



2009B Proposal Update

Dave Bell

NOAO received 419 observing proposals for telescope time during the 2009B observing semester. Observatory and panel breakdown statistics, estimated telescope oversubscription rates (nights requested / nights expected to be available), and time-request statistics by telescope and instrument appear in the chart and table below. Final subscription rate statistics will be published in the September 2009 edition of this *Newsletter*.

As seen in the chart below, Keck continues to be the most heavily oversubscribed resource. MMT and Magellan subscription rates vary

greatly due to small-number statistics, so it would be dangerous to draw conclusions regarding community interest from a single semester (e.g., In 2009A, MMT was the most oversubscribed of the three 6.5-meter telescopes). The rate for the Mayall 4-meter telescope is lower than recent semesters, with more nights now available, and the SOAR rate is higher, with fewer nights available due to a major shutdown for re-aluminization. When available time changes significantly, as in these cases, there is often a one-semester jump or drop in oversubscription that will adjust back in the following semesters. A discussion of historical Gemini subscription

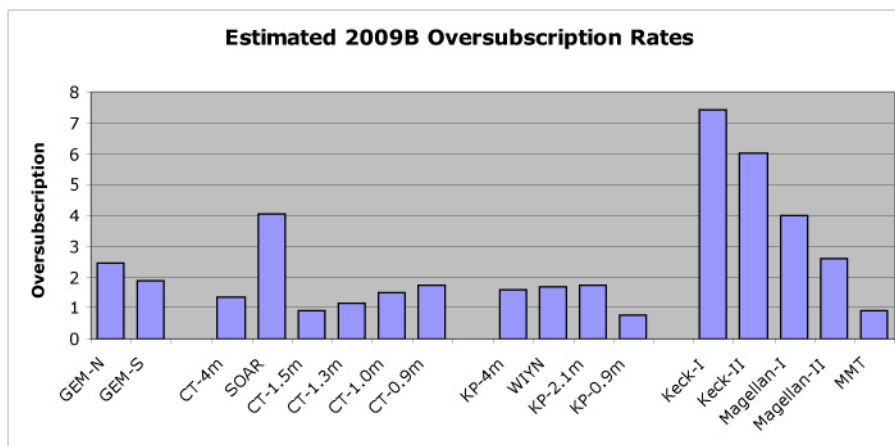
rates can be found in the NGSC section ("US Community Usage...") of this *Newsletter*.

Proposals were reviewed in May by members of the NOAO Time Allocation Committee (see list on next page). Telescope schedules should be completed by 11 June 2009, and principle investigators will be notified of the status of their requests at that time.

Looking ahead to 2010A, Web information and forms will be available online around August 15. The September issue of this *Newsletter* will contain updated instrument and proposal information.

NOAO Observing Proposals 2009B

Total Number	419
Extragalactic	189
Galactic	183
Solar System	47
Gemini	179
KPNO	94
CTIO	84
Keck	56
Magellan	15
MMT	7
Thesis	93
Long-term	16



NOAO Survey Program Letters of Intent Due July 31

Tod R. Lauer & Dave De Young

Proposals for the next round of the NOAO Survey Program are due 15 September 2009. Investigators interested in applying for time under the Survey Program MUST submit by 31 July 2009 a letter of intent (by email to surveys@noao.edu) describing the broad scientific goals of the program, the members and institutions of the survey team, the telescopes and instruments to be requested, the approximate amount of time that will be requested, and the duration of the proposed survey.

Surveys are aimed at identification and study of complete, well-defined samples of objects that can yield conclusions based on analysis of the survey data itself and also provide important subsets

for more detailed observations with larger telescopes. All survey teams are expected to work with the NOAO Science Archive project to ensure effective, timely, community access to the survey data.

Up to 20 percent of a particular telescope resource at CTIO and KPNO may be awarded through the Survey Program, including time allocated in the earlier rounds to continuing programs. A more detailed description of the Survey Program requirements and guidelines is available at www.noao.edu/gateway/surveys/. Proposals must be initiated using the NOAO Web proposal form at www.noao.edu/noaoprop/noaoprop.html, which will be available approximately 15 August 2009.

“What’s Happening to My Proposal?” (An Overview of the NOAO Scheduling Process)

Dave Bell

In the March 2009 *Newsletter*, Letizia Stanghellini presented an overview of the NOAO Time Allocation Committee (TAC) process, in which ~400 observing proposals are discussed, assessed, and ranked. Immediately following the TAC meetings, the scheduling process begins in which the TAC comments and rankings are used to produce classical telescope schedules and observing queues. This process currently involves over fifty instruments on eighteen telescopes at nine observatories, each with its own set of constraints. One common characteristic is that the rankings and time available cannot be used immediately to determine a strict cutoff rank, above which all programs can be accommodated. Instead, schedulers must use the TAC results to attempt to maximize each telescope’s scientific return while meeting the constraints imposed by each observatory, telescope, instrument, and program.

When assigning a night, the scheduler considers target coordinates, lunar phase, and other constraints imposed by the scientific program (e.g., time-critical or coordinated observations). Also important, however, are constraints imposed by limited observatory resources, such as minimizing instrument changes and ensuring that sufficient staff expertise will be available to support new observers. As most telescopes are shared, schedulers usually must consider all this while balancing the demands of several partner institutions. In some cases, these concerns will require trimming or augmenting a program by a night or two, or skipping over a program to a lower ranked one that fits better. In most cases, the top-ranked programs will be assigned nearer to their optimal dates and be allowed to drive the instrument schedule.

You might ask, “Why was I scheduled in June when my targets are up in March?” Most likely there was a good reason—other programs also needed

March, or perhaps you had the only March request for a less popular instrument and scheduling it then was not optimal. The scheduler determined that you would have enough available targets or ancillary science to make productive use of the nights, even if they are not ideally suited. If your program had not been deemed meritorious, it would, perhaps, have been replaced with another with June targets, so that should be some consolation.

For telescopes that are largely queue-scheduled, the process is much simpler and less time consuming. Care must still be taken not to overload the queue with programs needing the same limited resources or conditions. As is the case for classically scheduled nights, virtually all Gemini queue programs of higher rank will make it into the queue, but programs in Band 3 will often be selected if their tolerance for non-ideal conditions is less restrictive than some higher ranked programs.

This scheduling process runs in parallel at each observatory, sometimes requiring a few iterations of producing draft schedules and having them approved by several parties. Completed schedules are collected at NOAO and entered in our database, and, finally, schedules and an approved program list are published on the Web and notifications sent out by email. Usually, this will occur about one month after the TAC meetings, though in some semesters a last-second issue (like an instrument problem) will require a major rewrite causing target release dates to be missed. Your patience is appreciated during this difficult and time-consuming process. If your program does not make it onto the schedule, you are encouraged to resubmit. As subscription rates and the other factors discussed above will fluctuate, proposals that could not be scheduled in one semester will often fare better in another.

2009B Time Allocation Committee Members

Solar System (April 30-May 1, 2009)

David Trilling, Chair, Univ. of Arizona, Steward
Travis Barman, Lowell Observatory
Joe Harrington, Univ. of Central Florida
Amanda Hendrix, CalTech, JPL
Bill Merline, Southwest Research Institute
Beatrice Mueller, Planetary Science Institute

Extragalactic (May 4-5, 2009)

Jill Bechtold, Chair, Univ. of Arizona, Steward
Romeel Dave, Chair, Univ. of Arizona, Steward
Tod Lauer, Chair, NOAO
Mariangela Bernardi, Univ. of Pennsylvania
John Blakeslee, Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics
Ranga-Ram Chary, Spitzer Science Center
Mike Eracleous, Pennsylvania State Univ.
Karl Gebhardt, Univ. of Texas, Austin
Andy Howell, Univ. of Toronto
Lisa Kewley, Univ. of Hawai‘i, IfA
Jennifer Lotz, NOAO
Casey Papovich, Texas A & M Univ.
Tom Statler, Ohio Univ.
Daniel Stern, Caltech/JPL
Alan Stockton, Univ. of Hawai‘i, IfA
Louis Strolger, Western Kentucky Univ.
Pieter van Dokkum, Yale Univ.
Liese van Zee, Indiana Univ.

Galactic (May 6-7, 2009)

Ata Sarajedini, Chair, Univ. of Florida
Jeff Valenti, Chair, STScI
Sidney Wolff, Chair, NOAO
Bob Blum, NOAO
Howard Bond, STScI
Michael Briley, Univ. of Wisconsin
Geoffrey Clayton, Louisiana State Univ.
Anne Cowley, Arizona State Univ.
Moshe Elitzur, Univ. of Kentucky
Chris Johns-Krull, Rice Univ.
Jennifer Johnson, Ohio State Univ.
Steve Kawaler, Iowa State Univ.
Sebastien Lepine, American Museum of Nat. History
Phil Massey, Lowell Observatory
Simon Schuler, NOAO
Bill Sherry, NSO
Tammy Smecker-Hane, Univ. of California, Irvine
Stefanie Wachter, Spitzer Science Center

2009B Instrument Request Statistics by Telescope Standard Proposals

Gemini Observatory

Telescope	Instrument	Proposals	Runs	Total Nights	Dark Nights	% Dark	Avg. Nights/Run
GEM-N		118	153	151.4	48.4	32	1
	GMOSEN	50	63	69.1	43.4	63	1.1
	MOIRCS	1	1	2	0	0	2
	Michelle	21	29	21.6	0	0	0.7
	NIFS	11	11	15.6	0	0	1.4
	NIRI	41	47	39.4	2	5	0.8
	SuprimeCam	2	2	3.8	3	80	1.9
GEM-S		73	93	104.2	48.7	47	1.1
	GMOSS	37	45	54.5	44.7	82	1.2
	NICI	9	10	14	0	0	1.4
	Phoenix	10	14	12.4	0	0	0.9
	TReCS	18	24	23.3	4	17	1

Kitt Peak National Observatory

Telescope	Instrument	Proposals	Runs	Total Nights	Dark Nights	% Dark	Avg. Nights/Run
KP-4m		44	51	192	53.5	28	3.8
	ECH	2	2	13	0	0	6.5
	FLMN	5	5	21	0	0	4.2
	MARS	1	1	2	0	0	2
	MOSA	11	14	50.5	43.5	86	3.6
	NEWFIRM	13	14	56.5	0	0	4
	RCSP	13	15	49	10	20	3.3
WIYN		22	29	94.2	23	24	3.2
	HYDR	5	6	15	9	60	2.5
	MIMO	4	8	40	6	15	5
	OPTIC	5	5	13	8	62	2.6
	SPSPK	1	1	4	0	0	4
	VIS	2	2	6	0	0	3
	WHIRC	5	7	16.2	0	0	2.3
KP-2.1m		29	40	231	61	26	5.8
	CFIM	10	16	92	53	58	5.8
	ET	3	7	49	0	0	7
	FLMN	3	3	19	0	0	6.3
	GCAM	10	11	54	8	15	4.9
	SQIID	1	1	3	0	0	3
	VIS	2	2	14	0	0	7
KP-0.9m		4	4	15	6	40	3.8
	MOSA	4	4	15	6	40	3.8

Cerro Tololo InterAmerican Observatory

Telescope	Instrument	Proposals	Runs	Total Nights	Dark Nights	% Dark	Avg. Nights/Run
CT-4m		35	42	178	95.5	54	4.2
	HYDRA	9	10	36	18	50	3.6
	ISPI	6	6	41.5	0	0	6.9
	Mosaic	20	22	91.5	77.5	85	4.2
	RCSP	3	3	6	0	0	2
	VIS	1	1	3	0	0	3
SOAR		30	33	114.6	38	33	3.5
	Goodman	15	16	62.1	20	32	3.9
	OSIRIS	7	7	18.5	0	0	2.6
	SOI	10	10	34	18	53	3.4
CT-1.5m		4	5	19	0	0	3.8
	CSPEC	4	4	18	0	0	4.5
	FECH	1	1	1	0	0	1
CT-1.3m		8	8	35.3	0	0	4.4
	ANDI	8	8	35.3	0	0	4.4
CT 1.0m		6	8	71	43	61	8.9
	CFIM	6	8	71	43	61	8.9
CT-0.9m		10	16	59	29.9	51	3.7
	CFIM	10	16	59	29.9	51	3.7

Community Access Observatories

Telescope	Instrument	Proposals	Runs	Total Nights	Dark Nights	% Dark	Avg. Nights/Run
Keck-I		31	33	52.5	18.5	35	1.6
	HIRES	15	17	27.5	4	15	1.6
	IF	5	5	5.5	0	0	1.1
	LRIS	10	10	18.5	14.5	78	1.9
	NIRC	1	1	1	0	0	1
Keck-II		30	33	42.1	9.5	23	1.3
	DEIMOS	6	6	10.5	8.5	81	1.8
	IF	5	5	5.5	1	18	1.1
	NIRC2-LGS	3	4	3.5	0	0	0.9
	NIRC2-NGS	5	5	5.1	0	0	1
	NIRSPA0-NGS	1	1	1	0	0	1
	NIRSPEC	11	11	15.5	0	0	1.4
	OSIRIS-LGS	1	1	1	0	0	1
Magellan-I		9	9	20	16	80	2.2
	IMACS	8	8	18	16	89	2.2
	PANIC	1	1	2	0	0	2
Magellan-II		6	6	13	4	31	2.2
	MIKE	4	4	7	0	0	1.8
	MagE	2	2	6	4	67	3
MMT		7	8	13.9	9	65	1.7
	BCHAN	2	2	6	6	100	3
	Hectochelle	4	4	4.3	0	0	1.1
	Hectospec	2	2	3.6	3	83	1.8