

Evolution Learning Community
Student Conference Planning Committee Meeting
November 14, 2007
4:00 – 5:00 p.m., DL 105

In attendance: Kate Bruce, Jennifer Jancauskas (president, Geology Club), Tricia Kelley, Dale McCall, Tom Schmid, Ron Sizemore, Christy Visaggi

ELC members met to continue planning for the student conference to be held in Spring 2009. Follow-up on action items from previous meeting were discussed.

- Meeting logistics
 - Sizemore reported that dormitory housing unlikely to be available in spring 2009 (UNCW is now accepting additional freshman in spring semester to fill vacant dormitory housing)
 - Visaggi checked on times of spring break at UNC schools, Easter break, end of spring semester, plus some scientific meetings, Azalea Festival
 - Information still needed on a few meetings, but best times appear to be either weekend of 3/20-21/09 or 3/27-28/09 (latter date preferred)
 - Venue: Burney student center being renovated and would be appropriate for meeting this size, but Visaggi reported they will not be taking reservations until October 08
 - Unless other conflicts arise, preferred dates will be Thursday/Friday/Saturday 3/26-2/28/09 at Burney Student Center, with Warwick Center as backup
- Ideas for interdisciplinary sessions: Kelley distributed list of potential topics she had developed that would foster an interdisciplinary approach (included at end of Minutes)
 - Need to consider what format/topics will attract participants
 - Is it better for sessions to be thematically organized (as in Kelley proposal) or along disciplinary lines (e.g., “Darwin in literature”)? Would students be able to see how their research might fit within an interdisciplinary session?
 - All students should present posters; on submission form they could also indicate if they would like to be considered for oral presentation
 - Alternate open poster sessions with interdisciplinary (themed) sessions of 15-minute talks (12 minutes talk + 3 minutes for questions)?
 - National Honors Conference may be appropriate model: students submit papers which are then connected into common threads
 - Graduate poster session connected to Sustainability Conference this spring may also provide ideas for what will and won’t work
 - Need to bring in other disciplines (e.g., literature, education, chemistry, nursing)

Action items:

- Visaggi will investigate dates of other spring meetings (e.g., Benthic Ecology, SEGSA)
- Sizemore will see if Paul Reinmann has blueprint for renovated Burney Center
- Visaggi will work with Jancauskas to involve leaders of student groups not already represented on the planning committee (e.g. social sciences and humanities)
- All committee members should continue working on ideas for interdisciplinary sessions (i.e., questions that can be addressed by multiple disciplines)

Student Conference Spring 2009
Tentative Title: Darwin's Impact on the Sciences and Humanities

Kelley's ideas for evolution-related topics that can be addressed by multiple disciplines:

Biodiversity crises/conservation

Can be addressed by:

- Biology (e.g., genetic diversity, effects of gene pool depletion, population bottlenecks, ecological effects)
- Geology/paleontology (mass extinctions of the past, using the fossil record as a baseline for assessing the current crisis)
- Environmental studies (environmental implications, management)
- PAR (philosophical and religious ramifications of the crisis, issues of stewardship)
- Social sciences/economics (ramifications of the crisis for society)

The economics of evolution and its consequences for society

Can be addressed by:

- Biology (economics of evolution: how evolution is affected by economic principles such as availability of resources, competition, etc; implications for society)
- Paleontology (record of interaction through geologic time, e.g., escalation, coevolution, relationship to opportunity and constraint; implications for society)
- PAR (economics, evolution, and ethics)
- Political science/economics (societal applications of the economic lessons of evolution)

Implications of understanding the genome

Can be addressed by:

- Biology (reconstruction of phylogeny; understanding speciation; implications for medicine, agriculture; genetic manipulation)
- Paleontology (molecular paleobiology; reconciling fossils vs molecular data on the history of life)
- PAR (ethical implications)
- Psychology (genetic controls, evolutionary psychology)
- Various applied sciences (medicine, pharmaceuticals, agriculture)

Species in space and time (maybe focus on invasions?)

Can be addressed by:

- Biology (biogeography; process of invasion, biological consequences)
- Paleontology (lessons from past invasions/migrations re extinction, evolutionary consequences)
- Environmental studies (environmental implications, management)
- PAR (ethical implications)
- Social sciences/economics (ramifications for society)