

WHOI Postdoctoral Association

MINUTES OF MEETING NO 6

Tuesday, Jan 10, 2006

Watson 201

Committee members present:

Jed Goldstone, Nancy Grumet Prouty, Anna Nikolopoulos, Luc Rainville,
David Ralston and Tim Verslycke.
(Absent: Rowena Lohman)

- 1 • *Meeting opened by Luc*
Happy New Year!

- 2 • *Postdoc Breakfast Survey*

The reminder email about the survey resulted in some more responses; see below for a summary of them! Most people seemed interested in our plans of arranging the proposed panel discussions and brown-bag lunches. The latter ones are supposed to be informal meetings at lunch taking place in different departments/locations about every other month. The idea is to give us postdocs some more chances to interact on a semi-regular basis and facilitate collaboration between different groups/departments/topics.

The first lunch will take place in late January/early February and hopefully be arranged in one of the new Biology buildings on Quissett Campus. Jed and Tim are working on the specifics. Dave will work in putting together the March/April-lunch at AOP&E.

- 3 • *Panel discussion on Grant writing and Funding Possibilities*

We aim at arranging the panel discussion the week of March 6th – 10th 2006, and we aim at including 1-2 people closely related to the practicalities and formalities of proposal writing for postdocs (e.g. Claire Reid (GCO), Maryanne Ray (PO)), and also 1-2 people which can contribute with a scientific (PI) perspective on these issues (e.g. Judy McDowell (Bio), John Trowbridge (AOP&E), Jim Price (PO)). Needless to say we hope Jim Yoder also will have the possibility to participate.

Following subjects could perhaps act as basis for the Q&A type of discussion:

- May we (or do we have to) be Co-PIs for writing proposals?
- How do the cycles and timelines of funding deadlines look like?
- How flexible is a grant if moving to another job?

- 4 • *Postdoc Yoga*

Today's last issue was news about Pascale Poussart's postdoc yoga sessions which apparently interfere with the rules about the (free) use of the rooms at WHOI for other than purely professional activities. The PDA would like to support initiatives like this for the well-being of postdocs, and others, but we feel that we need to know the detailed background before discussing the issue any further.

• 5 • *Anna's successor*

Anna is leaving by the end of January, and Angela Dickens (MC&G) will take her spot as one of the two 'overall' representatives in the committee.

• 6 • *Next meeting*

Tentative date [Thursday, March 2nd at 14:00am](#), location determined later.

• 7 • *Meeting closed by Luc*

(Minutes recorded by A. Nikolopoulos)

Summary of Survey 2005

We got 14 responses (7 via email). Given that there are 7 of us on the PDA committee and we didn't fill out the survey, that's almost as many responses as there were last year about the formation of the postdoc association (21 versus 25 last year).

1) Panel on funding possibilities for postdocs.

- 10 are very interested, 4 are interested in participating.
- Help to organize it: 9
- Other topic?
 - Development of possibilities of careers outside academia, research, and even science
 - Job hunting ("funding and finding a job are my biggest concerns"), both in academics and in industry. This should also include the interview process.

2) Monthly postdoc "brown-bag"

About attending such an event, 5 persons are very interested, 5 are interested, 4 are somewhat interested. Not too surprisingly the people "somewhat interested" in attending are not willing to organize it, while the others mostly would be. Everybody would host and present if they were asked. Somebody suggested having a poster presented by each postdoc of the selected department.

3) What is missing at WHOI that the PDA can help with?

- Nothing, I think the Academic Programs Office is already doing a great job.
- So far everything was a smooth process. I might have a different opinion after being here for a few more weeks or months.
- A place for postdocs to meet informally for coffee or lunch.
- Together with the JP I think there could easily be a recruitment day. I remember in college there was a day that all the corporate business came in and tried to entice students, it could likely happen here.
- This may already be a part of PDA meetings or activities, but at the postdoc breakfast, I heard people talk about having discussions with both faculty and postdocs about balancing life activities (health, recreation, family, etc.) with career goals. I think this could be either an informal guided discussion with postdocs and faculty or a mentorship program among postdocs.

4) Do you have any comments on the existing/recurrent postdoc activities, or suggestions for new ones (social and professional)?

- The PDA is doing a great job. I've really enjoyed and appreciated the activities so far.
- Great so far. I've really enjoyed them.
- Everything has been great so far.