



Postdoctoral Association at Western

Minutes from December 1st, 2015 (4:00 pm /Meeting Room, Grad Club)

Attendance

Matthew Fox	President, VP Finance, Senate Observer, University Research Board (URB) Rep., Robarts Research Institute	X
Liliana Alvarez	Vice-President Internal, Outreach Coordinator, School of Occupational Therapy	Regrets
Jiro Inoue	Vice-President External, CAPS Representative, Robarts Research Institute	X
Andrea Di Sebastiano	Vice-President Communications, Social events coordinator, Department of Clinical Neurological Sciences	X
Ming Wu	Secretary, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering	X
Tim Burkhart	University Council on Research Ethics (UCRE), Department of Mechanical Engineering	-
Blake Butler	Department of Physiology & Pharmacology	X
Yara Hosein	Western's Mental Health and Wellness Initiative representative, Schulich Dentistry	-
Kalin Penev	Tax representative, Department of Chemical and Biochemical Engineering	-
Jessica Esseltine	Schulich Anatomy and Cell Biology	X
Emma Holmes	Brain and Mind Institute	X
Lauren Solomon	Department of Microbiology and Immunology	X
Baraa Al-Khazraji	School of Kinesiology, Faculty of Health Sciences	X
S. Amanda Ali	Health Studies, Faculty of Health Sciences	X
Yan Yan	Department of Computer Science	-

1. Ratification of the Minutes from the previous meetings

Passed

2. Ratification of the Agenda

Passed



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3. Announcements/Introduction of new members/Attendance

None

4. Update on CV-building opportunities (VP-webmaster, REB, SUPR-G) (Matt)

There were about 15 applicants for REB and 3 for SUPR-G. No-one has applied for webmaster.

5. Campus Council Meeting / Senate / URB (Baraa/Matt)

Matt had nothing of interest to report about postdocs from Senate or URB. Baraa reported that current issues raised in the Campus Council Meeting include the indigeneous Strategy Plan, London's Rapid Transit (light rail) plan, smoking cessation or limiting smoking to zones on campus and the new Brains and Minds Institute building. If any postdoc would like to be involved or provide feedback on these issues, please contact Baraa.

Jessica noted that a recent report (possibly URB) indicated that Western University was ranking poorly in several items including publications and research funding. This may present an opportunity for promoting postdocs.

6. Western subcommittee on postdoctoral training (Jessica)

This new Western subcommittee will steer the Competitive Edge and Mentoring scheme for new postdocs. Emma will follow up with a subcommittee member to discuss putting a postdoc representative on this subcommittee.

7. Update on PAWLink (Liliana/Amanda)

Liliana talked to Dr Ruth Martin, Faculty of Health Sciences' associate dean for graduate and postdoctoral studies, and she will include this as a point in the next associate deans' meeting. She will ask other faculties to identify a potential space for PAW to inform postdocs of our existence and get them involved.

Andrea has updated the PAW2013 email list.

8. Fall Research Program Event (Andrea)

The Fall Research Program Event was well-attended, with 44 people attending. 17 people responded to our follow-up survey, with the feedback indicating that the attendees like the panel, its discussions and felt it was relevant to postdocs. Some attendees disliked the planning component, wasn't sure what to bring or what the event would address. Another comment was that maybe the event could be more focused, that other events could focus on looking for academic/non-academic jobs, or there could be more targeted seminars or a series of events (maybe on career development).



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The panellists were keen to be involved in another event, and it may be good to include a recent graduate from industry to share their experiences.

It was suggested that a database should be created of recent postdocs who have transitioned to industry, to identify who could be involved in hosting future events. A LinkedIn webpage for PAW will also be created by Andrea to assist in this.

9. TSC event (Andrea)

The TSC event also had good attendance with 23 attendees and overall positive feedback. (Note the TSC only focuses on teaching - its courses are open to postdocs but are not well known to postdocs).

It was discussed that it would be good to have a continuous series of TSC (or other) workshops on career development; maybe two workshops a year. A good follow-up workshop would be on writing a teaching dossier etc in winter. In addition, the Research Program event could be modified to be part of a series held by TSC - featuring the panellists then a workshop on how to write a grant well. This event would be most suitable for August.

10. Potential postdoc seminar (Baraa/Amanda)

Baraa and Amanda were unsuccessful in starting a seminar series in their faculty featuring postdocs and early faculty hires, with the feedback given to them that they need to show first that a seminar series for postdocs can be successful.

Several suggestions were discussed. It was felt that a typical PAW seminar series involving postdocs about their research was unlikely to be well-attended, though there may be opportunities for postdocs to present at the seminar series of other departments and faculties.

It was agreed a TED or higher-style talk featuring postdocs would be a good format to start such a seminar series, with the first event featuring possibly two presenters (basic science postdoc paired with a multidisciplinary or applied science postdoc). Presenters would need to apply. Amanda and Baraa will start the organising.

11. Potential future social events (Andrea)

It was agreed that the upcoming social events will be:

- skating in Victoria Park (January)
- movie night at Western Films (March)

12. New Business/Open Forum

Happy hour is on Thursday, December 3rd.

The next PAW meeting will be on January 12th 2016, 4pm, at the Grad Club meeting room.