Greetings! As an AMCBT member, you will soon be receiving (or perhaps have recently received) a copy of the report, "Undergraduate Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Education," by the National Science Board Task Committee on Undergraduate Science and Engineering Education. This document evaluates the state of undergraduate education in science, mathematics, and engineering, and makes potentially far-reaching recommendations, including (but not limited to) recommendations concerning the role of the National Science Foundation in undergraduate education in these areas. It is a document you will want to read, think about, and share and discuss with your colleagues. Furthermore, it is one that we should respond to, as individuals involved in undergraduate science education, and collectively as members of AMCBT.

Dr. Robert Watson, Head of the Office of College Science Instrumentation at NSF, has encouraged AMCBT to respond to this report. Those of you who attended the Annual Meeting in Springfield, IL will recall his presentation on the opening panel. Dr. Watson has since contacted the organization to obtain the mailing list so that you can each receive this report. Now the ball is in our court. If you have ever wanted to bend the ear of NSF and affect the direction of support for undergraduate science, now is the time, and this is the vehicle! I am looking for several volunteers to constitute an Ad Hoc Committee to draft a response from AMCBT. The charge will be to read the report, to discuss how to solicit responses from the membership, to solicit these responses, and to summarize them in a document to be submitted to the Steering Committee. I urge you to consider serving on this committee. If you are willing, please contact me immediately.

In the first and second decades of its existence, AMCBT (both as an organization and through the work of individual members) had a significant impact on national movements such as the Commission on Undergraduate Education in the Biological Sciences (CUEBS) and the governing board of the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS). There has been no movement on a national scale in recent years in which it was appropriate for us to participate as an organization. This National Science Board report may provide a new cause celebre infusing us with renewed life and a new focus of activity.

I look forward to hearing from you (mail: Central College, Pella, IA 50219; phone: 515/628-5203 or 628-9409).

Janice C. Kemp
President, AMCBT

ANNOUNCEMENT

I have a large supply of good, viable sclerotium of Physarum polycephalum (produced by MP Backus, UW-Madison, retired). If you'd like some send me your address and one dollar ($1.) to defray the cost of shipping. Let me know if you just want a little to try or if you use it regularly and want a large amount. If you don't use this organism as a regular part of your labs you and your students are missing an easily grown, fascinating and fun organism which fits in with many subjects (cells, cell membranes, cytoplasmic streaming, growth, elimination of waste, fungi/protozoa, response to environment, life cycle, etc.). I'll include a sheet telling how I use it and how to make more of your own if you wish.

Janet W. Phelps, UWC-Baraboo/Sauk, Co.
1006 Connie Road, Baraboo, WI 53913

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