

Polar Programs Subcommittee of GEO Advisory Committee

March 28, 2014, 13:00-14:30 EST Conference Call

Committee participants: Cecilia Bitz, Mary-Elena Carr, Christina Cheng, Linda Hayden, Orville Huntington, Jordan Powers

PLR participants: Scott Borg, Alex Isern, Kelly Falkner, Polly Penhale, Simon Stephenson, Brian Stone

Discussion notes

Cecilia Bitz, former chair of the Office of Polar Programs Advisory Committee and now chair of the PLR Divisional Subcommittee developed the agenda and led the discussion. She is unable to attend the AC GEO meeting on April 2-3, 2014 as she is running a workshop regarding improving predictive capabilities for sea ice conditions on those dates. Christina Cheng has agreed to serve as chair of the subcommittee for purposes of the meeting.

The main subjects discussed are outlined below.

Mechanics of GEO AC

- Concerns about whether membership to PLR subcommittee adequately representative of fields/communities covered (logistics, biology, social science, Alaskan native community and astrophysics)
- Need to determine how to best function as a sub-committee (discuss at meeting)

Arctic COV report & response

- Given highly favorable reviews, it was expressed that the frequency for including RSL (logistics) in the COV review (2009, 2013) is about right. (I note that this approach deviates from stated NSF policy of every 3 years.)
- Recommended communications on experimentation and tweaks to ARCSS/ANS review process be made explicit such as via webinars.
- Emphasis on need for PO to travel to be effective in interfacing with their communities.

Polar Postdoc Program

Concern about suspended status of program Need to reexamine reinstatement (budget permitting) to fulfill intent of prestige and autonomy for young researchers. Will need to be mindful of monitoring efficacy. Statistics limited for short duration and small numbers to date.

PLR Budget

- Effectively flat

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- Pressure to fulfill expectations of support in face of rising fuel, labor and other costs.
- Detailed table to be presented at face-to-face meeting

GEO Strategic Plan Outline

- PLR Imperatives document built on former OPP AC efforts captured in Recommendations document that expressed a vision and guiding principles
- Noted that PLR Imperatives document in good shape thanks to H. Edmonds who consulted with AC members in formalizing
- Noted that input from divisional sub-committees and cross cutting committees used to produce outline for the GEO strategy to be discussed at meeting (L. Hayden will connect with Melissa Lane regarding her role on the Outreach/Diversity committee)
- Concern about imbalance in research topics with PLR activities inadequately represented
- Concern about embracing breadth of science (not just geoscience) that PLR supports