

January 2017

PDFA executive meeting

25 January 2017 / 3:00 - 3:56 PM / ROOM KATZ 3-003

In attendance

Megan Schmörlzer-O'Reilly (former member-at-large)

Ann Revill (former President)

Neil McMillan (former VP Communications)

Nico Vozza (former member-at-large)

Richard Kanyo (new president, former VP Academic)

Jessica Lieffers (new VP Academic)

Camille Dejos (VP Finance, continuing in this role from last term)

Anni Hamalainen (new VP Communications)

Wei Zheng (new VP Social)

Kate St. Onge (new member-at-large)

Absent:

Abhilash R. Hareendranathan (new member-at-large)

Zoey Zhang (new member-at-large)

Bing Cao (new member-at-large)

Mahdi Vaezi (former member-at-large)

Manmeet Mamik (former member-at-large)

Sarah Elliott (former VP social)

AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Overview of Transfer Document and Initiatives

NOTES

Review of some of the tasks and responsibilities of various roles:

- Ann has been focusing especially on developing professional contacts and networks for the PDFA over the last 3 years
- Meghan used to be responsible for Research Day, and will be available for helping with organization
- Nico was coordinating the travel award to a large extent last year
- Neil outlined the tasks of VP Communications: website updates, minutes, email accounts, Facebook
- Camille's role mainly involves fundraising for social events, Research Day, and the travel award
- Room bookings access by president, VP social and VP academic

Fund raising

Fund raising has been quite successful in the past, but there are additional potential sources of funding that could be explored:

- Healthy campus unit
- Alumni foundation?
- Membership fee, ideally automatically deducted from all post docs' salaries. A referendum for this is in place, but there has been no progress, so the process might need to be re-initiated. There may be need for a new referendum, and we have to clarify the legal side of deductions.

Advocacy

- Recognition of post docs has improved over the past years at the university as well as provincial level, but work remains to be done on both fronts. E.g.
 - Status of PDFs on campus as trainees reflects the fact that post doc status is poorly recognized, and this sets limitations to the benefits etc. that we are directly entitled to. Getting employee status might require unionization, but post doc association currently cannot discuss unionization through a memorandum of understanding with the U of A, so current policy is to improve benefits rather than reach for employment status; re-evaluate and learn from best practices from other provinces

- U of A Campus recreation needs to be reminded that PDFs get student rate
- PDFs are not currently mentioned in the post-secondary learning act, but advocacy is ongoing in collaboration with Lethbridge & Calgary PDFAs
- Tasks for the new council:
 - Member survey was done a couple of years ago: time for another one?
 - Meetings with the president and advocate e.g. PDFs maternal leave funding. ~ \$200 000 annually calculated to be required for parental leave from U of A.
 - Collaborate with Diane from PDF office to start tracking maternal leaves, get information on #s of post docs & maintain good communications
 - Meetings with VP research have been productive and collaboration should be maintained
 - Involvement of post docs in other things e.g. dean search committees?
- Post doc advisory committee started last year – staff and PDFs → talk to Walter (from ?) & Diane Rogers from post doc office

Professional development

- Brown bag lunches, career development seminars and Research Day have been organized regularly and seem to work well
- We should explore ways to equalize mentorship of post docs across campus, e.g. document for new post docs and mentors on the kind of skills & expectations that should come out of a post doc appointment
- Calgary & Lethbridge collaborations – bring in people for research day, and career day in Calgary invites post docs from Edmonton
- Travel awards – 15-20 applicants, currently PDFAs fundraises for it: currently 6 month cycle, try to break this?
 - NB: Research day or travel awards – make sure if execs run, they don't have access to the judging documents etc.

Communications

- Email address – old stuff has mostly been archived; VP communications should check email regularly

- Listserv: send emails from pdfa email account to reach post doc community
- Facebook: science- and post doc-related stuff posted as it comes up

Final advice and reminders from the old council to the new

- Read google drive!
- Start fundraising as early as possible!
- PDFA is different from PDF office (contact there: Diane Rogers)!
- The old and the new position holders should make sure information is transferred over the next weeks.

Approving previous minutes

Not necessary, as there was no official agenda

NEXT MEETING

Richard will organize a doodle to try to find a time that suits everyone on the new council for the next meeting, within a few weeks. After this, we will fix a monthly slot for the meetings.

