

YPA OPEN FORUM

Chairs: [12 min]

1. Welcoming remarks [Maikel]
 - Maikel (he/him/his)
 - Sam (she/her/hers)
2. YPA Code of Conduct [Sam]
 - There have not been any incidents thus far, but as YPA grows, it is great to have this document to fall back on if there are any issues in future
 - Executive board has been looking over it for the last few weeks; the chairs will review the comments. Thus far, there haven't been any drastic comments.
 - Summary of the document: play nice
3. Candidate chair announcements [Sam]
 - Sam's position is open, we need a new chair
 - Three candidates have self-nominated: Erin, Chantal, Anne
 - This will be our first election. Election will be open to all postdocs; however, voting is not open to ARS.
4. Coordinator turnover for Advocacy, Communications, Mentorship, Professional Development, and Treasury [Sam]
 - If anyone is interested, talk to the current coordinators or chairs
 - Maikel: Cc YPA email address when you contact coordinators/chairs regarding coordinator positions. Also, feel free to ask questions. Anyone can do these jobs and there is an overlap between previous members and new ones for continuity of knowledge.

Communications: [6 min]

1. Communications policy and social media difficulties [Anderson]
 - Introduced himself as a member of the communications committee. He will explain updates to the newsletter.
 - Made big change to layout with Yuri. Previously, the layout was long with a lot of text. It is now simpler, more concise, and shorter. People were complaining about advertisements.
 - Found that the ads that received more attention/clicks were those that had visual aids and were recreational events (e.g., pasta workshop, career affair, tailgating). Clicks were not correlational with order in the newsletter.
 - Career development and advocacy have been moved to the top.
 - Sam: Thanks for the redesign; the data are interesting, and it looks great.
 - Clicks are less than 50%, but we don't know why that is.
 - Descriptions for events are too long. The blurbs should only have essential information for the newsletter. Use the Google Form, where the blurb limit is 280 characters (in coordination with Facebook, Twitter, etc.). If extra information must be documented, there is another space in the Google Form for additional text/information.
2. Website updates and suggestions [Victor]
 - This is an easier interface, and it is still a work in progress.
 - Feedback from each of the committees will be great as some of the content is outdated. Furthermore, some content is hidden that should be promoted.
 - The launch date may be next month. Will try to have it ready for January.
 - Lina: Need all coordinators to check content and summarize what you want to highlight and

- what needs to be removed.
- Sam: To all coordinators – communicate with communications group on Slack

Community and Networking Committee: [8 min]

1. Pasta-making workshop report [Peppe]
 - The pasta making workshop went really well, and we may do it again.
 - Can also do other cooking events
2. Ongoing and recurring activities [Peppe]
 - a. Social and happy hours
 - Since the winter party is in the first week of December, we will cancel the happy hour and will reschedule the social hour to a later date.
 - b. Last Saturday at the Museum
 - c. Creative Writing
 - Soumya: Still going
 - d. Psychodrama Meeting
 - Three people attended last time
 - e. Volunteering at Columbus Shelter
 - Will last until April
3. Upcoming one-time events [Peppe]
 - a. Winter Party: “Oops, I’m in the 90’s again”
 - The Winter Party will be held at Gryphon’s lounge
 - b. Tailgating for the Yale vs Harvard game – high attendance expected
 - 500 people have RSVPed on Facebook.
 - Sam – People on Facebook just RSVP to events without a real intention to attend.
 - Maikel: May need to reconsider our name on it.
 - Daniel: But it is hard to find us
 - Sam: Maybe don’t post it on Facebook, just email regarding it;
 - Summer: Do events go to everyone? Maikel: Can’t make a closed event on Facebook on our page.
 - c. Yale Bands – Glenn Miller Holiday Season Concert
 - The concert briefly overlaps with the winter party; however, the concert starts at 7 and the winter party starts at 8:30.

Professional Development Committee: [2 min]

1. Communications Workshop [Eric]
 - Eric (he/him/his): Calls for postdocs to contact them with requests for communications workshops. The writing lab did an elevator pitch workshop, but it wasn’t that useful. maybe something more postdoc oriented would be nice. Aiming for something for early 2020; it is not urgent and will send out a survey
 - Chantal: Does anyone have ideas for public speaking workshops?
 - Sam: Put out a call for requests on Slack. Science hill loved the last workshop.

Advocacy Committee: [15 min]

1. Town Hall
 - Erin: The Town Hall was held in October and a lot was learned that could be beneficial for each of the YPA committees.
 - Erin (she/her/hers), Sean (he/him/his)
 - a. Recap of discussion session outcomes and discussion with panel [Erin]
 - The Town Hall consisted of two parts, a discussion group and a panel. Some key subjects that were discussed are as follows. Further details can be found in the report on the Drive.

- **Diversity and inclusion in the community:** There is a concern about the lack of diversity with respect to country of origin and a lack of representation in faculty. The financial situation for international students is unique and should be addressed.
 - **Lab/campus climate:** It would be great to be able to discuss and standardize climate, though due to it being lab specific, it is difficult to make changes. Some positive changes would be to have mechanisms and resources for switching labs and discussing difficulties. Another helpful change might be faculty training for building a positive laboratory environment. In terms of campus climate, postdocs feel invisible due to current infrastructure despite often being here as long as graduate students.
 - **Immigration/visa issues:** Visa time frames are short (1 year) while OISS and OPA do multi-year visas. International postdocs are dependent on PI for job and stability, which results in an unchecked uneven power dynamic. There is a lack of funding opportunities for international postdocs, and YPA can promote opportunities and make them more visible.
 - **Mental health:** Postdoc mental health is undervalued. It is confusing and difficult to find provider using Yale Health/Magellan. It would be great to advocate for changes to be made to the Magellan website to facilitate this process.
 - **Panel:** John Alvaro does hold mentor training for faculty, though it is not compulsory at the moment. It would be great to have resources to help with the transition from PDA to PDF. Postdoc salaries at Yale currently meet the NIH minimum, but this has not always been true historically. Yale leadership refuses to commit to following future NIH increases.
- b. Summary of feedback from survey [Sean]
- Due to time, may go over this later, but it is available in the report online.
- c. Set action plan for next steps, including surveying postdocs and following up with administrators [Sean]
- It would be great to make long-term YPA objectives using this information since addressing some of these things will take over a year.
 - Healthcare is an area where Yale may be able to help PDFs. Need to follow up to start a fund. First, we need to calculate expected cost. Start with an email. (This would be a long-term objective for YPA).
 - Push for commitment by Yale to follow NIH salary guidelines. (Summer: One complication may be that when the grant was initially funded, the allotted salaries were lower and you can't pay for more beyond what is in the grant.) Try to at least match inflation?
 - It would be helpful to get information on the PDA to PDF transition on relevant websites such as YPA and/or OPA (John Alvaro).
 - Could start asking for a blurb about culture on lab department webpages
 - Get university to do something for National Postdoc Appreciation Week.
 - Sam: New provost has been announced who has a background in science, which may be helpful. There is also a new Dean of the School of Medicine.
 - The first step for a lot of these initiatives is to just send an e-mail.
 - Things we can do without university support: mentorship for first-generation postdocs, lecture series of former Yale postdocs.
 - We continue to have the same discussion points: We know what postdocs are concerned with and are interested in. It is just a matter to working creating initiatives to address these areas and move forward.
- d. Open discussion [Sean]
- Sam: John is really interested in these initiatives. An interview series would be great; we can put it in the newsletter. Eric: OCS/Professional Development can help and possibly provide funding
 - Maikel: Parker contacted me. Daniel said he would help coordinate with OISS.

- Masha (audience): OISS isn't always open to multi-year visas and it is hard to schedule appts. Previously had experienced OISS trying to convince that the multi-year visa isn't necessary. Sam: It may be best to ask them to have consistent information and to make it available on the website in order to clear up any inconsistencies. Daniel: Will work on drafting this information. He has previous experience with them.
- Feedback was very mixed. Regarding the discussion session, people liked talking with peers and liked the prompts, but didn't like the low attendance. Feedback mentioned that a survey before town hall would be great (which they did do). Attendance was about 25 (38 registered). Regarding the panel, the attendees liked the discussion between panelists and that it wasn't just the panelists talking to attendees. One issue brought up in the feedback was the perception of apathy of panelists, and it seemed like nothing will change. Some audience members wanted to ask question and weren't called on. Lastly, it seemed there was not sufficient discussion on each of the topics to get anywhere.
- What do we want the Town Hall to be in the future? Maikel: Maybe it had too many topics, and we could split it into a multi-event series (this would address the feedback that the discussion on each topic wasn't lengthy enough to come up with solutions). Sam: Parker would love to hold an international postdoc Q&A session.
- Reminder – The report is on the drive

Mentorship Committee: [4 min]

1. Event attendance issues [Summer]
 - Held a mentorship workshop with John Alvaro, but had issues with getting people who signed up to attend. It's especially difficult with two-part workshop. Have also had trouble with attendance for the Meet a Mentor Tea.
 - Is it an issue for the Mentorship Committee alone or in general?
 - Sam: Attendance is a chronic issue. Have previously discussed it. Some options are an RSVP penalty if absent, RSVP blacklist, or deposits.
 - Maikel: Send several reminders, push the event
 - Can request people to tell you if they won't come and require reconfirming. Unfortunate because this event had a waitlist.
 - Chantal: Depending on the type of event and the space, can be more or less severe with the attendee limits. The addition of deposits would add a burden to coordinators. Maybe just start adding a few people from the waitlist and effectively "overbook" events knowing a certain fraction will not show up.

Open Forum Questions/Comments: [10 min]

1. YPA Symposium – committee designation, possibly as *ad hoc* during planning [Maikel]
 - Add the three chairs to agenda calls from now on
 - Chantal: Last year it felt like a subcommittee of Professional Development
2. OISS wants to set up a page specific to International Postdocs: Who will help structure this? [Maikel]
 - Daniel will help with this
3. New attendees introduced themselves [Maikel]
4. Bye Sam, we will miss you! She says to vote in the chair election!