

Jeopardy Game Contest “So you think you know well about Purdue & Optics?”

On March 7th, 2013, the OSA Purdue Student Chapter held a quiz contest in the spirit of the famous TV game show “Jeopardy!” covering topics in Optics and interesting facts about Purdue University. In order to create the atmosphere of a real game show, we made an interactive game board with sound effects. In this way we were able to share our knowledge and passion for optics with fun and excitement.

Jeopardy theme music played as people entered the room, where they were welcomed with food and drink. After assembling into teams, the game began. The goal of each team was obtain as many points as possible by answering questions. Each question was worth points, with the harder questions worth more points. The team with the most points in the end won. We used a game board we created using Microsoft Powerpoint displayed on a projector screen. The questions were arranged in 6 categories, with 5 questions in each category. The categories we used included History of Optics, Basic Optics, Funny Optics, and Notable Optics Inventions. Our questions ranged from “Why is the sky blue,” to “What is the principle of operation of optical tweezers?” The team who correctly answered the previous question would choose the next question from a particular category. The first person to raise their hand after the host was finished reading the question would be called upon to answer, but if a person raised their hand before the question was finished being read, they would be disqualified from answering that particular question. The next thing we knew we were all racing to raise our hands to answer the Jeopardy questions in friendly competition as our laughter echoed off into the night.

The nature of the friendly competition brought out a spirit and enthusiasm for optics such that we never expected of the many people who were new to optics at the event, and the rush to raise hands caused much excitement and laughter. The wide variety of types and difficulty of questions as well as the ability to work off of other people’s nearly-correct answers ensured that novices and seasoned optics students were able to compete on the same level. At the end it turned into an intense showdown between the teams, with the victory finally coming to one of the teams upon the answering of the final question.

With “Jeopardy” theme songs filling the air, delicious sandwiches and drinks filling our bellies, and cheers and laughter from the fun of the game, the night turned into a great time for everyone. On top of all of this, everyone walked away with more conceptual and historical knowledge of optics. It was a great introduction to the field for non-optics students, a nice refresher and topping on the cake for those more experienced with optics, and an explosion of enthusiasm for the field for all those in attendance.