

Minutes for the SPAN Conference Call
August 28, 2008

Attendees:

Beth Oesterling (U Kentucky alumna)	Natalie Johnson (TAMU)
Colette Quinn (Dartmouth)	Zuzana Majkova (University of Kentucky)
Colin North (MSU)	Vivien Taylor (Dartmouth)
Courtney Kozul (Dartmouth)	Justin Crane (NIEHS-MDB)
James Jacobus (Iowa)	Heather Henry (NIEHS-SBRP)
Kathleen McCarty (Harvard SPH alumna)	

Meeting Objective: Revisit the interest/applicability of facebook and LinkedIn as a networking tool. Discuss Annual Meeting and future plans for SPAN.

Meeting Summary:

Statement of Goal

The goal of SPAN is to link the various SBRP programs, students, postdocs and alumni as another mechanism to promote interdisciplinary research to address health and environmental concerns due to hazardous waste sites. The SPAN committee is a representative group of current and past trainees to help lead SBRP in this networking effort.

- **Previous Call** (June 25th, 2008) was reviewed and minutes approved.
- **Annual Meeting** will be December 7-10 in Asilomar, CA.
 - Details about the meeting are expected on the web very soon and will be accessible from the SBRP events page:
<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/supported/sbrp/events/index.cfm>.
 - Ride-sharing from airports (San Jose or Monterey) will be a potentially important coordinating activity for SPAN (via webpages / listserv / message board...but also open for suggestions).
 - Early draft of meeting indicates a poster session will begin the Sunday evening that the meeting starts. This is just a draft – this may change.
 - Icebreaker for trainees – suggested to have activities to stimulate mingling and ways to identify trainees by their school (suggest wearing school garb) or their discipline (something with nametags, maybe?)
 - Heather has been in touch with Dr. Dooley, who is organizing the meeting, hosted by UC-Davis.
- **Networking Tools** SBRP is investigating ways to use existing networking tools to connect trainees. We are also looking into building a database that would accomplish the same, only would be hosted on the SBRP website. We are asking SPAN Committee for suggestions and beta-testing of these web-accessible networking tools.
 - Facebook: JOIN the SPAN Group:
<http://www.new.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=20124049725>

- More of a social networking tool
- Need to be logged on to browse.
- Privacy features can be turned on so that your details/friends can only be viewed by people you have listed as “friend.” This may aid in maintaining a professional persona on facebook.
- LinkedIn: JOIN the SPAN Group: <http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=161625>.
 - More of a professional/corporate networking tool
 - The new group features allow sending out emails, search group rosters, discussion forum.
 - This could facilitate coordination at annual meeting.
 - Email addresses can be pre-approved to make it faster for people to join.
- Google Sites: Link to information about group/data-sharing sites offered by Google: <http://www.google.com/sites/help/intl/en/overview.html>
 - Pretty cool...what do you think?
 - Could be useful for your own lab groups...
- SO MANY SITES!/: For now, we are just exploring the use of these sites for networking and will at the very least maintain a minimal presence for those who use these tools. Ideally one will emerge that is best for our use and we’ll make a broader announcement to the whole trainee listserv (past/present). Or, we’ll build our own database and draw from the pros/cons of features/information identified by committee.
- Extra thanks to Courtney Kozul and Colin North who have been looking into these sites.
- **Future SPAN Activities:**
 - Virtual Journal Club – is of interest.
 - Web Seminar – SBRP will offer the “What is Superfund?” seminar in November so trainees have a better understanding of what the program is in advance of the meeting. In the Spring, these web seminars could feature student/postdoc/alumni research.
 - Besides just networking, SPAN committee should think about something to work towards, perhaps on a topical basis.
 - Collaboration: it was mentioned that SPAN could really take a meaningful step forward if there was a way to augment research collaboration or access to funding for cross-program collaborations.
 - **Please get in touch with Heather or Justin about your ideas of how SPAN can become a meaningful and useful catalyst for advancement of Environmental Health Sciences.**

Next Call will be scheduled for mid-late October.