

## **UCOAC MEETING MINUTES**

### **SEPTEMBER 4, 2020**

**ATTENDEES:** A. Barth (UCI), G. Becker (UCR), M. Bolte (UCSC/UCO), G. Coolidge (UCO), M. Cooper (UCI), A. Filippenko (UCB), M. Fitzgerald (UCLA), A. Ghez (UCLA), P. Hinz (UCSC/UCO), M. Kriek (UCB), A. Korossy (UCO), B. Lemaux (UCD), L. Lobin (UCD), C. Max (UCO, Director), B. Mazin (UCSB), I. McLean (UCLA), N. Pedroza (UCO), X. Prochaska (UCO), C. Rockosi (UCSC/UCO), M. Shetrone (UCO, Deputy Director), A. Skemer (UCSC/UCO), T. Treu (UCLA), D. Wittman (UCD), S. Wright (UCSD, UCOAC Chair)

#### **UCO BUSINESS**

There was an update on scheduling for proposal deadlines. The scheduling takes into account when other major deadlines are, such as NSF and other telescope proposals, while also allowing for time for the TAC meetings. There was discussion of possible dates for the proposal deadlines. The decision was for the third Thursday in September and third Thursday in March.

There was an update on the status of Lick after the lightning complex fire. The fire started on August 16, and resulted in the evacuation of the staff on August 19. The fires approached and swept around Mt Hamilton on August 19-20. Fire crews battled the blaze for several days, including flames up to 200 feet high. In the end, the south side of the mountain was burned heavily, while the north forested side was largely untouched. The fire was halted by firefighters before it could reach most of the structures on the mountain. All in-use residences survived, with some minor damage from smoke and water. About 100 windows will need to be replaced. An unused residence, the Barnard house, burned and will now be demolished. All the domes and telescopes are fine. There is a plan to thin the vegetation on the north side to help with future fire danger. The repair estimates are likely in the several millions of dollar range. Various sources of funding are being looked at, with a contribution from the Heising-Simons foundation for immediate repairs. CalFire noted that clearing of vegetation that happened in 2016 was critical for mitigating the severity of the fire. It was noted that UCSC labs space is highly vulnerable.

There was a discussion of the ongoing impact of COVID-19 on operations. Keck has continued with steady operations from remote observers, but it was noted that an increase in cases in Hawaii could change that status. The long-term future of pajama mode observing is being considered.

Claire Max will be stepping down as UCO director next summer. UCOP is being asked to conduct a national search for a new director this year. UCOP has been consulting with the previous leads of the director search for advice on how to proceed with the search.

There was a discussion of unused ToO hours. There are currently seven hours of cross-partner interrupts available through the TAC process. In the last two proposal cycles, there were no applications for cross-partner interrupts. It was therefore proposed to allocate the unused hours via director's discretionary time. After committee discussion, it was decided not to pursue this option but instead to encourage the community to take advantage of this resource via the proposal process. This could be either in the call for proposals or instructions to the TAC.

Give-back science nights on Keck were discussed. These are unused engineering nights. Normally the deputy director assigns these based on lost nights and TAC rankings for the appropriate instruments. Documentation of these nights is needed, and Keck has been asked to keep track.

There was planning for the UCO mini-grant process. They are due in the beginning of November, and review will happen shortly after that. Funding will be released in January. Reports from the last round were due in September.

## **UCO SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

There were reports from subcommittees. The first was from the LMAP subcommittee. They considered four possible changes to the LMAP proposal process, and came to a consensus on two. There will now be a required management plan and a service section. The management plan will include a data plan on both raw and legacy data products, and a personnel plan. The service section will now be mandatory rather than optional. The purpose of the section is to describe overall service to UCO. There was discussion of whether this should be past service or describe future service, which was not resolved in time for the latest call.

The update from the affiliate faculty subcommittee was deferred to the next UCOAC meeting.

## **REMOTE OBSERVING PROPOSAL**

UCO solicited remote observing proposals from all campuses for equipment upgrades, general support, and budgetary planning. Eight campuses submitted proposals: UCM, UCI, UCD, UCSB, UCSD, USC, UCLA, UCR. (Berkeley did not submit a remote observing proposal since they had just finished a recent upgrade). The UCOAC committee reviewed the proposal and approved each campus plan. All campuses should discontinue the ISDN lines in their remote observing rooms.

UCOAC agreed that UCO should solicit remote observing proposals every 3 years; next remote observing proposal round will be summer 2023.

## **LICK ARCHIVE & PYPELT**

J.X. Prochaska gave an update on the status of both the Lick Archive and PyPelt. There are now many contributors to PyPelt, and a Slack channel with about 50 users. The latest version available is 1.1. Work to develop this more is supported by a NASA ADAP award, which will focus on DEIMOS (PI B. Holden UCSC). Two new team members have been hired. The team continues to partner with Keck Observatory, and welcomes suggestions from the UCOAC on direction.

The Lick Archive is now available, but only contains raw data. The goal is to put the archive in the cloud and make it searchable. The model they are looking to is the Gemini archive. The team is requesting that a UCOAC subcommittee provide advice on development of the archive and help test it. They are looking into integrating this with PyPelt. Funding is needed for this, and possible sources were discussed (Friends of Lick, Lick Library endowment). A minigrant will be submitted for temporary funding.

## **KECK SSC UPDATE**

An update of the status of Keck was presented. Keck is operating at “Level 3: restricted operations” as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has resulted in slips in the schedule of KPF and KCRM. Pajama mode operations are a burden on the support astronomers. Keck is supporting two pajama observers per program. Currently, Keck does not want to extend pajama mode beyond the pandemic, but it is very popular so will likely be discussed on the SSC. There is no information yet about whether pajama mode impacts observational efficiency.

There was an update on LRIS. The LRIS detector is deteriorating. UCO is accelerating the completion of the new LRIS-R package, which is leading to a small delay for KCRM.

The segment repair work is now complete. The Keck 2 tertiary mirror is showing cracks similar to cracks seen in the segments. Keck is working to define different mitigation strategies. The plan to mitigate this is to use the old Keck 1 tertiary mirror instead. There was a discussion of the Data Services Initiative, which includes observing planning, efficiency, pipelines, and the archive. The DEIMOS detector needs an upgrade and plans for this will be coming soon. The Keck Science Meeting was held on September 24-25, 2020 and was all virtual. There was a discussion of Phase A instrument selection and discussion of the status of TRICK.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Topics discussed include TMT status, the upcoming search for a new director, and funding issues in light of COVID-19.