
The Institute

AIP Student Sections

DURING the past two years the total number of individual members of Student Sections of the American Institute of Physics has risen from 1000 to approximately 2000, and Sections now exist on the campuses of some 80 colleges and universities. In the same period, AIP activities in connection with the Student Section program have also been intensified, especially those aimed at improving and extending the Institute's lines of communication with the various Sections. Last year it was recommended by the AIP Committee on Student Sections* that the Institute engage the services of a physicist to make personal contact with student groups as part of a renewed effort to enlarge and strengthen the program. Donald Cunningham, on leave of absence from Thompson Ramo Wooldridge, Inc., has accordingly been working with the Institute staff during the current academic year as an adviser on Student Section activities. Dr. Cunningham, who received his PhD in physics from the Case Institute of Technology in 1959, has been visiting existing and potential Sections in various parts of the country to discuss the program with both students and faculty members. He is also associated with the Institute's Education Department where he is helping in the administration of the Visiting Scientists Program in Physics.

A new avenue for communication between the Institute and the Sections has been opened with the inauguration of a bimonthly *AIP Student Section Newsletter* which is intended to contain information contributed by the Sections themselves, recommendations concerning journal articles of particular interest, occasional problems in physics, and contributed articles and comments. In addition, an information booklet on the AIP Student Section program is in preparation and will soon be available for distribution.

Institute services to the Sections have consisted mostly of special mailings of selected pieces of literature and various compilations which have seemed of likely interest to physics majors. Material customarily sent from the office of the program's National Secretary (Mrs. Ethel E. Snider of the AIP) has included lists of schools having graduate programs in physics, listings of graduate assistantships and fellowships available in physics, lists of summer employment openings

in industry and government laboratories and other information on career opportunities in physics, news concerning an impending trip by one or another of the "Visiting Scientists" to the neighborhood of a Section, and material dealing with the activities and membership requirements of the several professional societies of physicists.

Two new items of information have recently been sent to Student Sections in addition to those mentioned above. The first lists more than thirty industrial research organizations which have signified their willingness to have student groups visit their facilities or to provide speakers for Student Section meetings. The second list is a brief compilation of titles of available films that are considered to have good physics content. Comments about the films, together with complete instructions for obtaining them, are included.

Originally established in the summer of 1950, the Institute's student organization plan was conceived as a means for supporting physics teachers in their efforts to encourage and stimulate the interest of undergraduates in the study of physics. It was also intended to offer an avenue for student physics groups to become formally affiliated with the national organization of physics and to instill an early awareness of the advantages of individual membership in the Member Societies of the Institute.

Requirements which must be met in order to establish a new AIP Student Section include the following: (1) the Section must be located in a four-year (or more) degree-granting college or university of recognized standing which has been approved by the appropriate regional or national accrediting agencies; (2) the physics department must have offered a major or its



* The Committee is under the chairmanship of R. S. Shankland (Case Institute of Technology). Its other members are S. S. Ballard (University of Florida), W. W. Havens (Columbia University), A. C. Helmholtz (University of California), G. F. Koster (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), C. J. Overbeck (Northwestern University), and T. J. Ward (LaSalle College).

Responsibility for establishing and maintaining contact with Student Sections is shared by Donald Cunningham and Ethel E. Snider. Mrs. Snider is national secretary for AIP Student Sections and Dr. Cunningham is currently serving the Institute as its student program adviser.



Smith College, Northampton, Mass., has formed the first Student Section of the American Institute of Physics composed entirely of women. President T. C. Mendenhall of Smith congratulates Miss Sylvia Langan, a junior from St. Louis, on the formation of the Section. Looking on, at right, is Prof. J. J. Josephs, chairman of the Physics Department at Smith and faculty adviser to the newly organized group.

equivalent in physics for at least four years, the major being defined as one including a minimum of 22 semester hours in physics of which at least 8 require calculus as a prerequisite; (3) the willingness of the physics department to sponsor the Section must be stated by letter to the Institute, signed by the head of the department; (4) the latter must appoint a member of the faculty as adviser to the Section.

Dues are determined locally, but the Section must send \$2 to the Institute for each member who does not already belong to one of the AIP Member Societies. Student Section members receive *Physics Today* and they may subscribe at reduced rates to any of the other Institute-owned journals. They may also attend meetings of the Member Societies and are encouraged to make use of the help offered by the Institute's Placement Service in matters concerning employment. In addition, they automatically are placed on a mailing list to receive the steadily increasing amount of factual and useful information available for distribution to students by the Institute. Other measures to increase the value of Institute services to Student Sections are being considered, and where feasible they will be adopted.

Requests for application forms or for additional information about the program should be addressed to Mrs. Ethel E. Snider, National Secretary for Student Sections, American Institute of Physics, 335 East 45th Street, New York 17, N. Y.

Planning for Graduate Work?

TWO recent AIP publications dealing with the subject of graduate study are aimed at helping faculty advisers and hopeful physics majors in planning for advanced training in physics. Both publications can be obtained without charge by writing to the Institute.

The first is a booklet entitled, *Planning for Graduate Study in Physics*, which has been issued by the Institute under a grant from the National Science Foundation. Written by George Pake of the Stanford University Physics Department, the manuscript was reviewed by physicists representing fourteen graduate departments. Among the topics discussed by Prof. Pake are:

should you seek a graduate degree?; undergraduate physics background required for graduate study; choosing the graduate department; what specialization within physics should you choose?; what about experimental physics versus theoretical physics?; applying for admission and for financial aid; and teaching assistant and scholarship awards. Some of the general procedures of graduate schools are reviewed in an appendix.

The second booklet is the result of a study itemizing the research specialties of 179 responding physics departments that offer graduate work. The pamphlet also lists separately the schools where research is done in one or more of 122 special areas of physics. The intent of the publication is to aid in selecting an institution represented by research interests which most nearly match those of the prospective graduate student. Entitled *Graduate Physics Research Specialties in American Educational Institutions*, the booklet was prepared by the Institute's Placement Service as a supplement to another AIP booklet, *Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships in Physics*, which was issued last year and is also obtainable without charge.

Summer Laboratory Employment

MORE than one hundred laboratories in the United States have indicated to the AIP Placement Service that they will welcome inquiries regarding summer employment in 1960 from college physics majors and from secondary-school and college physics teachers. Of the total, sixty-two laboratories are interested in having both students and teachers apply for summer jobs; the remaining forty-five are interested in employing students only. Although most of the laboratories that have responded to a recent invitation to submit information concerning summer job openings are those of industrial organizations, some are laboratories of independent nonprofit research institutions or are operated by or for agencies of the federal government.

A list of the responding laboratories for 1960 has been compiled and can be obtained by writing to the Placement Service, American Institute of Physics, 335 East 45th Street, New York 17, N. Y.