

Minutes of the DIVISION OF SYSTEMATIC AND EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY business meeting

January 4, 2010, Seattle, WA

Anne Maglia (DSEB chair) opened the meeting with introductions of the 11 attendees.

Bill Zamer (National Science Foundation) announced that NSF will no longer accept 2 page updates prior to proposal review to help with the workload of program officers. The NSF money from the stimulus package has been spent, leading to a bit higher funding rate for 2009. NSF will be increasing the climate change research portfolio; people can sign up for NSF alerts/updates if desired.

Officers Reports – Mike Alfaro (Program Officer). Next SICB meeting is in Salt Lake City, UT. ‘Phylogenetics for Dummies’ will convene again in 2010 (with food). Alfaro thinks these workshops are important for DSEB’s presence at SICB, and he may be willing to do a few more, given that he has grant support for similar workshops. Alfaro also suggests we consider a name change for DSEB to better define the divisions role. Patrick and Mike will discuss.

For the ‘Grand Challenges’ call, our division was seen as not offering much, not producing a paper. Mike is thinking of some issues that he could write up as an officer.

Four students were entered in the best talk and 10 for best poster. Everyone should encourage students to enter.

Nicole Cox (Student/Postdoctoral Affairs Committee representative) – This year, student housing and support was rather problematic; work assignments were confused, with some students not getting their due.

Marta deMaintenon (Secretary) – We continually need information for the researcher’s database, which could help spice up the newsletter. She noticed that DIZ created a poster of last year’s student winners, which is a good idea that we could replicate.

Ann Maglia (Chair) – Urges us to be proactive on the ‘Grand Challenges’ call. Some of the society funds are low (money for awards, etc), so donate if you can.

Patrick O’Connor (Chair-elect) – Stated need for a nominating committee for a PO-elect this spring. Graham Slater said he will do this.

- Need to support SICB funds. Suggests sending out an email of info about ‘phylogenetics for dummies’ and other important things.
- Should make sure meetings don’t overlap with other things – suggested all organismal type division meetings one day, concept divisions another. 4-day meeting?
- Reiterated need to donate to awards.
- PO elect wants to encourage high quality symposia for Charleston 2012.

Discussion

Rachel Collin – Indicated some problems with choosing session chairs – the PO had to do this manually – the internet check box didn’t work. She suggested considering changing the policy

disallowing students from acting as session chairs. Some sessions are all students, requiring a fully separate moderator. Other societies allow this – we could try it in a subset of talks. Ann Maglia suggested we diversify sessions to allow 1 student 1 faculty as co-chairs. Patrick O'Connor indicated that DSEB needs more people, one route could be through a name change (e.g., Systematic and Comparative Biology).

'Phylogenetics for dummies' had close to 100 people last year. This year is part 2. Ann Maglia suggests we look at affiliating the workshop with the flagship symposium again, and perhaps look at selecting symposia for this. This could dovetail with the proposed name change.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.