ESA Dept. Meeting August 18, 2015 2:30 p.m.

Present: Mark Boryta, Becca Walker, Sarah Dhalla, Julie Bray-Ali, Tania Anders, Craig Webb, Dave Mrofka, Micol Christopher, Heather Jones, Hilary Lackey

1) Welcome back! Welcome Tania Anders, our new faculty member!
2) June meeting minutes were approved.
3) Policies:
    a) We need an adjunct information packet specific to our department: Craig, Julie, Mark, Tania and Dave will create a draft.
    b) The Departmental field trip policy: We reviewed our notes from last year and agree that it is important to include examples of "significant" experiences and those that are not appropriate.
4) Equipment requests: All of our Lottery Request (total $43,359) was approved. We will be purchasing equipment for marine monitoring, weather data logging, among others.
5) I.T. changes: Karen Long will be the sole NS Division technical support person. If you need help, please fill out a ticket with IT. She won't be able to respond adequately to individual calls.
6) Lab Technician role, duties. Mark Koestel has a booklet of lab setup guidelines for Ocean 10. We want to expand this to include Geol 8. Also, when our new monitoring equipment comes in we will put maintenance and organization of those on his task list.
7) Elevator news: The freight elevator is out of service indefinitely due to a major repair issue, meaning there will be no access to the roof for heavy equipment or people in wheelchairs. A plan to make alternate accommodations for DSPS students and disabled visitors is needed. We discussed requesting a temporary stair lift for all public observing events.
8) Curriculum updates: Geology 29 needs attention.
9) Resource room and exploration center schedule.: Faculty have requested getting work study students who have some content knowledge. We do not have coverage for the first week, but we will have Mark Koestel staff it some hours.
10) PIE: Department members looked over the final 2014-15 PIE
11) Outcomes: We need to have all SLOs in TracDat. The next task is for faculty to check on the courses that are missing SLOs. Next, match up the SLO/measurable objectives with the Institutional Learning Objectives. Julie will send us the document she has listing the years courses were last approved.
12) Department meeting snack schedule:
    Sept: BW; Oct: HL; Nov.: MC
    Dec. holiday get-together: Tania?
    Mar: CW; April:DM; May: JBA
13) Save the date! The Astronomy scholarship dinner is April 9, 2016

Meeting adjourned 4:24 p.m.

Attached: Planetarium report:

Planetarium/Observatory August Report

Observatory Report:

Telescope Nights- Next telescope night is Friday October 2, 2015. Please let your students know about it and the opportunity to volunteer as a telescope operator. No experience necessary!

Camera Issues-
The 16" CCD Camera is back from its service repair over the summer and so far hasn't had any more shutter issues.

Planetarium Report:

Flyers - Fall 2016 flyers now available! This flyer lists all of our shows and telescope nights for the rest of the semester. If you would like to hand out flyers I can arrange to have some put in your mail box. Just let me know how many you would like.

Von Karmon Lecture – Thursday September 10, 2015 @ 6:30 PM
Mark gave the pre-lecture for the first Von Karmon on the school year to a very modest crowd of students. Thank you Mark!!

Von Karmon Lecture – Thursday October 8, 2015 @ 6:30 PM
Pre-Lecture Speaker?

Von Karmon October Lecture: Unveiling an Alien World: Dawn at Ceres

Prior to Dawn's arrival, the dwarf planet Ceres was the largest unexplored world in the inner solar system. Ceres was discovered in 1801, the first object identified at a time when many were searching for a 'missing' planet between Mars and Jupiter. Initially Ceres was believed to be this 'missing planet' but once it was determined that there were many objects forming a 'belt', Ceres was demoted from planet to minor planet, then to asteroid 1 Ceres. The IAU reclassified Ceres as a dwarf planet in 2006. Regardless of its classification, the nearly 1000-km-diameter Ceres is an intriguing planetary body thought to have formed within the first few million years of formation of our solar system. Ceres is roughly 30% water by mass as evidenced by its density and consistent with its shape. The water likely formed a subsurface ocean early in Ceres' history, but now is mostly an ice mantle that lies near its surface. The surface of Ceres is warm compared to the icy moons of Jupiter and Saturn, and this would have enabled convection within the ice and ocean shell, allowing transport of heat and material between the warm rocky interior and the surface. Recently, the Herschel Space Observatory observed water vapor coming from Ceres that appeared to be localized to certain longitudes. These observations, together with previous Hubble Space Telescope and other ground-based observations, tell us that Ceres is a unique object, straddling the boundary between the rocky bodies of the inner solar system, and the ice- and water-rich moons of the outer solar system, and that Ceres has a similar astrobiological potential as those other icy moons. Having completed its comprehensive investigation of protoplanet Vesta in September of 2012, the Dawn spacecraft travelled to Ceres, reaching it early in 2015 to finally pull back the veil on this mysterious world. Highlights from the first science orbits will be presented.

Speaker:

Dr. Carol Raymond, DAWN Deputy Principal Investigator, JPL

Digistar Upgrade-
The Digistar 5 upgrade is complete! We are still transferring over a few Digistar 4 programs but we plan to have everything moved over by the end of the year. We do expect a few growing pains however, if you discover any ipad buttons that no longer work correctly or have some default settings you would like to see changed (different color for astronomy art, larger labels etc..) please add it to the "D5 Issues and Requests.txt" document on the desktop. Thank you! If you would like to know more about the new features of Digistar 5 I would be happy to show you, just arrange a time with me.

Construction
The 26 East Grass adjacent to the planetarium where we usually launch rockets will be blocked off for construction in January and will not be accessible for six months. We've made arrangements to launch rockets for school groups from Sherman Park during this construction phase and then be back at the 26 East Grass by late summer 2016. We are **NOT** planning on offering the rockets activity for scout and birthday party groups during this construction phase.

Reach for the Stars –
We are able to continue the Reach for the Stars program for another year thanks to the Foundation's efforts! Thank you Bill Lambert! The application will be posted on our website as soon as possible. Can anyone help with reviewing the top 20 applications in late October? What is the best day to meet? Friday?