



Postdoc Quarterly

Yale University

The Postdoc Quarterly (PDQ), a newsletter for the Postdoctoral community at Yale.
Presented by the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs

NEWS

YALE POSTDOCS ON FACEBOOK



The members of the Postdoc Advisory Committee have created a Yale Postdocs group on Facebook. All Yale Postdocs are encouraged to visit the site and be an active member. Events, both social and career oriented, will be posted to

the site, and with 250 members and growing, it is a great forum for interacting with your fellow Yale Postdocs.

You can find the group by logging into Facebook and searching for "Yale Postdocs."

CONGRATULATIONS...

to the winners of the second round of the Postdoctoral Scholar Travel Fund! The Travel Fund is a pilot project currently available only to postdocs in the Faculty of Arts & Sciences.

Emily Levine; Whitney Humanities Center

Michael Hren; Geology and Geophysics

Alexander Sushkov; Physics

Shih-Peng Chan; Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology

Christopher Gilbert; Anthropology

The deadline for the next round of the Travel Fund is June 1st.

Please go to http://www.yale.edu/postdocs/post-docs_career.html for more information.

SPOTLIGHT

Congratulations to Zoe Cournia, Postdoctoral Fellow in Chemistry, who was one of ten women honored for their innovation and leadership in the fields of technology, science and engineering by the Connecticut Technology Council (CTC). CTC is the state's industry association for the technology sector and uses its Women of Innovation awards to spotlight the exceptional innovators and leaders working at Connecticut technology companies. Zoe was honored for her contributions in Collegian Innovation and Leadership.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Final Fridays at Five (FFF!)

Check out the Yale Postdoc Facebook page for announcements regarding the location of the Monthly Postdoc Happy Hour on the last Friday of the month!



The next two pages summarize recent workshops and panel discussions sponsored by the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs.

The Academic Job Search: The Interview Process December 9, 2008

This event was a follow-up to the September discussion on applying for academic jobs. Tom Appelquist, (Eugene Higgins Professor of Physics at Yale), and Rachel O'Neill (Associate Professor of Genetics & Genomics at University of Connecticut) provided an insider's look at the interview process. Questions submitted by PAC members guided the initial discussion, which covered search committees, the interview process, and job offers. Despite being in different research areas, the invited speaker's answers were quite similar.

On average about 200-250 applications are received for a job opening. A search committee of 5-6 faculty, with some but not all from fields related to the job, split the applications and narrow the field to 30-40 by reviewing research statements and looking for publications with high citations and impact factors. All candidates should also have recommendation letters. Committee members then read all 30-40 applications carefully and narrow the field to 6-7 for interviews.

Upon being notified of an interview, an applicant will typically have 2 to 8 weeks to prepare. Considering the short time, an applicant should be ready for the interview from the moment of submitting the application. It is critical to make a good

impression in the interview because there usually is no second interview. The process takes 1.5 days and includes a public seminar and/or private chalk talk with the committee; breakfast and/or dinner with faculty; and meetings with students, individual faculty, and the departmental chair. The public seminar should be neither too long nor too short and should try to tell a coherent story instead of talk about all of one's past work. During the chalk talk, it's important to focus on one's research plan and not so much on past work. Overall, it's essential to be enthusiastic and to highlight what one's future research objectives are.

Candidates who get an interview should be prepared to talk intelligently about the grants for which they will apply. At the same time, however, specific budgets are not discussed and are reserved for negotiations once an offer is made. The candidate should know, however, what the department's facilities are and whether or not certain equipment is available in other departments. An offer would be made to one whose research could be supported by the institution's resources and facilities.

Although in different disciplines and at different universities, the invited speakers' answers were quite similar and revealed the common aspects of an interview that all candidates will face.

Thanks to Salim Derrouiche for his contributions to this article.



Dissertation to Book: Academic Publishing

January 27th, 2009

Bryan Garsten – Associate Professor, Yale
Christopher Rogers – Executive Editor, Yale Press
Virginia Scharff – Professor, Univ of New Mexico
Rachel Teukilsky - Assistant Professor, Vanderbilt

This panel discussion helped postdocs understand what it takes to get one's research published in book format. Below are key points made by the panelists:

To improve your chances of success, network. Go to exhibit halls and meet representatives from various presses. Learn what they are looking for in a book.

Your best friend is a tough dissertation committee who will tighten up your arguments and your writing before you submit a proposal.

It's ok to send your proposal to more than one press at a time.

The larger or more prestigious presses such as Oxford and Cambridge can take at least a year to get back to you after you submit your book proposal.

The cover letter is critical. You really have to construct a great sales pitch, and if it starts with the name of the famous person who advised you to write to the press, all the better.

If a highly respected person is emailing an editor on your behalf, you are much less likely to get a form rejection letter.

Imitation is underrated. Ask other people for their proposals to see what worked for them, and incorporate the parts you like into your own proposal.

Because of increasing costs, academia has to evolve its publishing expectations. If your book idea is of interest to a handful of peers, it may no longer become a paper book and instead will be published electronically.

Effective Writing Habits for Postdocs

February 12th 2009

Stephanie Dunson, Writing Consultant

Dr. Dunson opened this workshop with several questions:

1. What is your writing process?
2. What works about your writing process?
3. What's your ideal scenario of the writing process?
4. How do other people get effective writing done?
5. When do you work well? When don't you?

Following discussion of these questions, she provided some of these insights and helpful ideas:

- Writing is hard, difficult work for everyone, even highly successful writers.
- Write every day.
- Write opportunistically, whenever you can.
- Generate excess – writing is more like sculpting a statue than crafting a diamond. Start with more than you need and whittle it down.
- There is a difference between writing and revising. Write first for yourself. Then revise for a believing audience and revise again for a resistant audience. Writing for the believing audience enables your thoughts to be understood by others. Writing for the resistant reader helps you to think about and incorporate other ideas.
- Planning ahead is overrated.
- Outlining can be better for review of material than as a starting point.
- Give your writing permission to help explore something new.
- One key to effective writing is the illusion of infinite time.
- Write as you research so as to keep track of your ideas. Research is not a reason not to write.
- Confront and challenge your inner editor, who may be an old teacher, mentor, or other positive/negative critic inside your head.
- Set realistic goals for writing, and pursue them relentlessly.
- Don't let grammar get in the way of what you want to say. Grammar can be fixed later.



Yale Business Cards

Yale offers a simple and cost-effective way for you to generate official Yale business cards that you can use for networking at conferences, meetings, and other career events. Go to http://www.yale.edu/ris/sub_design_buscard.html to begin the process.

OISS Mailing List

Sign up for the Office of International Students and Scholars event mailing list and you will receive important information regarding immigration and employment regulations and OISS programs and announcements.

OISS mailing list:
<http://www.oiss.yale.edu/about/oiss-l.htm>

Tax Time

April 15th is the deadline for filing your US Federal taxes. The Yale University Tax office web site, <http://www.yale.edu/tax>, has a special section for Graduate Students and Post-Doctoral Fellows at <http://www.yale.edu/tax/gradstudtax2008/index.html>. This tax guide can help keep you current and serves as a guide to offer general tax information.

Career Development Lecture Series

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs hosts monthly workshops and panel discussions on topics relevant to postdoctoral career and professional development. The series usually runs in late afternoon. The schedule of events is listed on the Postdoc web site and Facebook page, and details about each month's event will be emailed in advance to all postdocs. Please let us know if you have suggestions for topics for future workshops.

Need To Contact Us?

Have a topic you'd like us to cover in a future issue of the PDQ? E-mail your ideas to Monica.

Yale School of Medicine:

333 Cedar St.
Sterling Hall of Medicine L-203

Director
John Alvaro, Ph.D.
Ph: 785-3735
john.alvaro@yale.edu



Senior Administrative Assistant II
Abby Davi
Ph: 785-7528
Fx: 785-3734
abby.davi@yale.edu

Central Campus:

225 Prospect St.
Sterling Chemistry Laboratory Room 154

Associate Director
Monica Vella-Angelastro, Ph.D.
Ph: 432-5275
monica.vellaangelastro@yale.edu



Senior Administrative Assistant
Alisa Paradise
Ph: 432-9075
Fx: 432-6182
alisa.paradise@yale.edu