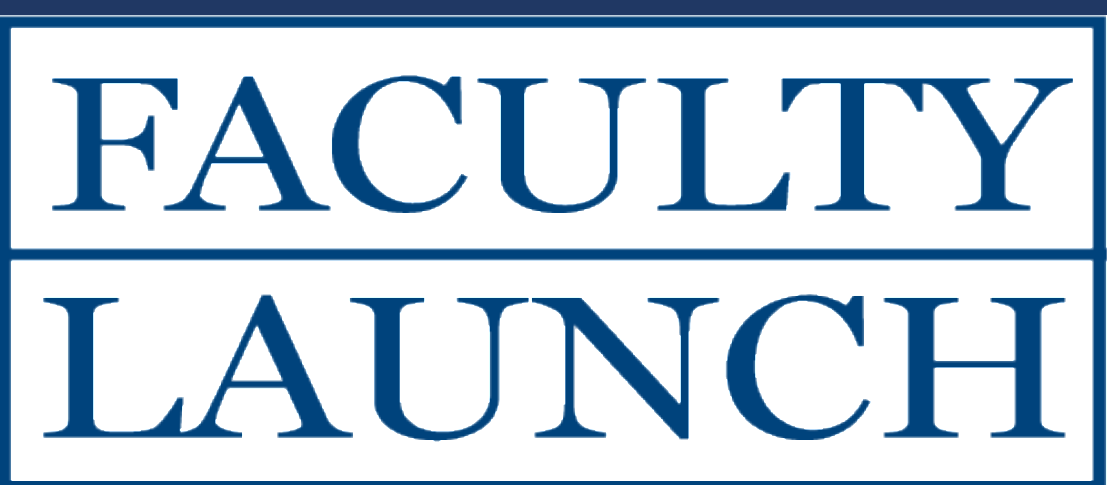


Increasing Drexel Presence and Student Participation at Local Scientific Meetings

Seena K. Ajit, PhD

Collaborators and Mentors: Olimpia Meucci, MD, PhD, Paul McGonigle, PhD, Michele Kutzler, PhD, Noreen Robertson, DMD, Jane Clifford, PhD

Affiliation: Department of Pharmacology and Physiology, Drexel University College of Medicine



Abstract

The two most important aspects of my career involve research and mentoring. So, I want to explore ways to integrate science and mentoring in my Faculty Leadership Impact Project. The overarching goal is to engage in activities that will take me out of my comfort zone, and an experience to develop my organizational and networking skills. I want to facilitate highlighting of the research being performed at Drexel University at local meetings, and Drexel's presence at the forefront among the institutes in Philadelphia, by involving our students. In our department, we have students in both Pharmacology & Physiology, and Drug Discovery and Development (DDD) programs. Most MS students never get an opportunity to attend an external scientific meeting. Even PhD students mostly start attending conferences in their 3rd or 4th year. I propose to work on increasing participation of our students in Mid-Atlantic Pharmacology Society (MAPS) meeting held annually. This will ensure significant presence of Drexel trainees, their mentors, and an opportunity for all the graduate students to attend an external meeting. MAPS is a chapter of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET). Their objective is to provide scientists in our geographical area with a forum for meeting to discuss recent advances in pharmacology, related medical disciplines and therapeutics. Students and postdoctoral fellows are encouraged to present posters. It is also an opportunity to interact with local industrial and academic scientists. Since the MAPS meeting is held in the Fall, the students can use the posters they prepare for Discovery Day. Additionally, I will work with Program Directors to add meeting attendance to the DDD curriculum. I will also explore the possibility of hosting a MAPS meeting at Drexel.

Background and Significance

The two most important aspects of my career involve research and mentoring. So, I want to explore ways to integrate science and mentoring in my Faculty Leadership Impact Project. The overarching goal is to engage in activities that will take me out of my comfort zone. I envision this will be an experience that will enable me to develop my organizational and networking skills.

Most MS students never get an opportunity to attend an external scientific meeting. Even PhD students mostly start attending conferences in their 3rd or 4th year. I propose to work on increasing participation of our students at local scientific meetings. This will ensure significant presence of Drexel trainees (and potentially their mentors) and an opportunity for all the Graduate students to attend an external meeting.

Goal

- Provide an opportunity for all the students to attend and present posters at an external scientific meeting
- Ensure significant Drexel presence at local scientific meetings in Philadelphia
- Host a meeting at Drexel

Objectives

- Increase participation of Drexel students at MAPS meeting held annually in Philadelphia
- Encourage students and postdoctoral fellows to present posters
- Highlight and celebrate research being conducted at Drexel
- Provide a venue for local scientific meetings to foster interactions with local universities in Philadelphia

Methods and Approach

MAPS is a constituent chapter of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET). Their objective is to provide scientists in our geographical area (New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware) a forum for meeting on a regular basis to discuss recent advances in pharmacology, related medical disciplines, and therapeutics.

Mid-Atlantic Pharmacology Society (MAPS)

The American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET)



<https://www.aspet.org/>

<https://www.aspet.org/aspet/membership-community/aspet-regional-chapters/mid-atlantic-pharmacology-society>

- Encourage all students to register, submit abstract and present posters
- Seek support from Program Directors and Department Chairs as needed
- Work with Program Directors to include meeting attendance into Drug Discovery & Development curriculum
- Get support to host MAPS meeting at one of the Drexel facilities

Short Term and Long Term Outcomes

- Work with Program Directors to include meeting attendance into DDD curriculum
- Circulate meeting brochure widely
- Discuss with Department Chairs and Program Directors as needed
- Encourage students to submit abstracts planned for Drexel Discovery Day
- Negotiate for registration fees to be paid by Department Chairs
- Discuss with MAPS meeting organizers about hosting a future meeting at Drexel
- Evaluate and identify a venue at Drexel conducive for maximum attendance with help from Dr. Noreen Robertson
- Expand to identify and include participation in other local chapters

Challenges

Garnering enough interest and enthusiasm!!



Image from Google

Evaluation and Assessment Strategies

- Determine the number of presentations from Drexel compared to previous years
- Obtain feedback from the students and faculty
- Commitment from MAPS for hosting a meeting at Drexel

Discussion and Impact

- Excellent representation of Drexel research and trainees at local scientific conferences
- Opportunity for all students to attend and present at an external meeting without significant financial burden for the faculty
- Develop my project planning skills by identifying and securing needed resources, and facilitating scientific exchange

Acknowledgements

Dr. Olimpia Meucci, Chair of Pharmacology & Physiology Department for her mentoring and sponsorship

Dr. Paul McGonigle for his support and encouragement to work with MAPS

Dr. Joanne Mathiasen for her support

Dr. Noreen Robertson and Office of Research for guidance and mentorship

Dr. Michele Kutzler and everyone who contributed to the success of the Faculty Launch Program

My colleagues from the Basic and Translational Research Dragon Learning Circle for their suggestions and support