

# THE YALE POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION MONTHLY MEETING



Tuesday, December 13, 2022 | 6:00 PM | Minutes

## Chairs [10 min]

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- Introduction of the incoming YPA Co-Chair for 2023
  - Cintia Sagawa is elected as co-chair
  - Thanks to Chris and Leila for running
- Trainee Accommodations Committee meeting update
  - Occurred between the YPA, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA), and other university leadership
  - An increase in postdoc salaries, implementing an ombuds office at Yale, and more clarity on grievance process was discussed
  - YPA is advocating for these for postdocs
- Feedback on tracking committee spending
  - This week, YPA met with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs to finalize YPA budget
  - Feedback for coordinators is to make a point of more closely tracking spending across the year to help better plan for budgeting/projecting budgets
  - In past years, we give ourselves more money than we may need but in future we should have our prospective budgets more closely match our proposed budgets
  - Understand that increased budgets may be needed compared to previous years due to moving back to in-person events (post-COVID restrictions)

## Secretaries [2 min]

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- Introduction of the new secretary – Alaz Ozcan
  - No objections so Alaz is the new secretary

## Racial Justice Subcommittee [5 min]

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- Planning future fundraiser/trivia night for Black History Month in February
- Working on climate survey
- Bystander intervention (future planned event)
- Following up with DEI office for new DEI toolkit
  - Plan to share new one in January 2023
- Equity in job search symposium
- YPA Co-coordinator
  - Sabine Franklin will take over as YPA Co-coordinator in January

## Community and Networking Committee [5 min]

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- New coordinator
  - Leila is leaving coordinator position and Gemma will be replacing her (no objections)
- Recent and Upcoming Events
  - Thursday, Dec. 1, 6 pm: Game night at the OISS
    - Everyone welcome to use their space -> Tues/Wed/Thurs available for space
  - Friday, Dec. 9, 7:30 pm: YPA Holiday party
    - 200 attendees
- Events in progress for the winter months
  - Happy Hour: Trinity (tentative, 3rd or 4th week in January)
  - Game night at the OISS (February)
  - Yale Art Gallery and Yale Center for British Art Tour
  - Behind the scenes tour in the Peabody Museum

### **Treasury Committee [2 min]**

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- Announcement of the new treasurer
  - Amanda will be the new treasurer
  - All of the budgets were approved and we have a spreadsheet with all the financials and you can keep track of your expenses, etc
  - Ask Mariateresa if you need any help
- Communicate the approval of the 2023 budget for each committee.
  - Krishna: Alyssa from OPA is looking at giving us a P-card and it should be available for people to buy items
  - Nicole: there's still an opening for a second new treasurer

### **Mentorship Committee [5 min]**

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- Farewell to the former mentorship coordinator, Pranava
- New mentorship coordinator (Marija)
  - No objections so she is nominated
- Modern instructor program conclusion and further updates
  - We have recordings and will upload them to the YPA website with everyone's permission
  - Some emails from people about the committee so talk to Aman if you are interested in joining

### **Professional Development Committee [10 min]**

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- Site visit to Cybrea company.
  - Very successful and everyone enjoyed visiting different parts of the company
  - Chris walked through the nature of consulting companies
- PreScouter (consulting company) introduction meeting. 13th of December 12 pm - 1 pm.

- Career Cafe on Feb. 8th with a focus on academic jobs for social sciences.
  - If you are from social sciences or if you know people that are looking, spread the word
- Pint of Postdoc on Feb 2nd. Please let us know if you are interested in presenting your project please fill out the sign up form.
  - This is happening at Gryphon's -> register on Yale Connect for the event and/or fill out the google form to participate as a speaker
- Writing course with Angie Hoffman:
  - No Yale Connect event yet but it will be up in about a week
  - Krisha: Is this in person or zoom? Sadaf: This will continue on Zoom
  - Nicole: If you're a new postdoc, make sure you sign up for Yale Connect

Thursday, February 9, 5-7pm - Writing a Research Paper - part I

Thursday, February 16, 5-7 pm - Writing a Research Paper - part II

Thursday, February 23, 5-7 pm - Writing a Research Paper - part III

Thursday, March 27, 5-7 pm - Writing a Research Paper - make-up if needed

Thursday, April 6, 5-7 pm - Grant Writing - part I

Thursday, April 13, 5-7 pm - Grant Writing - part II

Thursday, April 20, 5-7 pm - Grant Writing - part III

Thursday, April 27, 5-7 pm - Grant Writing - make-up date if needed

- Motivational leadership panel discussion
  - Still looking for panelists
- Cintia is stepping down as a coordinator. We have a candidate for the position, Laura Santos.
  - No objections
- Gina from Poorvu Center
  - Assistant director for graduate and postgraduate teaching at Yale
  - She aims to support us as teaching opportunities or mentorship opportunities + academic/any job market
  - Stephanie Ranks (instructional consultant)
    - Taught at Yale for 6 years now and she is happy to help anyone with any aspect of teaching they require and their teaching statements
    - <https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/graduate-students/teaching-consultations-and-classroom-observations>

### **Communications Committee [3 min]**

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- Platforms for communications, and their timelines
  - Thank everyone as outgoing coordinator
  - Preferably submit ads in by Friday. If you want it on social media or in any of the newsletters, you indicate that in the form of the ad and if you have any other questions/comments, you can email the incoming coordinators
  - Both Orchid and Nupur's last month
- Introduction of the new coordinators of the communications committee.
  - Rishi and Jyot are the new coordinators (no objections)

- Orchid: We will be doing a Yale Connect training course in the beginning of January -> Jyot and Orchid will be organizing it and will send event notifications when the time comes
- Krishna: Anyone can advertise with us (use submission form on YPA website) and not just committee members

### **Symposium Committee [5 min]**

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- Symposium date and venue is being finalized
  - Date planned is Thursday, May 25
  - Marsh Hall (same venue as 2022)
- Symposium activities planned - panel discussion, keynote lecture, photo-art competition, cover page art competition
- Coordinator role change - Matteo Rizzuto
  - No objections so Matteo is the new coordinator
  - If we have any suggestions for a keynote or other cool events please give it to Matteo/Sudheesh
  - Sudheesh: Still welcoming new people to the committee
  - Krishna: The symposium is an awesome event to learn about others and showcase your own work

### **Advocacy Committee [5 min]**

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- Welcome new member Nora
- Note the new healthcare subsidy policy and the recorded info sessions from the OPA
- Our committee has been developing a survey - look out for this in 2023
  - Advocating for ombuds office
  - New co-coordinator joining in January -> will join at the next meeting
  - Krishna: Fill out the survey so the YPA can best advocate for postdocs

### **Associate Provost for Postdoctoral Affairs, Erin Heckler [5 min]**

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- Changes to the PDF subsidy process
  - There is a page with process chart and FAQs
  - If you didn't get the email, let Alyssa Perreira know and she can resend
  - Hopefully everyone had a smooth experience but let them know if you experienced issues
- Postdoc and postgrad experience survey projects (working with the Co-chairs, Advocacy, and the YBPA on the postdoc survey)
  - Incentivizing postdocs to take it
  - Had Trainee Accommodations Committee (TAC) meeting to ask for support for postdocs and grad students (mental health). It would probably be more likely to get this approved by leadership through people within the offices.

### **Open Forum - Questions/Comments [5 min]**

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Azmi: What are the updates on TAC meeting?

Krishna: What Erin is saying is that Katie suggested we try to rephrase the ask for an ombuds person as a mental health issue in the sense of having a confidential person that we can talk to to help us navigate the system. I don't think that means we have to follow that route if it's necessary but in her experience she feels we'd have better luck convincing admin and higher ups that this would be a better route to go if we can rephrase this as mental health. This doesn't mean not having an ombuds but using a mental health aid approach to get an ombuds.

Erin: The way it was before was where the ombuds served everyone but faculty/staff don't need an ombuds, it is mostly needed for grad students/postdocs. It changed from asking for an actual central office to an ombuds person to be dedicated to grad students and postdocs and that could be from those offices or shared between. It feels like a bigger ask for a new office. It's easier when you're framing it as we need someone to help grad students/postdocs to navigate grievance policy.

Azmi: I think that will be in conjunction to the list of why we need an ombuds. We also need an impartial and confidential resource that will help you go through misconduct, trauma, professional health, etc.

Krishna: The person would serve not only as all of that but as a confidential source we could talk to that's not a full dedicated office.

Azmi: Will this be campus-wide?

Krishna/Nicole: This is what we were advocating for but Katie suggested aiming it towards grad students/postdocs but by proxy this is campus-wide.

Erin: This will be campus-wide serving all students/postdocs but it doesn't serve all faculty and staff.

Krishna: At least that was Katie's suggestion.

Azmi: The faculty have been advocating for an ombuds and have been advocating for years so shouldn't give up on them because they need it.

Krishna: People were open to that in FAS but I think we should still continue what we're doing.

Azmi is trying to get a panel discussion about the ombuds issue so be on the lookout.

Reed Miller (postdoc at School of Environment) has 3 points to raise: 1) Issue with teaching. He taught a core masters course this year and an elective this past spring and there were some issues around compensation (is it school specific or postdoc-wide?). He did additional research on top of that and didn't get compensation which seems like a Yale level policy issue, 2) Postdoc

salaries/transparency. He talked amongst different postdocs at School of Environment and there was quite a range in their salaries. Some is due to funding sources and others is due to people not realizing they can negotiate salaries. He proposes a glassdoor type situation where people post their salaries/whether they negotiated/salaries, gender, etc.

Nicole: Earlier in meeting it was mentioned that there is a survey going out to postdocs so this will be included in the survey.

Reed suggests that there's a question to know whether you negotiated or not. His third comment is that he did his PhD here and as he was involved in the LOCAL 33 grad union. Is there interest in the spring to have a conversation with 33 organizers? It feels like there could be some for awareness.

Krishna: If you're interested in doing this, keep in touch with Nicole and Jackie to discuss this next year.

Question for Reed: Were you talking about us learning about what's going on with grad students or us starting to think about postdocs unionizing?

Reed: The first thought was just do so people understand the history behind the union campaign (we will find out if it passed in January – contract negotiation process?). This might be helpful for postdocs to begin conversations about organizing this too.

Nicole mentioned the efforts in California at UC.

Krishna: You could reach out to the people at UC.

Barbara: Their committee was considering buying some speakers but there are issues because they have overspent and there might not be storage space.

Erin: There are some materials from the symposium in their office so her committee can check it out and see if there's speakers. There's limited storage space in office.

Barbara: Has coolers and stuff being stored at her house.

Nicole: We need to do inventory across committees and within the YPA.

Barbara: Could we start some sort of google sheet to see what everyone has?

Krishna: Erin is your office the only space we have? We used to have an old closet or some sort.

Erin: That building is not going to be in use anymore in the near future so we won't have access to that. There is another space in the current building with other offices. There's some space in their own offices but they're not going to be able to find a lot of space.

Barbara: Last year around Christmas, someone organized purchasing YPA merchandise. Will that be organized again?

Nicole: That was coordinated by the Communications Committee.

Orchid: This was not during her reign but they do have part of a budget specifically for that so if you want to you can talk to them about that.

Nicole: This is normally done as a drive where people can purchase it every second year.

Orchid: We are due for one so we can organize sweatshirts/t-shirts.

Anna: With regards to the sweatshirts/t-shirts, it might be worth having a sort of sheet that you can submit a form to so that when it comes around you've already put your name down for whatever there is and could be contacted.

Krishna: We could subsidize it or use the other money set aside for things although Erin might be doing something already for orientation.

Erin: For orientation, we have lanyards and little tote bags.

Barbara: She recently accepted a liaison position but is not sure how to complete her role. Are we supposed to reach out to other institutions?

Nicole: The YPA has a panel of liaisons which are members that strengthen relationships between other groups at Yale (ex: OISS / Poorvu). The role is up to your making so reach out to someone from the center/group you're the liaison for and just have a conversation about collaborations, events, etc. Sometimes great things can come from starting these dialogs/conversations. Nicole can help liaisons with identifying the best people to reach out to in their organizations.

Erin: In response to Reed's question about teaching - the issue is that for postdoc associates paid by grants, there is effort reporting which normally requires 100% effort to be spent on research. In order to teach, you need to reduce your research effort to accommodate teaching. Yale sets teaching pay rate (on website) at 10K. The issue is that it doesn't usually match the postdoc salary rate so effectively you are experiencing modest increase or even a decrease in pay. They started conversations with the college about having a different rate for postdocs but they don't have control over their policies so we need to continue the discussion and see what happens.

Nicole will close the meeting by thanking Krishna through all his roles and all his hard work and thanking outgoing coordinators. We are moving on to having a celebration event for YPA committee members as stay around.