

ACSF TOPICAL lunch summary - Ecology and Evolution of Infections and Disease

Laura Harrington and Colin Parish (organizers)

September 22, 2012

Those attending (17) : Organizers (Laura and Colin), Drew Harvell, Sunny Power, Alex Travis, Beth Bunting, Ian Hewson, Kristen Shuler, Angela Douglas, Brian Lazzaro, Steve Ellner, Mike Millgroom, Ned Place, Jonathan Ochshorn, Avery August, Mark Lawrence and Lauren Chambliss (ACSF staff).

The **goal** of the topical lunch was to stimulate discussion about the future of the EEID group at Cornell and funding ideas, and to make connections to the areas of animal, human, plant health, the roles of microorganisms as symbionts and pathogens, and sustainability, broadly defined.

EEID future directions and presence on campus:

It was agreed that the **website is a critical way of defining the program, and also a vital recruiting and advertising tool**. As a consequence, the website will be updated. Ian provided the name of an undergraduate who did his web design, Colin and Laura will follow up. Interested faculty will provide photos and bios for the website. ACSF may be able to help us by providing a link to our website from the ACSF site.

We discussed holding a **one day workshop on campus around the theme of “Redefining One Health for the Cornell community”** as suggested by Alex Travis. This would provide a unifying force for interested Cornell researchers as well as providing the opportunity to bring in a few high profile experts. The goal would be to expand One Health beyond traditional definitions of veterinary and human disease, and to include a more broadly holistic perspective that includes the role of plant health in maintaining human health, and also the connections to environment and ecology.

There was a sense that many faculty are doing EEID related things (e.g. the proposed USAID project-Cornell Center for Rural Resilience that Chris Barrett is organizing) and we don't necessarily need to force the formation of projects, but we can stay apprised of opportunities and take advantage of them as they come up.

We considered creating an **EEID minor** for students. Ian Hewson created one in Marine Biology and it was fairly simple. Many of us are already teaching courses that could be listed for the minor. In addition, we could require an internship experience. Many students are interested in this topic.

We discussed having **joint seminars** (Like “Biology without Borders”) or selected EEID speakers in our various departmental seminars each semester.

Funding for an EEID program:

NSF (or NIH) **dimensions and diversity program** was mentioned as a potential funding source. Alex Travis mentioned that these projects need to be highly technical. Angela and Brian didn't think this would be a problem.

An RCN (Research Coordination Network) was also mentioned. Laura, Colin and others will talk with our program officers at NIH/NSF about opportunities.

Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases grant application to the NSF.

We discussed trying to involve Cornell Weill and some of the challenges of connecting with Weill faculty. Avery August has been involved in some campus-to-campus initiatives.

Lauren Chambliss asked for a summary about the group, our needs and goals to have on hand during discussions with **donors** at ACSF. We need to come up with a coherent program and explain why Cornell is better than other peer institutions for this program. Laura Harrington will work on something and circulate it. We discussed how to break into the donor opportunities. Drew Harvell said ACSF could help by connecting us with foundations. We also could provide ACSF with ideas about foundations to target.