NEERS MEETING PLANNING DOCUMENT

   The following document is meant to help plan a NEERS meeting. It outlines the duties of various officers and committees, describes the timeline of events.

OVERVIEW OF DUTIES

   DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND PROGRAM CHAIR:

- Determine host(s) for meeting and what responsibilities they have.
- Determine possible dates.
- Identify Local Committee Chair and 2-to-4 people to serve on local committee.
- Consider special events—invited sessions, panel discussions, special interest groups, etc.
- Advise the treasurer on the investment of NEERS monies
- Accepts nominations from the memberships or makes their own proposals for Honorary Membership

   DUTIES OF THE HOST/SPONSORING INSTITUTION: (These duties are flexible and may change depending on the situation of the host institution.)

- Provides volunteers for the local committee.
- May provide facilities for meeting (i.e., auditorium, classrooms, etc.).
- Provides projection equipment and supplies for meeting.
- Provides people to run projectors, tours registration desk, etc.
- Provides facilities/personnel for typing, duplicating and mailing 2 meeting notices to about 400 people.
- Provides facilities/personnel for duplicating abstracts for about 150 people.
- Provides secretarial help for typing letters related to meeting.
- Covers local and long distance phone calls for meeting arrangements.
- May pay/provide some refreshment costs (i.e., coffee breaks, and socials).
- Does fund raising to offset the costs of the meeting and student awards.

   DUTIES OF NEERS:

- Pays for/provides those services mentioned above that are not supplied by the host institution.
- Has final okay of dates, facilities, program, prices and all notices.

Via NEERS Program Chair:
- Works with local committee of the host institution.
- Has ultimate responsibility for each meeting.
- Make decisions on deadlines, prices, abstract selection, program schedule, special sessions, invited speakers, etc.
- Reviews all meeting mailings.

Via NEERS Treasurer:

- Receives and tracks all registrations.
- Supplies letterhead paper and abstract form for mailings.
- Provides mailing labels for notices.
- Supplies NEERS, ERF and Business Meeting news for inclusion in notices.
- Reviews meeting prices and fees (each meeting should pay for itself).
- Pays for Thursday social, coffee breaks and any meeting facilities charges from registration fee.
- Pays for banquet, lunch, etc. from fees collected from participants.
- Keeps a copy of all notices for NEERS archives.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN SELECTING MEETING FACILITIES:

1. Plan for 75 to 125 registrants and 80 to 100 attending the talks at any one time.
2. Plan for 50 to 80 people at the banquet.
3. Plan for 50 to 80 people at the social.
4. Plan for 15 to 20 students at the banquet.
5. Plan for 25 to 40 sleeping rooms with a mix of 1, 2, 3 and 4 people per room available. (Spring meetings tend towards the high end of these ranges; fall meetings towards the low end, but not always! Centrally located meetings tend to have more registrants.)

In comparing facilities consider the following:
1. Costs for meeting rooms, sleeping rooms, coffee breaks, socials (including munchies), lunch (if provided), banquet.
2. Deadlines for meeting room and accommodation reservations.
3. Deadlines for number of banquet meals and lunches (if provided).
4. Availability of audio-visual equipment (screens, projectors, microphones, blackboards, tables/supports for displaying posters).
5. Availability of rooms for concurrent sessions/poster sessions.
6. Visibility in the meeting rooms (can they be darkened, can all see the area where the screen will be).
7. Proximity of restaurants for quick lunches and other meals.
8. Proximity of all needed facilities to one another (when facilities are all within walking distance logistical problems tend to be less and interactions among participants tend to be greater).

Other items to consider:
- Local color, points of interest.
- Availability of field trips.
- Availability of places to go dancing.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

- Talks are 20 minutes (15 for presentation; 5 for questions)

- Long days are preferable to concurrent sessions.
- 15-min talks are preferable to concurrent sessions.
- Leave plenty of time for breaks and lunch.
- All student papers must be on Friday to allow for judging and announcing he winner at the Banquet.
- Group papers thematically.

TIMETABLE FOR NEERS MEETINGS

This section details what needs to be done by when and by whom. This includes what to put in the meeting announcements and call for papers, how to plan a time table for sending out meeting announcements, deadlines for abstracts and registration, sending out the program, what to plan for in the way of room arrangements, coffee breaks and banquet arrangements.

As an overview, working backwards from a typical spring meeting date in say May, the final pre-registration deadline should be roughly two weeks earlier, say mid-late April. That means the Second Announcement, which includes the meeting information, maps and registration form, should be mailed out roughly two or three weeks prior to that, say end of March to early April. The abstract submission deadline should be about 3 weeks earlier, so roughly early to mid-March. Folks should have several weeks to think about what they want to submit in their abstract, so the initial meeting announcement and call for papers should go out by early February.

To put out the initial meeting announcement and call for papers, the Program Chair needs the details about:
- The scientific sessions: 1) the special Thurs session and 2) reminding students to submit for the 4 prize categories
- Travel (where, how much, what options)
- Housing (where, how much, what options)
- Banquet and other food (where, how much, what options)
- Field trips
- Other things that will determine the registration fee (costs of socials, and coffee breaks, food on silver platters or paper plates, room-use fees, audiovisual charges, postage and photocopying)
- What the base registration fee will have to be to cover all costs for the meeting (including student banquet meals), assuming only confirmed donations.
- How the fee will be adjusted between members and non-members and after the pre-registration deadline.

All this gets turned into a announcement, abstract submission form and pre-registration form with lines and check-off for all the appropriate information, plus lines for dues, back dues, student fund contributions. The abstract submission form will request information for preferred day, which student prize, audiovisual needs. All of this gets copied and mailed out by the local organizers, which means they need the attractive NEERS heading logo and mailing labels, all from the secretary. In addition, this gets posted to the web site by the webmaster. Abstract submission is via the web page.

A detailed timeline follows:

Typical meeting dates:

Spring: April 15 – May 15th. Most often the first weekend in May. Need to balance the competing needs of having it late enough so that students (especially undergraduates) have finished their projects but not so late that it is in finals week or after graduation. In April, watch out for Easter and spring vacation for kids. In June, the undergraduates have moved on to their summer jobs.

Fall: October 15 – November 15th. Halloween is a recurring theme in the fall meeting.

Six Months before the Meeting:

Executive Committee and Program Chair:

1. Determine host(s) for meeting and what responsibilities they have.
2. Determine possible dates.
3. Identify Local Committee Chair and 2-to-4 people to serve on local committee.
4. Consider special events—invited sessions, panel discussions, special interest groups, etc.

Five-to Six-Months Before the Meeting:

Local Committee:

1. Visits potential meeting facilities including meeting rooms, hotel room, banquet room, and social room.
2. Decides on best arrangements and notifies, in writing, NEERS Executive Committee and Program Chair.
3. After plans are accepted, reserves meeting facilities and starts talking it up, particularly with the local scientific community.
4. With input from the Program Chair and Secretary-Treasurer, sets registration fee (single day fees may also be set at the discretion of the decision-makers): Suggested formula:

   Total Expected Costs include misc. expenses, meeting room(s) cost, coffee breaks cost, social cost, paying for 15 – 20 student banquet meals
   Break-even fee = Total expected costs ÷ # expected (usually 80 - 100)
   Member registration = BE
   Nonmember pre-registration = BE+25% BE
   Pre-registered Student = BE - 40% BE
   Late registration penalty = +20% BE + Pre-reg. fee for that class

Example: If BE = $20, then Pre-registered member = $20; Pre-registered student member = $12; Pre-registered non-member = $25; Site-registered member = $24; Site-registered student member = $16; Site-registered nonmember = $29.

5. Begins to formulate plans for special sessions, invited speakers, etc.
6. Compiles a mailing list of local institutions that may be interested in NEERS meeting.
7. Keeps a sense of humor.

Executive Committee:

1. Reviews and accepts recommended arrangements.

Four Months before the Meeting

Local Committee:

1. Prepares a draft of the "Call for Papers". This should include meeting dates; host(s); place(s); costs and registration form; including membership information (to be sent to Secretary-Treasurer); information on submitting papers and posters; abstract form (sent to Program Chair) and deadline (generally two months before the meeting); information on the Student Award; any special events; NEERS news; accommodations; banquet and lunch (if provided) costs; a Local Committee phone number. (See other "Calls for Papers" for ideas.)
2. Sends copies of draft to NEERS Program Chair and officers.

NEERS President:

1. Provides NEERS news to Local Committee Chair for inclusion in "Call for Papers".
2. Reviews draft of "Call for Papers".

NEERS Secretary-Treasurer:

1. Provides NEERS news to Local Committee chair to include in "Call for Papers".
2. Reviews draft "Call for papers".
3. Provides mailing labels (member and non-member) and letterhead paper to Local Committee.

Program Chair:

1. Reviews draft "Call for Papers".

Three-to-Three Months before the Meeting

Local Committee:

1. Prepares final copy of "Call for Papers" and has it duplicated.
2. Address and mail "Call for papers" to NEERS members, local agencies, schools, New England firms, etc.

3. Sends several extra copies to Treasurer for further distribution.

Treasurer:
1. Begins to receive and tracks registrations.

Two Months before the Meeting

Program Chair and Local Committee:
1. Review abstracts and selects suitable abstracts for oral presentation and poster session.
2. Group papers appropriately.
3. Outline the program schedule with 20-min. time slots and locations. Avoid concurrent sessions and allow 20-min. talks. Allowing speakers 20 min. is more important than avoiding concurrent sessions.
4. Notify people whether their abstracts were accepted. We try to arrange the program so that all abstracts are accepted.
5. Ask the people that submitted abstracts that were not accepted if they would be a stand-by (paper, or poster if there is room).
6. Schedule times and places for each NEERS function. Thursday social, ExComm meeting at lunch on Friday, Banquet Friday night and dancing after the Banquet.

Local Committee:
1. Checks with NEERS officers for any last minute NEERS news.
2. Compiles above information into the "Program". This should include the schedule of talks and other events, a brief description of events and facilities, Student Awards details, accommodations, banquet, lunch, costs, a registration form (to be sent to Secretary-Treasurer), Local Committee phone numbers and directions (if necessary). (See previous "Programs" for ideas).
3. Sends final draft of "Program" to the Program Chair and NEERS officers for review.

NEERS Secretary-Treasurer:
1. Sends mailing labels to Local Committee.

One and 1/2 Months Before the Meeting:

Local Committee:
1. Prepares final copy of "Program" and has it duplicated.
2. Addresses and mails the "Program" (same recipients as "Call for Papers").
3. Sends Secretary-Treasurer several extra copies for further distribution.

Secretary
1. Addresses and mails "Program" to any registrants not on mailing list.

One Month before the Meeting:

Local Committee:
1. Checks that NEERS members have received the "Program".
2. Compiles and copies abstracts for distribution at the meeting.
3. Make additional copies of "Program" for distribution at the meeting.

Two Weeks before the Meeting:

Local Committee:
1. Checks with hotel on room reservations.
2. Checks with Secretary-Treasurer on registration desk supplies: name tags, marking pens, pens, tape, paper, etc.
3. Supplies notice about the meeting to the local paper and any other media.
4. Selects the judges for the Student Awards papers, makes up judging packages. Make up packages for the total number of judges needed so they are available for the judges that volunteer at the meeting.

The Day before the Meeting:

Local Committee:
1. Makes sure the meeting rooms and poster areas are ready and equipped.
2. Makes sure there are people to run the projectors and guide any tours.

At the Thursday Social

Local Committee:
1. Helps Secretary/Treasurer run registration desk (including the collection of dues at the spring meeting.
2. Checks with the hotel to keep everything running smoothly.

NEERS Secretary/Treasurer:
1. Runs the Registration desk.

On Friday:

Local Committee:
1. Helps with meeting registration.

2. Gets final count for banquet.

3. Gets to listen to some of the talks.

NEERS Secretary-Treasurer

1. Runs the Registration desk until lunch.

2. Keeps a running tally of the number of lunches (if provided) and banquets.

Before the Banquet

Past-President and Student awards judges:

1. Select winners of Ketchum, Dean, Rankin and Warren Awards.

2. Notifies President and Secretary-Treasurer (who prepares the checks).

At the Banquet

NEERS President:

- Remember to thank the judges and sign the Certificates.
- Awards the Certificates & checks to the students winning the Ketchum, Dean, Rankin and Warren awards.

After the Meeting

Local Committee:

1. Returns equipment

2. Supplies President with names of persons to receive thank-you notes.

NEERS President:

1. Sends thank-you notes.

NEERS Secretary-Treasurer:

1. Pays bills.

2. Updates NEERS membership database.

3. Prepares financial summary of meeting and distributes to Executive and Local Committees.

Everyone

RELAX—IT'S OVER!

Note: This timetable may be adjusted to accommodate particular dates. For example, people rarely mail abstracts before Labor Day.

NEERS Meeting Box

Pointers	Pencils
Extension cords	Scissors
Snake light for podium	Stapler
Push pins	Paper clips
Duct tape	Post-its
Masking tape	Markers
Pens	

Example of how to estimate the Breakeven registration fee

The trickiest thing to guess is the number of students that might attend. The cost of their banquets needs to be paid for by the other banquet attendees.

NEERS Conference Expense Worksheet: Note: Calculations are based on conference room price and morning and noon breaks that would accommodate 100 people but would be paid for by only 80 people, plus 10 unpaid student banquet tickets; banquet pricing is based on 50 people paying.

Item	Cost/per day plus additional charges		Total
TOTAL MEETING COSTS			
Conference Room	$250/day	x 2.5 days	$ 625.00
Screen	25/day	x 2.5 days	62.50
			$ 687.50
Breaks			
Morning	$3.75/pp/pd	x 100 attendees + 5% + 15% x 3 days	$ 1,358.44
Afternoon	$3.75/pp/pd	x 100 attendees + 5% + 15% x 2 days	$ 905.62
Subtotal			$ 2,951.56
Student banquet	$13.95/pp	x 10 students =$139.50 + 5% Mass. tax + 18% gratuity + $10.00 (entertainment fee if applicable)	$ 272.85
TOTAL EXPENSE (for conference)			$ 3,224.41
Breakeven Registration fee	$3,224/80 = $40	Assume 100 people might come, but be able to pay for it all if only 80 actually come	**$40.00**