

Purdue Postdoc Association (PPDA)

Minutes of the meeting of the PPDA Council

Meeting date / time	Monday December 07, 2009, 12.30pm
Meeting location	Room 398, Physics Building, Purdue University
Minutes status	Accepted 01/11/2010

Name	ID	Position	
Kris Villez	KV	Co-President	Present
Valentina Trinetta	VT	Co-President	Present
Nicolas Bordenave	NB	Treasurer	Present
Kostas Gourgouliatos	KG	Public relations	Present
Charlotte Perrett	CP	Secretary	Present
Peter Richtsmeier	PR	Webmaster	Present
Aravind Chiruvell	AC		Present
Melissa Dyehouse	MD		Absent
Talvikki Hovatta	TH		Present
Ana Juan Garcia	AJ		Present
Alon Ludwig	AL		Excused
Nicky Moore	NM		Present
Jennifer Tsuruda	JT		Present
Nicole Weber	NW		Excused
Yinyan Zhao	YYZ		Absent
Yang Zhou	YZ		Absent

Also present, PPDA Faculty Advisors; Professor Peter Dunn and Professor Jon Story

Agenda:

- 1. Approval of previous minutes**
- 2. PPDA constitution and official recognition**
- 3. PPDA logo**
- 4. PPDA website**
- 5. Postdoc survey**
- 6. Moderation of mail list**
- 7. PR officer role**
- 8. Social events**
- 9. Next meeting**

1. Minutes

a) November Meeting Minutes Accepted

b) In future minutes, KV suggests changing the title of minutes from 'Minutes of the meeting of the PPDA Officers and Team' to 'Minutes of the meeting of the PPDA Council,' and to alphabetise the list of council members to record presence/absence to save CP time when writing up minutes.

2. PPDA Constitution and Official Recognition

a) Prior to the meeting, PPDA council members were sent a copy of the draft of the PPDA constitution created by KV, AL and YZ. KV asks for comments/suggestions. The following comments/suggestions are made:

- i) NB asks whether the PPDA will have a membership fee and, if so, whether this needs to be written into the constitution. VT responds that other Graduate Associations do not have a fee and therefore PPDA should not either. KG also points out that many student organisations do not have a fee. A vote takes place to decide whether PPDA should have a fee. Everyone votes for no fee. AC points out that this issue can be reviewed in a year, and if necessary an amendment made to the constitution.
 - ii) CP asks whether it is accurate to associate all Postdocs with 'science' e.g. is the sentence 'to promote the contributions of postdoctoral researchers to Purdue University and science in general,' accurate? Are there Postdocs in other fields such as arts that could be excluded by such a statement? A discussion follows and it decided to replace 'science' with science and humanities to cover all subject areas.
 - iii) KG suggests that the PPDA should have a general meeting once a year in October, like the first PPDA call out, where everyone in the PPDA is welcome to attend and discuss the role of the PPDA and its constitution, and where the council members can be elected, and asks whether this needs to be written into the constitution. There is a consensus that a general meeting is a good idea but KV says that it does not need to be written into the constitution since the draft constitution already states (Section X) 'the Council shall review the Charter by-laws at least annually to ensure that they remain current,' and it does not need to be any more specific than that.
 - iv) KV highlights that at the present moment the constitution states that individuals serving on the PPDA council should be committed for one year, although obviously given the nature of Postdoc positions this may not always be possible, and hence the reason the constitution states 'individuals will strive to maintain active membership for a minimum of one year.' Everyone agrees for this time frame to be written in the constitution.
 - v) PR asks about the role of any subcommittee formed. KV highlights section IX of the draft constitution where the role of subcommittees is stated and confirms that the purpose, role and reporting to Council of the subcommittee will be defined at its formation.
- b) NB asks how sturdy/sustainable the PPDA constitution needs to be i.e. how many people would be required to change the constitution and whether they would be council members or regular PPDA members. A discussion takes place of the relative merits of having everyone and just Council members deciding on the constitution, and also other decisions related to the PPDA. It is agreed that constitution changes should only take place at the annual general meeting where regular members will be able to vote either by being present or by emailing their

vote prior to the meeting. Two thirds of the expressed votes (votes cast at the annual meeting and votes cast electronically) will be required for acceptance of a change to the constitution. For all other decisions related to PPDA, only Council members will vote and a quorum i.e. half the people present plus one, must accept the motion for it to stand. In both instances where a vote is taking place, the proportion of votes in favour of the motion proposed will be calculated only from those votes cast i.e. absence or failure to cast a vote will not be included in the calculations.

c) Prof Peter Dunn and Prof Jon Story had not seen the draft constitution prior to the meeting and therefore will review the document and give KV their comments before KV produces the final draft for submission. Peter Dunn and Jon Story will also find out who the Constitution needs to be sent to for acceptance. Since the PPDA is not a student organisation there may be a different pathway to follow for its approval.

3) Logo

a) VT shows council members the logo NW has created for the PPDA. Prof. Story points out that Purdue University is very sensitive to the subject of logos as it wants one official 'image/brand' associated with the university, and is therefore unlikely to officially recognise the logo. However, council members agree that it should be the unofficial logo used on the website.

4) Website

a) Prior to the meeting a link had been sent to PPDA council members to view a draft home page for the PPDA created by PR, to comment and give suggestions during the meeting. Following points are raised:

i) JT points out that 'Purdue Postdoctoral Association' on the website should be 'Purdue Postdoc Association' as stated in the draft constitution.

ii) Peter Dunn points out that part of the text should read 'Postdoctoral researchers' not 'Postdoctoral staff' as the latter refers to faculty staff.

iii) VT feels the current introductory text needs to be changed as she doesn't identify with it and thinks it would be better to state what the missions and aims of PPDA are. Therefore, VT shows some statements she and KV have come up with as an alternative text. PR will incorporate these into the next version of the website.

iv) A discussion is held over the colours to be used on the website. VT suggests blue and cream to match the colours of the National Postdoc Association, while AC suggests black and gold for Purdue. Prof Jon Story says that the Purdue colours would probably be favoured by the University. It is decided to choose the colours for the website at a later date when the content has been decided on.

5) Survey

a) KV and VT report that they went to a staff meeting at the Center of Instructional Excellence (CIE) and the staff there would be happy to collaborate with the PPDA to provide training for Postdocs. Currently, the CIE runs a Graduate teaching certificate, which they would be happy for Postdocs to participate in. However, it runs for two semesters and has an intensive curriculum so KV feels it is too time-consuming for most Postdocs, and will suggest the creation of a separate certificate for Postdocs.

b) David Nelson at CIE has experience in designing and running surveys, and has volunteered to help the PPDA run a survey of its members. It is decided that the PPDA survey should find out about the interests of Postdocs, any issues they have and what they expect from the PPDA. Prof. Peter Dunn suggests that instead of sending out the survey via the Postdoc email list, a site such as SurveyMonkey.com is used. An email with a link to the survey can be sent and the responses will be compiled by the website. A suggestion is made that the link could also be put on the PPDA website. KV suggests a subcommittee is formed to carry out the survey. KV, TH and NB volunteer to be on the subcommittee [Note: It was later decided by VT and KV, that VT will replace KV on the committee since KV is committed with developing the constitution].

6) Moderation of mail list

- a)** KV reports that he has received a complaint about the number of emails being sent on the Postdoc List. KV will remind Postdocs in the next newsletter that they can control the number of emails they receive by adjusting the 'digest' settings; however suggests that the use of the Postdoc email list is reviewed, and the possibility of having a forum. PR suggests not sending emails about jobs but putting them on the website. VT agrees with having a forum and that the email list should only be used for official business. KV suggests that all emails be sent to the co-Presidents who will then send one email containing all the different information people want communicated. This is accepted by the council. KV will inform Postdocs that from now on they should contact him directly with information, questions etc. rather than emailing the Postdoc List. KV will then create one email containing all the information and send to the Postdoc List. KV will also inform Sherri Neiberts, Prof. Dunn's secretary and administrator of the Postdoc List, of this process, although she will remain responsible for managing and maintaining membership to the Postdoc List.
- b)** There is a general consensus that a PPDA forum is a good idea. NB asks how the PPDA will monitor the forum, as there could be legal issues in regards to what people post. AC suggests that people are approved membership to the forum, however this and someone monitoring the forum appears too time-consuming. PR volunteers to investigate about forums and their maintenance.

7) PR officer role

a) VT and KV have discussed the PR position and believe it is needed. They would like the PR officer to find contacts in Human Resources, the Graduate school and each of the business offices at Purdue University; so that all Postdocs can be reached and so PPDA can get suitable information/advice when necessary. Prof. Dunn informs the council that he receives a list of new Postdocs and their department once a semester and can give this list to KG (PR officer), so that KG can email new Postdocs to welcome them and let them know about PPDA. Prof. Story adds that in the future it may be possible to have some form of induction event for new Postdocs, which is done at some other universities, and where information and advice is given on subjects such as accommodation, transport, health care etc.

8) Social events

a) NB asks for there to be some family-friendly PPDA social events. VT agrees and explains that this is why the social committee have chosen ice-skating as the

December social event on Friday 18th December. Details will be sent in the PPDA newsletter.

Actions:

Action identifier [yyyymmdd-no- id/id/..]	Short description	deadline	Status
20091014-1-KV//AL/YZ	Create a PPDA constitution proposal	2009	completed
20091014-2-PR	Create a draft design for PPDA Website	2009-12-07	completed
20091014-3-NW	Create a draft design of the PPDA logo	2009-12-07	completed
20091014-4-KV	Consult Prof. Dunn and Prof. Story on how they wish to participate in PPDA meetings	2009	completed
20091014-5-VT//TH/NM/JT	Organise November PPDA social event	2009-11-22	completed
20091207-1-KV//AL/YZ	Complete PPDA constitution and send to University for official recognition of PPDA	2009-12-31	ongoing
20091207-2-PR	Create a fully optional PPDA website	2010-03-31	ongoing
20091207-3-VT//TH/NB	Create a survey to canvas opinions from PPDA	2010-06-30	ongoing
20091207-4-PR	Investigate the format and controls of different forums	2010-01-11	ongoing
20091207-5-VT//NM/JT	Organise December PPDA social event	2009-12-24	completed

Any other business: N/A

Date and time of next meeting: Monday 11th January, 2010 at 12.30pm. Room 104 Smith Hall.