

WHOI Postdoctoral Association

MINUTES OF MEETING NO 7

Thursday, March 2, 2006

Clark 201

Committee members present:

David Ralston, Jed Goldstone, Luc Rainville, Tim Verslycke, and Janet Fields.
(Absent: Nancy Grumet Prouty, Rowena Lohman, Angela Dickens)

Jim Yoder and Kira Pratt joined us for the last 20 minutes.

- 1 • *Meeting opened by Luc*
It's snowing!

- 2 • *Panel discussion on Grant writing and Funding Possibilities*
We seem to be all set for the panel discussion next week. Rowena will lead the discussion and Luc will get the cookies. Janet is ordering coffee and tea.

- 3 • *National Postdoctoral Association Meeting*
The annual meeting of the National Postdoctoral Association is on April 21-23 in Maryland, very close to DC. This will be a great opportunity to get ideas for social events, career development, outreach, etc. Janet and one member of the PDA will participate to the meeting and report back to us. Check out the schedule at http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/annual_meeting/2006

- 4 • *Postdoc Yoga*

In the last couple of months, the issue of the use of conference room for social activities has been raised. In particular, a group of postdocs (and students) was meeting once a week in the evening for a yoga session in Clark 201. This apparently is against the rules for usage of conference space at WHOI. Kira Pratt (Conference Services) came to the meeting and explained the situation. It all comes down to the fact that the rooms are designed (and paid) for use directly related to work. Besides the occasional department or retirement party, the rooms can't legally be used for social activities. Conference services in fact get tons of requests for 'social/work' activities (yoga, pilates, bible studies, knitting, book clubs, etc.), and they have to draw the line somewhere. For the conference rooms they are responsible for, they can only handle meetings and conferences. They of course can't control the rooms when an activity is not scheduled, but using the room without reserving it (even at night) can result in complications, such as interfering with cleaning or maintenance. Note that using room for a function not directly related to work is possible (e.g. Weight Watcher), as long as it's sponsored (HR in that specific case) and presumable open to all the whoi community.

On the short term, there is the possibility that we could use a room that doesn't fall under the umbrella of conference services. For example, Jim Yoder mentioned that Academic Programs are paying for at least one room (a classroom). They could sponsor us, allowing postdocs and students to meet for yoga in a classroom. Another possibility is to rent Carriage House (~25\$? for an evening). The student lounge is also a under different rules, but meeting there would required the

approval of students (?).

So:

- Short term: Can we meet in a classroom to do yoga session? Do we want to rent Carriage House?
 - There is a clear interest for yoga at WHOI. If we find someone willing to teach an institution-wide class, we can certainly get sponsored by HR and have a session for a very little fee, just like the Weight-watcher program.
 - There is a clear need for a room where people working at WHOI (postdoc in particular, but also staff) can meet for yoga and other activities. Jim Yoder will talk to the directorate about this, and the PDA should also make sure that this question is addressed. Other committees at WHOI would certainly get in with this. Can we get the administration to designate Carriage House as available for social groups of whoi employees? How can we formulate such a request?
- 5 • *Brown Bag Lunches*
Last month was quite busy, but we haven't given up the idea of lunches in each of the department. Jed will talk to a few people about meeting in the new Biology building in Quissett this month, and after that we'll hopefully meet in the Village in AOP&E. Stay tuned.
 - 6 • *Visit from a NASA program manager*
Jim Yoder mentioned that a NASA program manager, Paula Bontempi, will be at WHOI on April 7th. She will be giving a talk in the afternoon. This will be a great opportunity to meet her.
 - 7 • *Next meeting*
Sometime in mid-April. We'll pick a date via email.

(Minutes recorded by Luc)