

MEETING OF THE NHERI USER FORUM COMMITTEE
April 18, 2022, 11:00am Central

MINUTES (by Wei Song)

In Attendance: Mohammad, Maggie, Stephanie Pilkington, Stephanie Paal, Wei, Antonio, David, Claudia, Yazen, Shane

1. Approval of meeting minutes from the Mar 9, 2022 meeting

Mohammad made a motion to approve the minutes: Wei seconds; no objections.

2. Update on the summer institute (registration, travel arrangement, June UF meeting)

Almost all UF members except one will be supported by NCO. Stephanie's travel will be supported by ECO. The travel reimbursement for Shane is difficult due to his status as a government employee. Shane will inform UF if he can attend the Summer Institute as soon as possible.

Mohammad: Robin requested information from UF for a flyer to be finalized by the end of April. I will meet with Marti to confirm and draft the flyer for the UF members to approve.

Mohammad: will request a temporary agenda from SI to determine the room/time for the UF meeting in SI.

Antonio: We can ask during the NCO meeting and check if the agenda has been set.

3. Report from User Satisfaction Survey committee

Maggie: I am in the process of preparing all the satisfaction survey questions in qualtrics. In the next two weeks, I will confer with the user satisfaction subcommittee regarding preferred dates for data collection to start in May with an extension to the 1st or 2nd week of June. Hope to have something ready to share before the summer meeting.

Mohammad: Do you think we (the survey subcommittee) can have a meeting for the plan of next year or requesting for feedback?

Maggie: we can have some email communications first and then decide if we need to call a meeting.

Antonio: how is the response rate?

Maggie: Currently, we only have gone through one cycle of aggregation with the data and the next one will be around the end of June. I am excited that we will conduct a comparison

of surveys and the results will tell us if we can move forward with the regular survey module data. I am satisfied with how it went from the last cycle.

4. Report from NCO representatives

Mohammad: In the past NCO meeting, it was asked if UF can help to track the NHERI activities, in particular, how many people are aware of the Science Plan. Do you think the current survey design can help to answer that question? The whole point is to help with the self assessment of NCO activities.

Maggie: Yes, it (for Science Plan) definitely can be tracked based on the survey questions. I will take a look at the questions again and highlight the ones that I think may be useful and send them to everyone to take a look at.

Mohammad: Yes, if you can provide a summary on that would be great. It can be integrated into the report to NSF. In addition to the Science Plan, anything you think could show how NHERI and NCO are helping the community can be used as a self assessment metric. Some examples are the number of participants in the survey and the diversity of the participants.

Maggie: I think we have questions like that, for example, “what is your stage in your career?”. I will go through the questions and highlight the part that may be helpful to what you are looking for, and then you can let me know what you think is appropriate to be pulled together into a report.

Mohammad: That would be great. We have an NCO meeting this Friday. What do you think we can show in that meeting?

Maggie: By Friday, I can highlight the relevant parts in the survey that can help to answer these questions so that we can put the corresponding results in the next report.

Mohammad: Sure. Such information can help with the discussion in our next NCO meeting.

Antonio: A comment—while UF conducts its planned activities, if these activities at the same time can provide certain information to help to measure the impact of NCO or NHERI, that would be great.

5. Report from ECO representatives

Stephanie Paal: In the past meeting, we mainly discussed the NHERI summer institute: the breakdown of the panels, and the invitees. We also have discussed the graduate student council and REU. Designsafe and Simcenter will organize a Hackathon event in Austin from July 27- July 29. This event is looking for teams and mentors (mentors to be

associated with teams and projects). Ideally, this event will be held in person but it also offers the option to attend virtually. Here is a google document to explain the details ([NHERI Hackathon Project Nomination \(google.com\)](#))—provided by Stephanie). You can nominate a project and express your interest to serve as a mentor.

Mohammad: Maybe Stephanie can help to represent UF in the graduate student council and let them learn what UF does.

Stephanie: That is a good idea and I can do that.

6. Report from Facilities Scheduling representatives

Claudia: I have two topics: i) the facility scheduling is planning to develop a research tool to engage researchers and engineers so that users can search funded projects with keywords and can visit the related databases and publications associated with that project. They are planning to have the prototype in about 6 months. The concern is, however, on if PIs can provide necessary information to this searchable database as planned; ii) a reminder for UF members to provide feedback on the scheduling tool.

Mohammad: Is this research tool planned to be released in designsafe or as a separate engine? Designsafe is supposed to compile the data and publications for funded projects so that they can be searched online.

Claudia: We have discussed that in the meeting. This issue is a concern especially because the PIs may not be responsive to the requests of providing the information needed.

Mohammad: Maybe designsafe is a more appropriate tool to be used, and the scheduling committee needs to have a meeting with designsafe to discuss ideas to upgrade some functionalities that designsafe can offer in the future.

7. Report from Technology Transfer representatives

Shane: We are in the process of making 2~5 mins short videos to upload to NHERI youtube

channels based on the Tech Tran Committee's white paper. After that, the committee will meet and discuss the next step.

8. Updates on Communication and Outreach subcommittee

Stephanie Pilkington: We decided to do a coordinated campaign with the REU participants. We will be integrated into the REU program and we will help them to brand their social media accounts for professional use. We are going to work across NHERI, UF, and NCO accounts to push bio messages for participants on LinkedIn and Twitter. Our next meeting is next week. Had discussions on who uses what social media.

Stephanie Paal: The ECO has discussed asking the REU students to prepare short videos to upload to LinkedIn, Twitter, and other new social media platforms, including TikTok and others.

Stephanie Pilkington: We have also discussed who is using what (social media) nowadays. Twitter is where you can find lots of researchers, and LinkedIn is good for the industry. Students also like to use LinkedIn and Instagram. But Instagram may not be the ideal platform to consider right now.

Mohammad: LinkedIn is a good platform to consider as it is widely used by the industry. Also, based on many discussions with the practitioners in the past, it is important to let students understand the impact of writing and practice writing. We can bring that up in the ECO meeting and see if there is a way to promote the importance of writing in their careers when educating grad and undergrad students.

Stephanie Pilkington: Another piece of information is I did a short podcast about the user forum which will be released on all the social media platforms.

Antonio: That is great! Thank you, Stephanie!

9. Discussion on establishing liaisons with other technical committees in hazard engineering

Mohammad: We can have a booth set up at the ASCE conferences (e.g., ASCE Geo-Congress, ASCE Structures Congress, etc.) to promote the NHERI and UF to students, practitioners, and early career faculty members. Also, when can plan to participate in the short talk (2-3 mins) sessions to present information about NHERI, UF, and NCO for better exposure to the community.

Shane: Tech transfer committee starts making these videos, which hopefully can be helpful to those early-career faculty members and researchers. One objective is to better connect early-career faculty members, students, and researchers to those who are currently working on transferring research into practice. This liaison idea can help the tech transfer committee in this regard as well.

Mohammad: Communication and Outreach can also discuss how to do this next time. We may be able to expand to reach the audience in broader communities like ASCE or others.

Yazen: Another thought is to explore the opportunities with the DFI (deep foundation institute) whose members are mostly contractors, but they also start doing research. Maybe we also can introduce designsafe and NHERI there for better exposure and transfer of technologies to practitioners.

Mohammad: This idea may be suitable for NCO meeting to discuss. Antonio may weigh in more but I think we can discuss with DFI the efforts that NHERI is working on and we may be able to come up with some solutions together.

Antonio: I think it is a good idea in both ways. It can help us to learn what each other is doing.

Mohammad: I will bring this up in the NCO meeting on Friday and see if it is ok to bring the DFI's present to the meeting with NIAC or NCO. I think that could help us to better connect with the industry and with the tech transfer effort as well.

10. Others

Mohammad: The election for next year is coming up. If you are planning to take a different role in UF, please let us know. We may also think to add one or two new members because we have a new Communication and Outreach Committee.

Antonio: On May 24 (Tue), we will have the annual NSF review. It would be very helpful for the UF to provide a summary of the UF activities in the past year, which demonstrate the integration between the UF and the NCO. It would be helpful to have someone to represent the UF participate in this review meeting (typically in the morning). In the past, the presentation will take 10-15 mins but the agenda has not been determined yet. (Mohammad: the coverage is for just the past year or the entire history of UF). Although the review is for the second part of the NCO (after the renewal), it will be good to provide an overview perspective of the functions and history of the UF with a highlight of the past year. We can discuss more with more details later.

Mohammad: I will work with Wei and Stephanie to prepare for the presentation.

Antonio: Wei please post the UF meeting minutes to assist the review process. Also, Mohammad will be invited to participate in the organizing committee of the NHERI Researchers Meeting, and he will provide an update on the NHERI Researchers Meeting in the future.

Mohammad: I have participated in the last meeting about the researchers meeting and I can provide an update at our next UF meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:01 pm CT.

Summary of action items:

- Shane will inform UF if he can attend the Summer Institute as soon as possible.
- UF members: Experimental facilities committee is asking for active participation in reviewing the scheduling tool (<https://www.designsafe-ci.org/nco/>) and providing feedback. If you have any comments and feedback please contact Claudia.
- Mohammad: Bring up the idea of meeting with DFI in the NCO meeting on Friday. Work with Stephanie and Wei to prepare for the presentation on May 24.
- Wei: Post the UF meeting minutes.