ARO Council Meeting Minutes

Date: July 17, 2025
Attendees: Kristin Johnson, Laura Reynolds, Samantha Davis, Ronna Hertzano, Lisa Cunningham, Radha Kalluri, Katharine Fernandez, Anna Lysakowski, Alain Dabdoub, Sunil Puria, Mike Bowl, Avril Genene Holt, and Jeffrey Holt

1. spARO Committee Update

Summary:

Samantha Davis, Chair of spARO, provided updates on current initiatives. These included clarifying spARO's structure, planning fall and spring events, and improving communication with trainees. There was a discussion about improving the spARO webpage and addressing committee attendance issues.

Decisions Made:

- Plan to host two annual events: a fall and a spring event.
- Consideration of a trainee-specific newsletter.
- Agreement to update the spARO webpage for clarity and engagement.
- Attendance policy will be enforced for committee members missing multiple meetings.

Action Items:

- Samantha to follow up with absent committee members via email.
- Samantha to coordinate with the Executive Office on newsletter logistics.
- spARO to propose updates to the website.
- Kristin to support enforcement of attendance policy as needed.

2. 2028 Meeting Location Proposals

Summary:

Laura Reynolds presented venue options for the 2028 ARO meeting. The Hyatt Regency New Orleans emerged as the preferred option due to its amenities, location, and cost. Discussions included accessibility, weather concerns, and room block logistics.

Decisions Made:

- Hyatt Regency New Orleans identified as the preferred venue.
- Laura to inquire about securing a small room block at the adjacent Hyatt House for trainees and government rate attendees.

Action Items:

- Laura to negotiate additional room block at Hyatt House.
- Kristin to coordinate next steps based on venue feedback.

3. ARO Scholars Program and DMAC Name Change

Summary:

Avril Genene Holt introduced the proposed name change for the Diversity and Minority Affairs Committee to the Development, Mentorship, and Advancement Committee (DMAC). The council also reviewed funding needs for the ARO Scholars Program. A request for $20,000 was made by the DMAC to support four scholars for the upcoming year.

Decisions Made:

- Council approved the DMAC name change.
- Council unanimously approved $20,000 in funding for the ARO Scholars Program for the upcoming year.

Action Items:

- Kristin to update the website with the new DMAC name.
- Kristin Johnson and Avril Genene Holt to coordinate on funding application process for ARO Scholars Program.

4. Clinical Content Scheduling Practices and Second Plenary Proposal

Summary:

Ronna Hertzano proposed enhancing clinical content at the beginning of the meeting to better engage clinicians. A new Sunday morning plenary session was suggested, featuring late-breaking research and a focused clinical update (e.g., gene therapy trials). The council discussed the implications of scheduling and content balance.

Decisions Made:

- Council agreed to vote via email on:
    - Shifting more clinical content to Saturday/Sunday.
    - Adding a two-hour plenary session on Sunday morning (1 hour late-breaking, 1-hour clinical focus).

Action Items:

- Kristin to draft and distribute a ballot to council members.
- Council members to submit votes via ballot.

5. Bylaws Review

Summary:

Kristin announced the upcoming review of ARO bylaws. Members were asked to read the current bylaws and contribute suggestions for updates.

Decisions Made:

- Agreement to begin bylaw review process.

Action Items:

- Kristin to distribute bylaws and collect feedback from council members.

Summary

The meeting covered updates from spARO, venue selection for the 2028 meeting, funding for the ARO Scholars Program, a proposed name change for DMAC, scheduling of clinical content at the meeting, and a new plenary session to enhance clinical engagement. The council also agreed to begin a review of the organization's bylaws.

Decisions Made (Consolidated)

- Host two annual spARO events (fall and spring).
- Develop a trainee-specific newsletter.
- Update the spARO webpage for clarity.
- Request additional room block at Hyatt House for student/government rate rooms.
- Approve DMAC name change.
- Approve $20,000 funding for ARO Scholars Program.
- Proceed with email vote on clinical content scheduling and new plenary session.
- Begin bylaw review process.

Action Items (Consolidated)

- Samantha Davis to email absent spARO committee members.
- Samantha Davis to coordinate newsletter logistics with the Executive Office.
- spARO Committee to propose website updates.
- Kristin Johnson to support attendance policy enforcement.
- Laura Reynolds to negotiate additional room block at Hyatt House.
- Kristin Johnson to update website with new DMAC name.
- Kristin Johnson and Avril Genene Holt to coordinate on funding application process for ARO Scholars Program.
- Kristin Johnson to draft and distribute council vote on clinical session scheduling and plenary proposal.
- Council members to submit votes once the ballot is circulated.
- Kristin Johnson to distribute bylaws and collect feedback for review.