

WHOI Postdoctoral Association

MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 10

Friday, August 4, 2006

Clark 201

Committee members present:

Heather Benway, Angela Dickens, Henrieta Dulaiova, Jed Goldstone, Luc Rainville, Dave Ralston and Tim Verslycke.

Other representatives present:

Janet Fields (Postdoctoral Coordinator/Academic Programs)

1. Meeting opened by Luc

2. New G&G Representative

Welcome to Heather, who is Rowena's successor.

3. Women's Committee representative

Now that Nancy is gone, we need to get a postdoc representative to take her place on the committee. Janet will look into how to do this.

4. Summer social event - BBQ

We were generally very happy with the way this event went last year, though we decided to try a cookout rather than pizza. PDA members will take care of the grilling, and we'll order the meat and sides from Shaws or BJ's and buy the drinks. Jed will look into where biology got their grillables. There will be various lawn games, maybe a game of whiffle ball or kickball. In addition to WHOI postdocs, we'll also invite postdocs from MBL, NOAA, USGS and WHRC (Janet will get the lists of these postdocs). We were undecided on the date at the meeting but later settled on Friday, August 25.

5. Caryn House

Janet has some money to pay for renovations to the postdoc room at Caryn House, and we'll be moving PDA meetings there once it's ready.

6. Postdoctoral Research Symposium

This will be a Tuesday or Wednesday in late October, at the National Academies' Campus, which we were all very happy with last year. Uli Riemenschneider is interested in helping with the organization.

7. PDA Elections

Janet will run the elections, sending out ballots by email and listing the current members in that email. Current PDA members will help count. Because of the PDA charter, elections

must occur in September and can't be moved to November as we had hoped (to allow new postdocs to vote).

8. Education Council – Proposed changes

Jed passed out text including the proposed changes in wording to the description of the postdoctoral scholarship program, as listed on the webpage. These changes include text saying that postdocs at WHOI cannot apply to be postdoctoral scholars and that scholar status can be extended up to six months in rare cases if funded using unrestricted, internal funds. Additionally, the Ed Council decided to keep language saying that scholar appointments carry special recognition at the Institution.

9. Postdoc-faculty transition

We again discussed the need for more transparency and standardization in the way these internal hires are pursued, particularly in the differences between hiring scholars and investigators. Janet said the requirement is for an “open and fair” competition for the positions, and that the scholar competition qualifies for this whereas investigator hires don't. The different departments often have different requirements and processes, and what these are is often not clear. Janet will request the WHOI requirements for these hires, and we may post these on the webpage or look into having each supervisor go over these with their postdocs. We decided to have a panel discussion about how this process works in the different departments. Janet will ask Jim Yoder to ask the department chairs (or possibly department administrators) to participate, and we'll aim to have this on the same day as a chairs' meeting.

10. Meeting with new postdocs

We would like to have PDA department reps meet with each new postdoc to help orient them to WHOI postdoc life. One issue we'll look into to convey at these meetings is ESL (English as a Second Language) help for partners/families of postdocs. We should also ask postdocs if they speak other languages and would be willing to help others with language issues. We should also let them know there is an International Committee at WHOI.

11. Next meeting

Our next meeting will be either the afternoon of Friday, September 15 or the previous Friday.

12. Meeting closed by Luc

(Minutes recorded by Angie)