Critical Issues (and Solutions) Facing the Physics Community: Teacher shortages, Diversity

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APS Education and Diversity Programs

- PhysTEC
- APS Bridge Program
- STEP UP 4 Women
- National Mentoring Community
- Conferences for Undergraduate Women in Physics (CUWiP)
- New Faculty Workshops
- APS Guide to Assessment: Effective Practices, Program Review

  - Physics chairs meeting (7-9 June)
  - REU site leaders
  - Prof. skills development workshops
  - Graduate education conference

- Advocating for physics education
- Childcare at meetings
- Mentoring seminar materials
- Ethics case studies
Percentage of Women in Physics
Percentage of Women in Physics

Source: National Center for Education Statistics and APS
Undergraduate Physics Degrees Awarded to Women

Physics / STEM Bachelor Degrees

Source: IPEDS
Hispanic American Bachelor Degrees

US College-Age Hispanic Population

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, US Census, and APS

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African American Bachelor Degrees

US College-Age Black Population

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, US Census, and APS
Underrepresented Minority (URM) Physics degrees

Only ~30 students!

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, US Census, and APS
APS Bridge Program:
Key Features

• **Recruit** students through graduate (unaccepted), undergraduate programs *(promising but uncompetitive, or unsure)*

• **Establish** Bridge Sites (6):
  • Year 1: Advanced undergraduate or grad courses, introduction to grad-level research, active mentoring, progress monitoring, social integration into grad school *(Project funds)*
  • Year 2: Take 1\textsuperscript{st} year grad courses, apply to PhD program, research underway *(Department funds)*

• **Place** additional students at Partnership Institutions (23):
  • 65 graduate programs looked at “other” applications (2017), recruited additional students; No direct support, some travel
  • “COM approved” Partnership Institutions; national recognition of program

• **Monitor** student/site progress

• **Research**

• **Disseminate / Advocate**
Member and Partner Institutions

Member Institutions
• 125 in 38 states

Partnership Institutions
• 32 in 18 states
  ▪ 24 PhD
  ▪ 8 MS
Institution Involvement

• **Member Institution** (any institution, 125)
  Free; receive information / updates; reduced fees for APS-BP conferences

• **Partnership Site** (graduate only, 32)
  APS COM approval process; recommended site for Bridge Fellows (and others) to attend; demonstrate effective practices in graduate student support

• **Bridge Site** (graduate only, 6)
  Receive significant funding from APS; build sustainable program; prepare 2+ students each year for graduate study; significant institutional commitment

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**APS Bridge Partnership Sites**

*Bowling Green State University*
*California State University Long Beach*
*California State University, Los Angeles*
*Columbia University*
*Delaware State University*
*DePaul University*
*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University*
*Fisk-Vanderbilt*
*Florida International University*
*Florida State University*
*Illinois Institute of Technology*
*Indiana University*
*MIT*
*North Dakota State University*
*Ohio State University*
*Princeton University*
*Texas State University*
*Towson University*
*University of Central Florida*
*University of Chicago*
*University of Cincinnati*
*University of Connecticut*
*University of Hawaii at Manoa*
*University of Houston Clear Lake*
*University of Michigan*
*University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*
*University of Rochester*
*University of South Florida*
*University of Texas at Arlington*
*University of Texas, San Antonio*
*University of Virginia*
*Wright State University*
Bridge Program Achievements

Bridge Program Physics PhDs

- 23% Women (20%)
- 93% URM (6%)
  - 64% Hispanic
  - 24% African American
  - 5% Native
- 88% Retention (60%)

National Achievement Gap

Students

2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Left Program
Placed/Retained
Project Funding

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Where did the 48 students go (2017)?

- Bowling Green State University
- CSU Long Beach (2)
- CSU Los Angeles (5)
- Delaware State University (2)
- DePaul University
- Fisk-Vanderbilt University (3)
- Florida State University (6)
- Indiana University (2)
- Ohio State University (3)
- Texas A&M University, Commerce
- Texas State University
- University of Central Florida (5)
- University of Cincinnati (3)
- University of Connecticut
- University of Houston, Clear Lake (3)
- University of Kansas (2)
- University of Massachusetts Dartmouth
- University of Minnesota Duluth
- University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- University of Rochester
- University of South Florida (2)
- University of Virginia
Physics GRE: Impact of Cutoff Scores

Fraction (White) - 0.44
Fraction (Hispanic) - 0.34
Fraction (Black) - 0.09
Fraction (Asian) - 0.61
**Mission:** To increase the number of underrepresented ethnic and racial minorities who complete a physics BS degree

**Program components:**

- Pair undergraduates with local faculty mentors
- Email prompts
- Workshops/PD
- BEAM fund
- Annual meeting

**Sign up now!**

- [www.aps.org/nmc](http://www.aps.org/nmc)
- Email: NMC@aps.org
• Focus on professional development, networking, understanding pathways
• Attendance more than tripled since APS became involved in 2012
• Very good URM attendance
• Departments using CUWiP as retention event for 1st year students
• Support from NSF, DOE
• 11 sites for 2018, plus 1 in Canada
• Directed research efforts to improve messaging to women sees positive changes
• National leadership group; Current chair: Pearl Sandick, Utah; Overseen by CSWP
• Site applications due 1 November for 2019 conferences
High school classes taught by teacher with degree in the field

Source: Schools and Staffing Survey
### Top 5 education fields (greatest demand)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spec. Ed. – Severe/Profound Disability</td>
<td>4.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spec. Ed. – Emotional/Behavioral Disorders</td>
<td>4.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physics</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.51</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spec. Ed. – Visually Impaired</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spec. Ed. – Hearing Impaired</td>
<td>4.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Bottom 5 education fields (least demand)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Demand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-K education</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate education</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English/Language Arts</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten/Primary Education</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health education</td>
<td>2.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2015-16 AAEE (American Association of Employment in Education)  
Educator Supply and Demand in the United States Report
Numbers of new physics teachers educated

![Bar Graph]

- 1081 Institutions (72%)

Source: Title II
• 46 PhysTEC Sites educate 1 in 8 physics teachers with a degree
• *Comprehensive* Sites nearly **tripled** their numbers of physics teachers
• Retention rates for new PhysTEC teachers are **over 70% after 5 years**
What would it take to solve the problem?

New physics teachers hired each year (1400 total)

600 with major/minor in physics or physics education

800 without deep content knowledge

Need 800 more new physics teachers / year

Source: AIP Statistical Research Center
• Recommendations to recruit more physics, chemistry, math and computer science majors to teaching
• Surveyed 8,000 STEM majors and recent graduates, including over 1,200 physics majors
• Partnered with the American Chemical Society, the Computing Research Association, and the Math Teacher Education Partnership
“How interested are you in being a middle or high school teacher?”

- **Physics**: 28% Not at all interested, 12% Slightly interested, 6% Somewhat interested, 2% Quite a bit interested, 2% Very interested
- **CS**: 23% Not at all interested, 9% Slightly interested, 3% Somewhat interested, 1% Quite a bit interested, 1% Very interested
- **Math**: 21% Not at all interested, 10% Slightly interested, 6% Somewhat interested, 17% Quite a bit interested
- **Chemistry**: 25% Not at all interested, 9% Slightly interested, 4% Somewhat interested, 3% Quite a bit interested, 3% Very interested
“Middle or high school teaching is discussed as a career option in my major department.”
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Student misperceptions

• Teacher salaries are ~$20k higher than what students think, on average

• 40% of STEM majors listed uncontrollable or uninterested students as a significant worry about teaching, whereas less than 8% of actual teachers reported this as a concern

• See report for more:
  www.aps.org/policy/reports/popa-reports
Recruiting one more teacher

“Physics teacher candidates are in your program: They just need the opportunity to discover how rewarding teaching can be.”
   – Alma Robinson, Virginia Tech

“I’ve been generally surprised how many physics students were interested once they knew that teaching is an option.”
   – Brian Thoms, Georgia State
Planned Project Activities

• Funding new “Comprehensive” sites (5); Spring 2018 RFP
• Funding “Recruiting” sites (10)
• PhysTEC “Fellows” (first cohort just identified)
• Report Card to document national need
• PhysTEC meeting (8-10 Feb 2018)
• Workshops on “Learning Assistants”
• Recruiting kit
• Online physics methods course
• Recognition of top producers: “5+ Club”
• Recognition of top teachers: PhysTEC teacher of the year
Quick Tips from Successful Sites

• Identify and support a faculty “Champion”
• Advertise your department’s education track
• Host an informal departmental event for students interested in teaching
• Ensure all undergrad advisors are knowledgeable about teacher education
• Tell all intro classes whom students interested in teaching should contact
• Track number of physics teachers graduating from your program each year
• Ask your students if they have considered teaching
• Invite a high school physics teacher to give a talk in the physics dept.
• Invite a recent physics teacher grad from your dept. to meet students
• Go to lunch with education faculty member
• Survey your students to ask who has ever considered high school teaching
• Know your local high school teachers, and make sure they know you
• Learn about Learning Assistants
Next Steps...

- Replicate Bridge Program in chemistry, math, astronomy, geosciences (apsbridgeprogram.org)
- Mentoring / tracking students into careers / postdoc positions
- National Mentoring Community (aps.org/nmc) expansion
- New BEAM (Bringing Emergency Aid to Mentees) fund available
- PhysTEC meeting: 8-10 Feb 2018, College Park, MD (phystec.org)
- PhysTEC solicitation for new sites starts Spring 2018
- CUWiP: 12-14 Jan 2018 (each year on MLK wknd) (aps.org/cuwip)
- STEP UP 4 Women: Pilot phase now (stepup4women.org)

Happy Physicists ⇒ Great Physics
Thanks!

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