

U of U Postdoctoral Association Board Meeting

April 30th, 2015

HSEB 3515B

12:00 - 1:00 PM

Attendance: John O'Shea (Oncological Sciences), Simran Sidhu (School of Medicine), Catherine Loc-Carrillo (Orthopedics), Jen Nichols (Orthopaedics), Yen Wang (Oncological Sciences), Natalia Torres, Lars Laurentius (Nano Institute), Jennifer Mabey (Graduate School).

Known Absences: Mary Anne Berzins, (HR), Daniel Mendoza, Swapna Gudipaty (Oncological Sciences).

Unplanned Absences: Venkata Neti (Chemistry).

Agenda

1. Approve minutes from last meeting (John)

- Minutes were approved

2. Board Member Update (John)

- Swapna Gudipaty is stepping down from the board.
- Welcome Natalia Torres to the board meeting.
- John will be stepping down from the board this summer and will remain senior chair until next meeting in June. After this, Jen will take over the senior chair position.
- We need to update our internet site, John will ask Daniel to look into it.
- This will be Simran's last board meeting as she is moving away.

3. UPDA Upcoming events

- UPDA Summer BBQ:
 - Jennifer booked the pavilion at Sunnyside park for the 26th of June. We will hold the BBQ between 5-8 pm.
 - Most board members are available to help out.
 - Jen and Lars will buy supplies from Costco; need to determine what to buy.
 - Budget for the BBQ event is approximately \$100.

Action: 1) Jen will set-up a Google invite to determine how many people will attend.

- 2) Daniel will send-out emails for event: mid May first email announcing the event, June 15th last RSVP chance, and June 22 reminder email.
 - 3) Jennifer will take inventory of BBQ supplies at her disposal and let us know. We will look at the receipt from last year to determine what else we need to purchase for the event.
- AGM (Annual General Meeting):
 - We will need to plan the meeting well in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts between our meeting and the staff appreciation event and RATS courses.
 - The meeting will be during or near the postdoc appreciation week. We could hold it on the Friday prior to kick-off the post doc appreciation week.
 - The workshops were well received, but the post session needs to be scheduled differently.
 - **As an aside**, many postdocs use their institute email address over their University email address, which could potentially lead to contact problems as all email communication from the UPDA go to University addressrd. Jennifer will ask IT about this issue, and we will highlight the issue on the UPDA website to inform postdocs.
 - Ideas for workshops include career development, career planning, resume/CV, and introduction to the academic job market.
 - Jennifer has two potential candidates to hold a “recently hired” Faculty panel to discuss the hiring process in the next month or early summer.
 - We will have coffee/snacks during the event and not afterwards. Also, hold the poster session in-between the workshops with enough time to socialize.

- Action:
- 1) Jennifer will check scheduling conflicts with RATS courses and staff appreciation event.
 - 2) Jennifer will contact newly hired faculty to determine best time to hold a career panel.
 - 3) Come up with ideas for workshops at the AGM.

4. General Report of Past Activities (Jennifer and Yen)

- Report on National Postdoc Association Meeting (March 2015).

- The NPA meeting was very interesting and helpful establishing connections.
- There was a trend for organizations to move towards best practices in terms of postdoc hiring and contracts. Here at the U, there are no specified requirements or a centralized process to hire postdocs.
 - Jennifer brought this back to the Dean of the Graduate School and he is taking this very seriously, contacting HR to get a process into place. The Dean is also looking into setting up a formal grievance process for postdocs to better address this issue. Postdocs are considered temporary staff and there is a lack of information in regards to the position's benefits, job codes, vacation, etc. Therefore HR is interested in assigning one person (possible Jennifer) to clarify the roles of postdocs and act as a liaison between the various departments and HR.
 - Jennifer asked the board to look into training ideas for postdocs that HR could offer to new hires or throughout the postdoc employment.
 - Training could be part of the new hire process for postdocs in order to increase awareness of various services available to postdocs such as UPDA and Office of Postdoctoral Affairs and Professional Programs.
 - Yen suggested looking into NIH guidelines for postdocs as a basis for new guidelines to be implemented here.
- One of the activities was an elevator pitch event. The attendees were mixed with industry representatives and given 1 minute to talk about their research.
 - We could do a workshop on holding an elevator pitch for postdocs here at the U.
 - Jennifer pointed out that the Graduate School has been involved with holding 3-minute thesis talks for graduate students. We could get involved with or adopt something similar for postdocs.
 - We could organize a series of workshops right before the AGM (end of August/mid-September) preparing postdocs to give an elevator pitch to various audiences, i.e. academic, industrial, investors. This would then lead-up to have a select few candidates giving an elevator pitch at the AGM for a prize.

Action: 1) Jennifer will check with the thesis office and career development if they can run the workshops.

2) Jennifer will contact newly hired faculty to determine best time to hold a career panel.

3) Look at other universities' websites to see what kind of training they offer postdocs.

5. UBox account

- Instead of using Dropbox, we should switch to an UBox account for the UPDA, but we need the UPDA email-access information in order to do so. The initial account was created by IT services and we don't have that information.

Action: 1) Jennifer will ask IT to set-up an UBox account for the UPDA.

6. Additional Points of Discussion

- UPDA Budget:

- Currently, our expenses are paid for by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs and Professional Programs (Jennifer). Is it possible to have our own budget?
 - There is a possibility for UPDA to have its own budget depending on new fiscal year approvals for the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs and Professional Programs, but there needs to be a reasonable structure/plan put in place for such a budget.

Action: 1) Consider a UPDA budget proposal and items that should be included in such a proposal.

- 2) Due to the major board transition occurring this summer, we should consider changing the frequency/schedule of future meetings.

7. End of Meeting

- Meeting adjourned.

Next Meetings: Tuesday June 16th HSEB 4100A 12:00-1:00 pm.
 Thursday August 20th 2015 TBA

Documents Sent: Minutes from February meeting & Agenda.