*: theory and computational modeling of the interaction of intense laser emissions with matter; applications include the recently discovered (by the ISU group) “cycloatoms” and soft matter, as well as a fundamental resolution of the long-standing “Klein Paradox”. Funded by NSF and The Research Corporation.
- *Space Physics*: theory, modeling, and spacecraft data analysis focused on the Earth’s magnetosphere, magnetic storms, and auroral substorms. Funded by NASA.
- *Materials science and nanotechnology*: applied computational and experimental research on semiconductors, quantum “dots”, ferro-electric materials, and surface electronic states. Funded by NSF and The Research Corporation.
- *Atomic and molecular physics*: experimental and computational studies of the fundamental properties of “exotic” atoms, spin polarized atoms, and the spectra of molecules. Funded by The Research Corporation and DOE.
- *Statistical Physics, nonlinear dynamics, chaos*: Computational, theoretical, and experimental work on microcluster phase transitions, nonlinear plasma transport, and phase synchronization control of chaos. Funded by NASA and The Research Corporation.

- *Physics Pedagogy*: textbooks and physics education research in mathematical physics, physics teacher education, computational physics, and web-based asynchronous learning.

With no graduate program, the physics department research program is undergraduate centered, offering a multitude of out-of-class experiences for students from short projects to cutting-edge research accompanied by conference presentations and journal article authorship. In addition, the department has funding for student research visits to China, under the NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program.

II. Physics Department Organization and Governance

A. Governance Structures: Committees and Coordinator Assignments

The Physics Department is a small department and has a relatively simple structure. With the Department Chairperson, eleven faculty, five AP staff, and two Civil Service staff, communication is often informal, through discussions and email. Nonetheless, the department has a formal committee structure and several coordinator service positions as enumerated below. With the exception of the Department Faculty Status Committee (DFSC), membership and committee charges are determined by the Chair.

1. **DFSC**: Membership and function of the DFSC are described in the Physics Department ASPT document, attached as Appendix I.
2. **Facilities Committee**: Main duty is to distribute the bulk of the department's equipment budget and that portion of the contractual budget allocated to faculty/staff software. In addition, the Chair consults this committee regarding facilities issues including space, renovations, and repairs to the department's existing space. The Facilities Committee is the only committee with an assigned budget, determined annually by the Chair.
3. **Physics Curriculum Committee**: Duties include decision making on submitted course and curricular proposals, performing periodic assessments of the department's curriculum and proposing changes the committee feels are necessary, monitoring proposals being considered from other departments at the College and University levels and commenting officially as appropriate.
4. **Nominations and Awards Committee**: Duties include locating awards, prizes, scholarships, etc. available to department faculty, staff, and students, and selecting appropriate nominees from the department. Final determination of nominees is performed in concert with the Chair. In particular, this committee determines the recipients of all departmental awards and prizes each year.
5. **Proposal Review Committee**: This committee reviews URG proposals from department faculty, ranks them in each category, and passes the rankings on to the College.

Committee members should also be available to advise faculty on proposals to external funding agencies, as needed.

6. **Recruitment Committee:** This committee works with the Chair on issues regarding recruitment and retention of physics majors. Duties include actively communicating with applicants, participating in admissions Open House and Showcase events, designing departmental advertising (brochures, web pages, posters, etc.), and assisting the Chair in determination of departmental freshman scholarship recipients.
7. **Strategic Planning Committee:** This committee is by volunteer only and is not assigned by the Chair. It plays an advisory role in issues of both short and long term planning and decision making.
8. **Colloquium Coordinator:** The coordinator invites speakers for the Physics Colloquium, arranges itineraries for each speaker (including dinner guests), oversees advertising with the assistance of the department secretary, and allocates reimbursement funds for speakers. The colloquium budget is determined by the Chair.
9. **Engineering Physics Coordinator:** The coordinator oversees the Engineering Physics degree program, playing the role of chief advisor and interfacing with the Curriculum Committee on issues regarding this program.
10. **Computer Physics Coordinator:** The coordinator oversees the Computer Physics degree sequence, playing the role of chief advisor and interfacing with the Curriculum Committee on issues regarding this sequence.
11. **Library Coordinator:** The coordinator is the department liaison to the science librarian and oversees the physics conference room book and journal collection.
12. **Website Coordinator:** The coordinator oversees regular updates of the department website and works with the Chair in planning website redesigns.

In addition to these committees and coordinator positions, there are several other service roles available, both within and liaisons outside the department, but these are not typically involved in department governance in any sense. Finally, ad-hoc committees, such as an Introductory Lab Committee and an Assessment Committee, are formed as needed for specific needs.

B. Staff Responsibilities

Seven staff members play crucial support roles in the department, whose jobs often interface with governance issues. A list of basic duties follows.

1. **Department Secretary:** Among other things, the secretary is the department's receptionist, performs clerical duties, supervises student secretaries, handles textbook orders, and assists with department record keeping and databases. The secretary oversees College and

University election voting in the department and plays the role of contact person for faculty and staff searches.

2. ***Assistant to the Chair:*** This position handles a variety of tasks including record keeping, bookkeeping, advising Engineering Physics majors who have already transferred to their chosen engineering school, editing the alumni newsletter, and assisting with a variety of tasks including advising, outreach, women and minority issues, etc.. The Assistant handles the minutes and voting at department meetings, and attends College lead staff meetings and academic advisor meetings.
3. ***Director of Physics Teacher Education:*** The PTE director has responsibility for that sequence, including designing the curriculum, teaching the specialized methods courses, advising PTE majors, keeping abreast of state and accrediting body regulations and guidelines, and arranges clinical experiences and student teaching positions at high schools. As such the PTE Director is involved in all departmental decision making involving this sequence.
4. ***Planetarium Coordinator:*** The Coordinator handles all aspects of the ISU Planetarium, including acquiring, developing, and presenting shows, managing the Planetarium Gift Shop, supervising student assistants, troubleshooting problems with Planetarium equipment, and assists with strategic planning and fundraising for the planetarium. This position also oversees the planetarium income account and the planetarium budget.
5. ***General Education Lab Coordinator:*** The Coordinator handles all aspects of general education laboratories and assists with other introductory laboratories not in the general education program. The position supervises PHY 102 lab monitors and graders, oversees lab curricular development for the course, and teaches lectures in the course, as well as in other general education course lecture sections. The Lab Coordinator oversees the general education lab budget, assigned by the Chair, and interfaces with all general education faculty and instructional staff. In addition, the position assists with a variety of departmental outreach programs consistent with broadening public appreciation and knowledge of general physics.
6. ***Physics Department Computer System Manager:*** The System Manager has responsibility for all computers, networks, printers, and peripheral devices under departmental purview, excluding those purchased for personal home use or purchased by grant funds for specific uses. The position also plays a role in keeping faculty, staff, and students up-to-date with the latest equipment and software, and plays an advisory role on new computer equipment and software purchases. In addition, the System Manager teaches courses and/or labs as required and assigned by the Chair.
7. ***Physics Model Maker:*** The Model Maker has responsibility for the department's machine shop and handles machining and woodworking for departmental needs in instructional and research labs and for major projects such as the ISU Solar Car. The position also assists faculty, staff, and students in the shop and with design work as needed.

Further discussion of some specific staff functions can be found in later sections.

C. Department Meetings

The Chair convenes Department Meetings as necessary to discuss and conduct department business, typically once per month during the academic year. All department faculty and staff are invited to attend and suggest agenda items. Meetings are conducted by the Chair, with minutes taken by the Assistant to the Chair. The Chair's meeting presentation slides and the minutes for each meeting are available online on the department's secure website (<https://mallard.ilstu.edu/phydemo>). Meetings are generally conducted in an informal manner, with the exception of votes and elections, which are performed as follows:

- **Votes:** when an issue requires a vote, unless a show of hands is agreed upon by the group, the vote shall be conducted with paper ballots, counted and reported by the Assistant to the Chair. Eligibility to vote on a particular issue depends on the nature of the issue. For example, ASPT issues are restricted to faculty as described in the department ASPT document; curricular issues will be voted on by all faculty as well as those staff associated with curricula (*e.g.* the PTE Director and the General Education Lab Coordinator); for issues affecting the whole department, all faculty and staff are eligible. If there is any question of eligibility at a meeting, the criteria for eligibility will be debated and voted on by all attending, assuming a quorum.
- **Elections:** There are only a few departmental positions requiring elections:
 1. DFSC members: specific procedures are delineated in the department ASPT document. Votes are usually held at the last department meeting of the spring semester.
 2. Search committee members: the constitution of faculty search committees is governed by the department ASPT document, but AP and Chair search committees may require a vote. In these cases, faculty will vote for faculty committee members and AP and civil service staff will vote for staff committee members. These elections will be handled by paper ballot.

Elections for committees and positions external to the Department are handled according to the guidelines of the unit running the election. The Department Secretary handles ballot collection and passes the results on to the appropriate unit.

III. Faculty Assignments: Teaching, Research, and Service in the Physics Department

Teaching, research, and service are the traditional "academic triad", the foundation of a faculty member's career at Illinois State University. Note that non-tenure-track faculty typically will be assigned teaching or curriculum support duties, while AP positions are largely administrative, with a maximum of 50% teaching allowed. This section briefly describes assignments for tenure-track faculty.

A. Teaching Assignments

Teaching assignments are made in writing from the Department Chair, in the annual assignment letter, before the beginning of each academic year. A "full load" at ISU constitutes 12 equivalent semester hours, although every research-active tenure-track faculty member receives a 25% release to pursue scholarly activities. Teaching related activities like mentoring students on research projects, honors projects, or independent study projects are not specifically assigned. These activities are arranged between the students involved and the faculty member. Evaluation of teaching will include all teaching related activity. Specific teaching expectations for annual evaluation, promotion, and tenure are described in detail in the University, College, and department ASPT documents.

Courses offered, classrooms, and times are set well before registration begins for the relevant semester so the printed and online course schedules can be published. For example, the deadline for Spring semester is usually the preceding summer and deadlines for Fall semester courses are usually the previous winter. The department Chair determines which courses are to be offered and which faculty and staff will be assigned to each course. The Assistant to the Chair works out the classrooms and course times. Requests to teach specific courses should be discussed with the Chair and requests for rooms or times should be forwarded to the Assistant to the Chair. Faculty may exchange course times amongst themselves as long as all parties agree in writing. No assignment changes will be allowed after the official schedule of courses is made public.

A.1. Equivalent semester hours

Equivalent load hours are assigned as follows, based on departmental discussions and consensus, as well as historical precedent:

1. Courses with no laboratory are given one equivalent hour for each contact hour. For example, PHY 240, a 3-semester-hour course with no lab is assigned 3 equivalent hours.
2. Courses with an associated lab (PHY 105-112, 375) are assigned one hour for each lecture hour and one hour for lab coordination; it is expected that the faculty member assigned to the lecture will develop the laboratory assignments, produce and update the lab manual, and work with other faculty or UTA's teaching lab sections. For example, PHY 109, a 4-lecture, 5-semester-hour course, receives 5 equivalent hours.

3. Labs associated with courses (PHY 105-112, 375) are assigned one equivalent hour for each lab taught. For example teaching two lab sections in PHY 109 earns 2 equivalent hours.
4. PHY 270 is assigned 2 equivalent hours for each 1 hour of credit that students register for.
5. PHY 102 lab proctoring is assigned 1 equivalent hour for each 2 hours in the lab.

A.2. Release time from teaching duties

Besides the standard 25% release for active scholarship, there are other ways to earn release time. Release time is limited by College standards: all faculty must teach at least one course per semester. Examples of release time are

1. **Junior faculty:** untenured faculty in their first three years of service are eligible for a reduced teaching assignment in order to concentrate on initiation of a research program. This release is given only if all departmental teaching commitments can be met with existing faculty and instructional staff.
2. **External funding:** faculty with significant external funding can earn release time to work on the funded project, as long as departmental teaching commitments can be fully met. No more than one course per semester can be released in this way (unless the grant provides specific funds for buying your time). This perk can be used as grant matching to indicate to a prospective funding agency that there is institutional support for a grant project.
3. **Buying out teaching time with external funds:** If a grant pays for faculty time during the academic year, and if a qualified replacement to teach an assigned class is available, a faculty member can "buy" release time with grant funds. Most funding agencies require that their funds be used to pay the grant investigator, in which case the department uses the displaced personnel funds (the "variance") on the faculty member's line to pay the replacement. Note that the Department Chair must be apprised of such plans well ahead of time in order to locate and hire a replacement; if a search is needed it could take up to several months.
4. **Special assignments:** occasionally faculty are called upon to perform part-time administrative duties by the department, College, or University, with funds provided for a teaching release. Again, the Department Chair must be made aware of such plans well ahead of time in order to locate and hire a replacement.

B. Research Assignments

The assignment letter describes a faculty member's research percentage time assignments along with teaching assignments. For an active faculty member without external funding or special assignments, the research assignment is 25% time. The percentage of time assigned to research may increase with external funding or with a special research assignment. Each faculty member is expected to be an active scholar, with scholarship appropriate to his or her field and interests. Specific expectations for scholarship for annual evaluation, promotion, and tenure are described in detail in the University, College, and department ASPT documents.

C. Service Assignments

Governance at Illinois State is shared governance. That means each faculty member has a role to play in institutional governance and decision making. That role is reflected by the service component of a faculty member's professional work. Departmental service consists mainly of work on departmental committees and as a departmental coordinator (see Chapter II of this document for a list of committees and coordinators). Such service is assigned by the department Chair before the beginning of each semester in a memo separate from the assignment letter. Requests for particular assignments are welcome and should be discussed in advance with the Chair. Service to the College and University is not specifically assigned, although such service is encouraged. Depending on the committee or governing body, extra-departmental service positions may require nomination and election, while others are by appointment only. Service external to the University typically takes the form of activity within professional organizations or journal editorship and can enhance an individual's reputation in his or her field. All faculty are assigned departmental service, while extra-departmental and external service expectations generally increase with rank. Specific service expectations for annual evaluation, promotion, and tenure are described in detail in the University, College, and department ASPT documents.

IV. The Physics Department Budget

The department obtains funds from four basic sources: state funds, external grants, income (Planetarium ticket receipts and gift shop, lab manual sales, royalties), and donations. Each funding source has different accounts associated with it and different rules governing it. Here's a quick summary:

A. State Funds

We have a permanent base budget of state general revenue funds, sometimes supplemented by temporary infusions for special projects or needs for extra class offerings. We get new state funds mostly through the annual budget request process each January: the department writes a

proposal to the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) outlining its recent achievements and future plans, with specific requests for either permanent or temporary funds.

State funds go mainly for personnel and operating budget and are distributed into several specific accounts.

1. **Personnel** includes all permanent faculty and staff, post-docs and non-tenure-track instructors (NTTs), as well as student help. Summer school is funded differently, not from our base budget; the summer school funding model is currently in the process of being changed and specific guidelines will be added to this document at a later date.
2. The **operating budget** is broken down into the following categories: *equipment* (including lab equipment, computers and peripherals, shop tools, etc.), *contractual* (including software, maintenance and repairs, and any work contracted out), *commodities* (office supplies, purchases under \$100), *professional travel*, *telecom*, and *awards and grants* (for student awards and scholarships). In addition we have a small pot of summer projects money used for special projects and student research support.
3. Essentially all state funds come on a fiscal year basis (July through June) and must be spent by the end of the fiscal year, June 30.

B. Grant Funds

Most grant funds (direct costs) go directly to the grant investigators to accomplish the goals of the grant proposal. These funds go into the same types of accounts as state funds, but the grant Principal Investigator has control of them (*i.e.* is the fiscal agent). Depending on the granting agency, grant funds can roll over fiscal year boundaries and do not need to be expended until the end of the grant period.

Most grants also provide the University with “indirect costs” designed to pay for the background costs the institution pays to provide grant personnel with a supportive environment to pursue research. These include both fringe benefits for those receiving salary from the grant and “overhead” expenses (light, heat, office supplies, paper, printers, clerical help, etc.). The University allocates a percentage of overhead costs recovered from the grant to the College and the department. The department’s share of indirect costs (ICs) works as follows:

1. Departmental IC recovery funds are received each semester and are based on the grant indirect costs paid in the previous semester. Thus IC amounts are always out-of-synch with grant spending, by at least one semester.
2. The department receives 23% of total ICs, 3% of which is earmarked for PI use and 20% for department use. In some years the College allocates part of its IC's to departments, thus effectively increasing this percentage.

3. The indirect costs recovered are split between the department's operating budget and an account that rolls-over fiscal year boundaries. Normally, 65.2% of our share of ICs goes into a special account called the “RGF” account which is not subject to fiscal year boundaries. The remaining 34.8%, termed the “appropriated exchange,” is put into one or more of the department’s operating budget accounts; this portion must be spent before the end of the fiscal year in which the funds are allocated. The PI 3% share is normally considered to be part of the appropriated exchange funds and is automatically used as part of any grant matching committed on the internal ISU grant proposal paperwork (see Section V).

C. Income Funds

The department has three income fund accounts

1. ***Planetarium***: Income received from Planetarium ticket receipts and the gift shop go into special accounts used exclusively for Planetarium purposes.
2. ***Lab manual receipts***: Any excess funds over printing costs are used for student-support purposes such as computer lab printer supplies, *etc.*
3. ***Royalties*** from departmental authored lecture notes, manuals, and textbooks go into an income fund account, and are treated similarly to grant indirect costs.

Income fund accounts are officially "Agency" accounts and are allowed to roll over fiscal year boundaries.

D. Donations

All donations go into one of our Foundation accounts, administered by the ISU Foundation. Donations can come either directly to the department, in which case the full amount goes into our accounts, or through the annual fund drive (the “telefund”) from which a percentage is taken to cover the costs of the telefund drive. Foundation accounts can either be endowed, for which the department receives annual interest, or direct, in which case the department has access to all the funds in the account. The department has the following endowed Foundation accounts:

1. ***Dale M. Shulaw Scholarship Fund***: This is an endowed scholarship for freshman physics majors donated by ISU alumnus Dale M. Shulaw.
2. ***Skadron Scholarship Fund***: Begun as a tribute to former department Chair George Skadron, this fund is used for scholarships and awards for Computer Physics majors.
3. ***Michael Canney Scholarship Fund***: An endowed account to fund a scholarship for physics majors exhibiting an entrepreneurial spirit.

The department's non-endowed, direct access Foundation accounts are as follows:

1. ***Physics Alumni Scholarship Fund***: An account funded by multiple alumni donations and used for entering freshman scholarships and other awards.
2. ***Women Physics Research Fund***: A fund utilized to support research by women physicists.
3. ***Women in Physics Fund***: Donations are used to support women physics students and are used for research, travel, or scholarship support.
4. ***ISU Solar Car Fund***: This account receives donations to support the ISU Solar Car Team.
5. ***Physics Excellence Fund***: Funds designated for this general fund can be used for departmental needs at the discretion of the Chair.
6. ***ISU Physics Teacher Education Fund***: This fund receives donations to support the PTE program.

E. Spending Physics Department Money

Part of the operating budget of the department is allocated by the Chair to various “cost centers”. For example our recent cost centers (and responsible person) are listed below:

Webmaster	<i>(Rutherford)</i>
Library/Conf. Room	<i>(Hassani)</i>
Computer Systems	<i>(Bogue)</i>
Department Office	<i>(Shoemaker)</i>
GenEd program	<i>(Ansher)</i>
Instructional Labs (105-112)	<i>(Ansher/Zich)</i>
Instructional Labs (270, 375)	<i>(Clark/Marx)</i>
Instructional Labs (PTE)	<i>(Wenning)</i>
Polarized Electron Lab	<i>(Rutherford)</i>
Nonlinear Dynamics Lab	<i>(Clark/Rosa)</i>
ILP Light Scattering Lab	<i>(Grobe/Su)</i>
Physics Model Shop	<i>(Dunham)</i>
Colloquium Series	<i>(varies)</i>
Special Projects	<i>(Martin/Johns)</i>

The allocated amounts vary year-to-year depending on the department's overall budget and specific needs.

Another portion of the budget, including equipment and software contractual funds, is overseen by the Facilities Committee to be allocated to faculty/staff by a prioritized request method. The

remainder is used as a departmental buffer for special projects, emergencies, rescissions, *etc.* More details of how departmental funds are spent can be found in Section V.

V. Faculty/Staff Funding Requests from the Physics Department

Departmental funds are made available for faculty/staff needs in many different ways. This document outlines departmental policy regarding faculty/staff funding requests. Since our budget is often tight, justification for requests is needed as part of most requests. To ensure the most beneficial and fair use of department resources, requested funds will be allocated based on justifications indicating real need and benefit to the faculty member, students, and the department as a whole.

In most cases, *a short (1 paragraph to 1 page) written request should be submitted, on paper or via email, including the amount requested and with a justification of why the funds are needed and how they will be spent.* Exceptions to this process are noted in the following list of potential funds available.

A. Annual Operating Budget Requests

1. **Travel:** Available travel funds are normally announced after the beginning of each fiscal year (FY) as soon as the department receives its travel allotment from the CAS. Faculty requests for travel funds are made via travel encumbrance forms. For travel to a conference at which a paper is to be delivered, no further justification is required. For other purposes, the issue should be discussed with the Chair or a brief (1 paragraph) written justification should be provided.
2. **Equipment:** The facilities committee handles all requests for equipment from our annual equipment budget. This committee normally requires a justified, written request, including vendors and costs.
3. **Software:** Regular software updates are performed by the Computer System Manager, who has a software budget for this purpose. Special requests not usually supported throughout the department should be sent to the facilities committee, which controls a portion of the departmental contractual budget for such requests.
4. **Commodities:** Cost Center coordinators are allocated a commodities budget annually. Other faculty/staff commodities needs can usually be handled directly by the departmental secretary (for office supplies) or the Assistant to the Chair. Special requests should go to the Chair.

B. Requests for occasional announced funds availability

When funds beyond our base budget are made available to the department, they are usually offered to faculty and/or staff on a one-time basis.

1. ***Student research support***: when availability of student research funds is announced, faculty can request them by a written request to the Chair specifying the amount needed, the project the student(s) will participate in, and the student beneficiary, if known.
2. ***End-of-FY funds***: sometimes the department receives additional equipment, contractual, or commodities funds from CAS near the end of the fiscal year. If there are outstanding, unfunded faculty/staff requests, these will be covered first, but the remainder will be made available to faculty and staff. Requests should go to the appropriate committee or person, as outlined above.
3. ***Summer projects***: The department has a small summer projects allocation and can request more from CAS each fall for the following summer. These usually include lab or curriculum development projects. Requests can be made directly to the Chair.

C. Requests Related to Grants

1. ***Matching Funds for proposals***: While the bulk of grant matching is done at the College level or from the state matching program, the department has often supplied smaller amounts for this purpose. The source of departmental matching funds is normally a portion of the indirect costs the department expects to receive from the grant, if successful. For external funding sources which require matching, a request and justification commensurate with the amount should be submitted. For proposals that do not require matching, extra justification will be required. Justification should include information on how the funds will be used to benefit the department and not just the individual researcher(s). The full amount of indirect costs will not be committed as matching ahead of time for a variety of reasons (e.g. departmental needs associated with the grant, final budgets being smaller than proposed budgets, budget rescissions and indirect cost “taxes”.)
2. ***Requests for supplemental funds for an existing grant***: If no matching was requested in the original proposal for an existing grant, PI’s have the opportunity to request supplements after the grant is received. Guidelines are the same as for matching funds.

D. Special Requests

Innovative new ideas are always welcome in the form of special requests. These would usually be requests beyond the capabilities of the department’s base budget, for example for large equipment items, new programs, summer workshops, etc. Such requests must be justified at the same level as an external proposal and normally will be educational/curricular projects of significant benefit to the department’s needs and mission, rather than faculty research projects.

If accepted by the department, the request will become part of our annual proposal for new funds from the CAS, which occurs in January of each year. Ideas for such a project should be discussed with the department Chair.