

# Minutes of the Winter 2018 UCOAC Meeting

February 2nd 2018  
SETI Institute  
Mountain View, CA

Attending in person: Claire Max (UCO Director, UCSC), Gillian Wilson (UCOAC Chair, UCR), Andy Skemer (UCSC), Michael Fitzgerald (UCLA), Andrea Ghez (UCLA), Jean Brodie (UCSC), Ian McLean (UCLA), Brad Holden (UCSC), Anna Korossy (UCSC), Ilse Ungeheuer (UCSC), Kevin Bundy (UCO), Nicholas MacDonald (UCO)

Attending remotely: Ben Mazin (UCSB), Shelley Wright (UCSD), Aaron Barth (UCI), Michael Cooper (UCI), Tommaso Treu (UCLA), Lori Lubin (UCD), Michael Bolte (UCSC), Graseilah Coolidge (UCSC), Marusa Bradac (UCD), Connie Rockosi (UCSC), Garth Illingworth (UCSC),

Absent: Alex Filippenko (UCB)

## **Keck Observatory:**

Jean Brodie (SSC co-chair), Aaron Barth (SSC) and Andrea Ghez (SSC) presented news and updates from the most recent Keck Science Steering Committee meeting held in November 2017 and discussed issues likely to arise at the upcoming SSC meeting to be held later in February 2018.

## **General Updates**

- In December 2017, Anne Kinney stepped down as Keck Observatory's first chief scientist to become head of the Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences at NSF.
- The Observatory is reviewing metrics i.e., how publications and "impact factor" are evaluated.
- NASA has awarded a five-year Cooperative Agreement with the California Association for Research in Astronomy (CARA) to continue the science program at the W. M. Keck Observatory. The new agreement will take effect March 1, 2018.
- Mainland-only observing now constitutes more than 50% of nights.
- The Keck Visiting Scholars Program which targets early-career scientists (graduate students and postdocs) was by-invitation only in 2017. It will be continued in 2018 with an open application process. UCOAC members are encouraged to identify potential candidates and encourage them to apply.
- NIRES saw first light on October 5<sup>th</sup>. Commissioning is going well, though there are some remaining issues with focus and flexure correction. Shared observing risk will begin in 2018A.
- The OSIRIS imager upgrade and new filter wheels were installed on November 15<sup>th</sup> 2017. Warm tests went well and cold tests are imminent.
- K1DM3 is in final test at UCSC with pre-ship review expected in Dec/Jan and projected install at K1 in March. It is anticipated to be available for science in 2018B.

- Snapshot and ToO time were separated in the 2018A proposal call (4 each per partner, rather than 6 total events per partner as in previous semesters). The ToO Policy will be revisited later in the year at the end of the trial period.
- The 2018 Keck Science Meeting will be held on September 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> at Caltech.

Public Records from Keck SSC meetings are now available from this website: <http://www.ucolick.org/keckssc/public/index.html>

Director Max presented some additional Keck updates

**2018 Keck Funding Transition:** The new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was approved by the CARA Board and the UC Regents in January of 2018. It now remains only to be signed by the UC and Caltech Presidents before the end of March when the current agreement expires.

**KRAKENS Red Team review:** A “Red Team” (Jean Brodie, Andy Skemer, Claire Max Gillian Wilson, Mike Bolte, Ian McLean) reviewed and provided feedback to Ben Mazin in early January on his NSF Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) proposal to build “KRAKENS”, a new MKIDS-based Keck instrument.

**Keck Telescope Allocation Committees (TACs):** Due to the increasing number of proposals being received, the time investment required to serve on a Keck TAC, especially on the extragalactic TAC is becoming increasingly burdensome on the faculty. The UCOAC continued discussion (which was curtailed due to time constraints at the winter 2017 meeting) of ways to mitigate the burden of serving on a Keck TAC. These included piloting three TACs in 2018B.

## **WFOS**

Kevin Bundy (WFOS PI) and Nick MacDonald made a presentation to UCOAC on a wide-field multi-object fiber spectrograph concept for Keck, and possible UCO participation in SDSS-V.

## **Lick Observatory**

A new support astronomer is being recruited. In the UCO Business Office, two retirees have been successfully replaced and a search is underway to replace a third. There are several ongoing upgrades on Mt. Hamilton (road repair and vegetation removal for fire safety, renovation of a staff house, the Astrograph Dome being readied to receive Shelley Wright’s prototype SETI instrument).

## **Automated Planet Finder (APF)**

Brad Holden presented an update on the 2017 APG Community workshop which was held at Caltech and generated a UCO mini-grant proposal. APF is transitioning to a long-term goal of 90% of time going to UC observers, mostly for long-term projects. There is interest in creating a shared data reduction facility at UCSC and making APF competitive for TESS. A high priority is creating a unified queue.

## **UCO Business**

- **2017-2018 Mini-Grant Awards** have now been disbursed. Award details may be found here: [http://ucolick.org/home/resources/observers/mini\\_grant.html](http://ucolick.org/home/resources/observers/mini_grant.html)
- **2018-2019 UC Telescope Proposal Deadlines** were finalized and may be found here: <http://ucolick.org/home/resources/observers/callforproposal.html>
- **MRU Annual Report:** Preparation of the annual report submitted to UCOP in September 2017 was rather time-intensive. UCO is working with UCOP to conduct a review of the process and identify how it might be made less labor-intensive for the next annual report which is due in September of 2018.
- **Deputy Director and Senior Director of Development searches** are ongoing. The UCOAC reviewed the job description advertisements.
- **Systemwide incentives for faculty hires in instrumentation:** The UCOAC discussed the concept of “UCO affiliated faculty” Max would like to help with startup for new faculty in instrumentation at all UC astronomy campuses. Campuses need to be proactive in contacting her as early as possible when they have a search in which such a candidate might be hired.
- **Keck/Lick Remote Observing Room Upgrades:** A committee is exploring two main issues – Polycoms and ISDN lines. Old Polycoms are failing but new Polycoms are not compatible with Keck. The solution may be Zoom rooms. ISDN lines are a backup if the internet goes down but new technologies may be preferable. Stay tuned for the committee’s recommendations.
- **Communications:** Ilse Ungeheuer gave an update on the ongoing overhaul of the UCO website which is migrating to a Content Management System, a process which is expected to be complete by June 2018.

## **PSI/SCALES**

TMT has issued a [Call for Instrumentation White Papers](#), due by March 21<sup>st</sup> 2018. In response, Mike Fitzgerald and Ben Mazin made a presentation on the high contrast exoplanet second-generation TMT concept Planetary System Imager (PSI) concept instrument. Andy Skemer then described PSI-Red/SCALES, a 2-5 micron planet integral field spectrograph.

**TMT**

Mike Bolte summarized recent news about the project.

**2018 Spring Meeting**

The spring (southern California) UCOAC meeting will be held at UCLA on Monday May 7<sup>th</sup> from 10am-5pm.

*These minutes were prepared by UCOAC chair Gillian Wilson*