



Users' Committee for Gemini Observatory (UCG)

Charge

To provide feedback to the Gemini Observatory on all areas of its operations that affect current users of the facility, based on the experience of the committee members as well as input collected from the larger community of Gemini users. The Observatory will use this information to improve the service it provides to users.

Terms of Reference

Membership

The Observatory will select the members of the Users' Committee for Gemini (UCG), soliciting recommendations from the National Gemini Offices (NGOs), the user community at large, and Observatory staff. Appointments will normally be for 3 years, renewable. The distribution of membership will be representative of the international community and the collective user experience. The constitution of the regular members of the committee is: four from the US, two from Canada, and one from each of the other Participants and site hosts. One ex-officio member from Operations Working Group (OpsWG) serves in an observer capacity. Limited-Term Collaborators may also send representatives to observe at their expense.

Gemini appoints the Chair from amongst the current members with at least one year of service to the committee. The duties of the Chair are the following:

- Develop the agenda for the annual UCG meeting in conjunction with the Head of Gemini Science User Support Department.
- Run the annual meeting, ensuring participation by all members, keeping on time and on topic.
- Deliver a report summarizing the annual meeting to Gemini with feedback and input from other committee members.
- Communicate with the committee in the off-season for the purpose of preparation for upcoming meetings and wrap-up of previous meetings as well as to coordinate specific activities (e.g. surveys, determining the user impact of possible proposed changes, etc...).

Meetings

The UCG is expected to meet in person once per year, with additional teleconferences or communication during the year, initiated either by the committee or by the Observatory.

Reporting and Response

The UCG reports to the Gemini Director. Because the UCG advises on user issues, and in the distributed support model the Observatory and NGOs jointly provide user service, the feedback will also be provided to the National Gemini Offices via the Operations Working Group (OpsWG), and the OpsWG may be involved in responding to the information.

The Observatory will make the UCG report and the responses publicly available. The NGOs will have a role to disseminate this information throughout their communities and, where appropriate, to respond to the report.

Note that the Science and Technology Advisory Committee (STAC), reporting to the Gemini Board, advises the Board on policy matters of long-range scientific and technical importance, including scientific priorities for projects and instrumentation. Thus, these issues are not the focus of the UCG. However, recognizing that areas of common interest and attention will emerge, Gemini encourages direct communication of the UCG with the STAC and OpsWG, as appropriate. Within each partner community, the Gemini governance, advisory, and operations participants are encouraged to interact, to ensure that the Observatory is correctly and adequately informed of their community's needs and desires.

Logistics

Gemini Observatory will support the expenses of the committee's operations, and will assist with logistics regarding meeting organization, email exploder, dissemination of information, etc.