



Postdoctoral Association at Western

Minutes from November 8th, 2016 (4:00 pm / Meeting Room, Grad Club)

Attendance

Andrea Di Sebastiano	President, Senate Observer, Department of Clinical Neurological Sciences	X
Baraa Al-Khazraji	Vice-President Internal, Outreach Coordinator, School of Kinesiology, Faculty of Health Sciences	X
Jessica Esseltine	Vice-President External, CAPS Representative, Schulich Anatomy and Cell Biology	X
Kyle Paradis	Vice-President Finance, School of Kinesiology, Faculty of Health Sciences	X
Ming Wu	Secretary, Acting Vice-President Communications, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering	X
Kaitlin Laidlaw	Webmaster, Brain and Mind Institute	-
Blake Butler	University Research Board (URB) Rep., Department of Physiology & Pharmacology	X
Kate Parham	Tax representative, Department of Microbiology and Immunology	-
S. Amanda Ali	Health Studies, Faculty of Health Sciences	-
Matthew Fox	Department of Medical Biophysics, Robarts Research Institute	-
Jiro Inoue	Robarts Research Institute	X
Emma Holmes	Brain and Mind Institute	-
Lauren Solomon	Department of Microbiology and Immunology	X
Katherine Kasper	Department of Microbiology and Immunology	Regrets
Valentina Taiakina	Department of Biochemistry	X
Jahirul Mazumder	Department of Chemical Engineering	-
Ian Kalman	Department of Political Science	X
Pavlo Sukhachov	Department of Applied Mathematics	-
Tadilo Bogale		-

1. Ratification of the Minutes from the previous meetings

Passed

2. Ratification of the Agenda

Passed

3. Announcements/Introduction of new members/Attendance

None

4. VP-communications (Amanda)

Amanda has accepted a postdoc position at McMaster and has resigned from the VP-comms role. We will continue advertising for a new VP-comms. There has been little interest, but Nicole is a new postdoc starting in January and has expressed interest in the role. Baraa/Andrea will contact her and seek a candidature statement from her. Ming is acting VP-comms until a replacement is found, with help as needed from the other exec members.

5. Holiday event (Andrea)

We discussed options and decided to do breakfast at the Wave again. Andrea will follow up with the Wave about the booking.

6. Postdoc Round Table (Andrea)

Baraa is to contact Dr Seguin again to schedule the postdoc round table ('Taking fellowships to grants'), hopefully for this semester.

Another potential topic is 'getting a contract' (perhaps by Paul Beamish, Ivey). We could also contact other organisations to let us know if their people are visiting Western soon, then we could plan a session or workshop around them.

7. Update from SGPS meeting (Andrea)

At the meeting with SGPS (Mihaela Harnos, Peter Simpson), we discussed with them our vision for PAW for this year and planning for the Research Forum and possible workshops (including discipline-specific academic job interview workshops or a panel of employers that hire PhDs).

8. Research Forum (Andrea)

We discussed and agreed that the Research Forum will comprise 0.5 day of an academic job interview panel then breakout groups into the different streams (e.g. CIHR, NSERC & SSHRC); and 0.5 day industry panel for postdocs making the move to industry. The industry panel could be about information on what is asked in job interviews, what jobs are out there, and what employers are looking for, and could feature previous postdocs now in industry (alumni on websites e.g. Phys. & Pharm. may be a good source for potential panelists).



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If anyone knows of any formal postdocs in their group who are now in industry and may be good panellists, please let the exec know.

9. New Business / Open Forum

The next PAW meeting will be on December 6th 2016, 4pm, at the Grad Club meeting room.

Columbia sale – a reminder that postdocs will have access to Columbia employee's store during November 18 to December 14. Please check your emails for the details.

University Research Board (Blake) – Blake reported on the recent URB meeting. Western is generally doing well at research and getting research funding, but CIHR funding needs to be improved. The committee is discussing the possible future restructure of the URB, but postdocs are likely to maintain a seat on the URB.

Western U. is looking for the next potential large focus area to support for funding – if your lab has any great ideas, bring forward within your department/faculty. The university will also likely apply for 2 Canadian excellence chairs.

Blake will retire from his other PAW duties but continue to be the PAW representative to URB.

Association meetings (Andrea/Amanda) – Andrea and Amanda has emailed around notes from the CAPS and CAPA meeting held in early November. These notes will also be put on the PAW website.

Andrea briefly went over the notes from the CAPA meeting. The CAPS survey showed many postdocs had mental health issues at some point and this should be an important focus. We agreed to continue to promote Mental Health Week and mental health services on campus.

We also agreed a workshop on 'establishing an online presence as a postdoc' (e.g. ResearchGate, Twitter), would be good for next year.

Canada 150 year celebrations – Andrea submitted a funding proposal but we have been referred to SOGS as we are not faculty/staff. Andrea will contact them again for a solution.