

## AJED Meeting Notes February 12, 2024

### **In attendance:**

Nina Sherwood

Natalie Kerr

Mar Martinez Pastor

Rossie Clark-Cotton

Jessica Harrell

Steve Nowicki

David Su

Alison Hill

Colby Cheshire

Dan McShea

Jill Foster

Paul Magwene

Carl Manner III

Aeran Coughlin

Lotus Lofgren

### **Introductions and updates with Nina Sherwood**

Welcome Chinese New Year!

Welcome to undergraduate Colby Cheshire, BCA member and graduating senior with a double major in French and Biology!

#### **1. BCA/AJED MIXER: Feb...!**

BCA/AJED would like to do a mixer; food will be provided. This is a nice way for biology undergraduates have a chance to interact with other people in department

If you can attend, please fill out preferred times at this when2meet link to help the BCA plan for a time when folks are optimally free:

<https://www.when2meet.com/?23628566-ZGUT3>

From Yochebed: *We are trying to have about one event per semester and we decided to have our mixer this month. I think food will definitely be a good incentive. High tea sounds yummy! I think it would also be a good idea to have our members submit questions or topics they would like to hear/talk about.*

**2. Status of GRUNCHES:** FLUNCHES are alive and well!

GRUNCHES no longer exist (based on the dates it hasn't been updated since 2019).

BUT undergraduates can take grad students, PDs, staff, etc. to FLUNCH (in theory they are supposed to be in a teaching role). Are undergrads generally aware of this?

The FLUNCH program was started in 2007 by the, then, student body president, Paul Slattery. The program has been tremendously successful and expensive for Trinity. The program is not intended to be exclusive.

**3. Spontaneous department gatherings.** Emily B. received loud and clear the message that there needs to be more FUN. So, more fun is happening -- e.g. the recent donuts and bagels events. **How can AJED help get people to attend these events, and to mix a bit rather than just grab a holey carb and leave?**

Suggestions:

- Send out announcements earlier in advance of the gatherings
- Provide name tags for people at the gathering which say..."ask me about xxx (something)..." This would help people approach one another.
- Different department committees could host a gathering to introduce and talk about what the mission of the different committees is.
- Aeran volunteered IDEA to host a gathering and also mentioned concerns about what is perceived as the divide between EEOB and DCMB; perhaps these gatherings could address this.

**After the meeting** Alison contacted Blythe about upcoming dates to provide a calendar for people to sign up for hosting.

From Blythe:

“ I’m conferring with some of my colleagues about our next steps, based on our experiences so far. We also are seeking clarification on the goals for this effort. I am beginning to view this as still being in its pilot stage.

I would love AJED’s involvement and will let you know what we learn.”

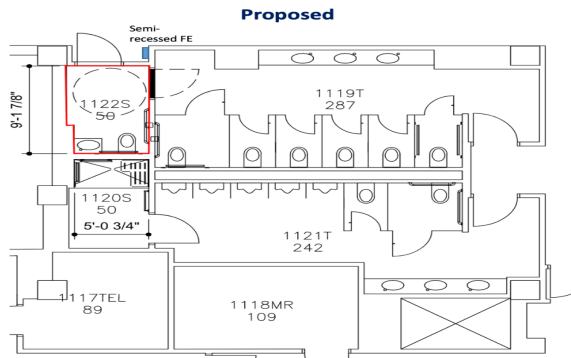
As an aside, multiple people have also noted that **pumpkin carving was GREAT** (thanks Natalie and Mar!!) — great because it removed any hierarchy, not 100% social (because there was a clear task to be done), also inclusive.

#### **4. SDAO is revamping its association with the department.**

Apparently, we have two SDAO reps in the department, Amy and Donyell. Christina D. Klein, J.D. said, among other things, that she’s working with Biology on the GNB’s? **GNB’s now fall under their domain -- Williams v Kincaid. Recognized gender dysphoria as a mental health condition. Therefore, SDAO must provide support for this if it’s gender dysphoria.**

#### **5. GNB’s, continued...**

Steve Nowick reconnected with Bobbi Weinberg (Project Manager at Duke) about the Gender-Neutral Bathroom and confirmed that Bobbi is supportive of building a GNB in biology. Steve provided our group with a floor plan (pasted below) to be enacted on the first level of French which would involve converting a shower in the current women’s bathroom into a GNB. This would involve creating a new door, the addition of facilities and a sign for the bathroom. The time frame for the construction of the bathroom is, hopefully, by the end of spring semester. A big thank you to Steve Nowicki for his incredible efforts and doggedness in moving this project forward and to Emily Bernhardt for suggesting to Daniel Ennis (executive vice president of Duke) that bureaucracy can slow the forward movement of important DEI projects.



**Scope:**

- Relocate existing door
- Stud/Drywall void where door was
- Relocate water supply for sink and toilet
- Relocate drain for sink and toilet
- Demo tile off walls and drywall and paint
- Patch floor tile / re-tile (approx. 50sq ft)
- Procure toilet, sink, accessories, grab bars. Wall mount
- Lighting, sprinkler, and exhaust to remain as is

Cost TBD – Need estimates and architect to confirm shown layout meets handicapped accessibility requirements or modify as necessary.

## 6. Visit with Professor Kelly Hogan, Education Innovator:

The early work of the AJED education subcommittee involved evaluating our introductory biology curriculum through an equity lens. This work culminated with a recommendation to the department steering committee that the department engage in a comprehensive review of the curriculum. This led to inviting the NSF group PULSE (Partnership for Undergraduate Life Science Education) to review the department’s curriculum in the fall of 2021. One of the conclusions Emily made from the PULSE report was to create an Education Innovator position in the department. After a semester-long search Kelly Hogan from UNC, experienced in strategies for promoting equity in undergraduate STEM classrooms, was hired into this position, and started in August of 2023. Our education subcommittee invited Kelly to join our meeting this semester to share her first impressions of our curriculum and possible future steps.

Some of the observations made by Kelly about our curriculum are:

- The term “gateway” implies “gatekeeping” which is not the message we should send our undergraduates
- The previous version of Bio201L was pitched at a very high level. She is working to find the right level to teach molecular biology to our incoming undergraduates.
- The design of a course can send the message to students about whether the faculty prioritize “learning” over grades and the importance of faculty with a growth mindset
- Curriculum was previously described as lacking “intent”

- The current course evaluation system is not an effective way to gather information about a course. Alison described new efforts in the department to set up peer observations of faculty teaching as a way to expand input about faculty teaching.
- The plan for the newly remodeled BioSci building (in ~3 years or so) will convert BioSci 111 into a teaching theater to enhance best practices in pedagogy. Eventually, the hope is to run two simultaneous sections of a large intro class so it can be subdivided into two smaller sections of students (i.e. ~100 students/class)

## **7. Identity Groups.**

Internationals – Nina will start to work with our International Scholars liaisons Ze-yi, Natalie, and Mar to assess how our international members are doing. Other groups (postdocs, teaching & admin staff, research associates), have you been gathering, is there a need? Does anyone use the listservs? → the postdocs meet once per month!

## **8. PR Person:**

We've been given the go-ahead to hire a work-study student to do PR — specifically, coming up with and maintaining a wiki page for the department, keeping track of the listservs, updating web pages, etc. If anyone has input on what else they'd like this person to do, please let Nina know.

**9. Mentoring training was provided by Jessica Harrell** to our research scientists and graduate students. Both Mar Martinez-Pastor (Research Scientist) and Carl Manner talked about how excellent the mentoring program was for both groups. Carl suggested that, perhaps, the program should be made mandatory for graduate students.

**The meeting ended before** we had time to take a quick field trip down to ground zero of French where the current Gender-Neutral Bathroom resides. Many thanks to Jill Foster for this idea. Maybe next time.

Alison and Nina