Dartmouth College Postdoctoral Association Meeting Minutes

Friday, February 5th, 2-3pm
DHMC – Auditorium F

Postdocs in Attendance: 16

Additional Attendees: Liz Bankert (Provost), Cindy Tobery (DCAL)

Presided over: Kristine Hill, President

Meeting Points:

1. Next meeting will be Thursday, March 4th; 12 to 1:00pm on Hanover campus.
   • Agenda points: 1) Budget request (due April 1st). Liz advised that in the current financial climate we should probably keep it the same as previous year. 2) Discussion of survey and results.

2. Nicole Smits agreed to take the role of Secretary and to update the website.

3. Alix Norris will write-up future meeting minutes and see they are posted on website.

4. Meetings will be opened up to any postdocs who are interested in attending.
   ➔ Kris Hill will announce next meeting time/date/place on the First Monday Daily Updates message at beginning of month to facilitate this.

5. Discussed raw data from the recent DCPDA postdoctoral survey.
   ➔ Kris and Anwesha Nag will write up a synopsis of the outcomes for website.
   • Attained 63 responses (out of 160 total “putative” postdocs positions)
   • Focused on Question 18 (“How important is it that DCPDA focuses on the following areas in the future?”): Career development is most important. This justifies the continued planning of career development workshops. Also highly important was the advocacy for rights of postdocs.
   • Question 5 addressed the issue of postdoc salaries. It suggests the starting range is reasonable, according to NIH recommended guidelines, however there is no mandatory pay-raises at Dartmouth for each additional year of postdoc experience. After discussions, it was decided that this should not be a point of contention at this time, due to the current financial woes of the College.
   • Melanie Rutkowski mentioned that faculty member Bill North had a contact at the NIH with whom he was discussing the matter of postdoctoral fellow discrepancies. He was looking into how other institutions may have circumvented the lapse in benefits for fellows.
   ➔ Alix will follow up with Dr. North, as she has already done the research into the variations for fellows/research associates within the Ivy Leagues.

6. Making an official definition for a Dartmouth “postdoc.”
   • Cindy and Kris are meeting with Cheryl (in HR) to discuss a means of identifying people who are postdocs at the College.
   • It was decided that the DCPDA will take the definition of a postdoc from the National Postdoctoral Association: “A postdoctoral scholar ("postdoc") is an individual holding a doctoral degree who is engaged in a temporary period of..."
Cindy and Kris will take pamphlets to HR to handout to new postdocs.

7. Aurelie Deveau began a discussion about concerns for international postdocs. She is in contact with Robin Catmur (International Office) to set up a document to make it easier for international postdocs to get settled and to fulfill visa/passport requirements. She will discuss how the DCPDA can help to disseminate the information better.

8. Postdoctoral/graduate student support group: Kris is meeting with an MCB graduate student (Justine) to talk about getting the DCPDA involved with such a study/support group, for the purpose of practice talks, scientific feedback and interview information.

   Liz pointed out we should be partnering more with the Graduate Council on some issues (perhaps like fundraising?!). Need to follow up on that.

9. Social issues: Ian (Social Chair) is looking into upcoming social events:
   - Continuing the twice a month social nights: 1st Monday and 3rd Thursday
   - The First Pint Tradition: Start St. Patty’s day (March 17th) off right. Have a 9AM Guinness toast at the Lebanon Salt Hill Pub before work!