ARO DMAC Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: November 5, 2025

Attendees: Kristin Johnson, Jeffrey Cheng, Tejbeer Kaur, Avril Genene Holt, Michele Insanally, Carolyn McClaskey, Charanjeet Kaur, Jarnail Singh, Luberson Joseph, Timothy Balmer, Agudemu Borjigin, Yuan He

1. ARO Scholar Program Updates

Summary:

The committee discussed the review process for the ARO Scholar Program. Four top-ranked applicants were identified based on scores. Two approaches were considered as a next step: (1) selecting the top four based on scores or (2) holding a subtask group meeting to discuss scoring/reviews in detail. Members emphasized the need to standardize review criteria and clarify that the program is distinct from the ARO Travel Award. Suggestions included updating application guidelines and requiring a structured summer research plan as part of the application in future years.

Decisions Made:

- ARO Scholars task group will meet to finalize awardees and standardize review criteria.
- Notifications to awardees will be sent before Thanksgiving.
- Future applications will include clearer guidelines and possibly a scoring rubric.

Action Items:

- **Jarnail**: Send Doodle poll to schedule task group meeting ideally to occur within the next 1-1.5 weeks.
- **Task Group:** Plan updates for next year's application and review process.

2. Special Session Task Group Update

Summary:

The group addressed pending abstracts for the DMAC special session. One presenter agreed to withdraw an existing poster abstract and transfer that same abstract to this special session. The committee will finalize the session with five confirmed abstracts and seek final program committee approval. Travel funding requests were confirmed as approved within the budget.

Decisions Made:

- Abstract from Lubriel Escobales will be moved from poster to DMAC session.
- Session will proceed with five speakers if sixth abstract is not received.
- Requested speaker funding amounts that were included in the original session submission will be honored.

Action Items:

- **Kristin Johnson**: Coordinate abstract transfer and confirm session approval with Program chairs.
- **Task Group**: Determine speaker introductions closer to the meeting date.

3. Coffee Hour Series Update

Summary:
Charanjeet Kaur announced details for the third Coffee Hour session titled *Exploring Funding Opportunities: Foundation and Private Support*, scheduled for December 10. Speakers will include Dr. Peter Santa Maria (University of Pittsburgh) and Dr. Wei Sun (University at Buffalo). Previous sessions had strong attendance, and the task group is hopeful that will continue.

Decisions Made:

- Coffee Hour details confirmed; session will be advertised.

Action Items:

- **Charanjeet Kaur**: Resend session details to Kristin Johnson.
- **Kristin Johnson**: Forward details to Rhiannon for announcements and email distribution.

6. JARO Manuscript Update

Summary:
Carolyn McClaskey reported progress on drafting a manuscript based on the 2024 session. The subtask group will finalize a draft by early December and then consult the JARO editor regarding submission type. Access to original recordings will be provided. Discussion included authorship considerations and inclusion of past committee members.

Decisions Made:

- Manuscript draft will be completed by early December.
- Former committee members will be consulted for authorship or acknowledgments.

Action Items:

- **Carolyn McClaskey**: Share draft with task group; start new email thread for manuscript collaboration.
- **Kristin Johnson**: Provide access to 2024 session recordings.
- **Task Group**: Review draft and provide feedback.

5. Pre-Midwinter Virtual Session Planning

Summary:
The virtual session is scheduled for January 14 at 12:00 PM Eastern. The group discussed potential topics, including an overview of special sessions and Puerto Rico-specific logistics. A brainstorming meeting will be held December 4 at 3:00 PM Eastern.

Decisions Made:

- Session date and time confirmed.
- Brainstorming meeting scheduled for December 4.

Action Items:

- **Agudemu Borjigin**: Send Zoom invitation for December 4 brainstorming meeting.
- **Task Group**: Prepare ideas for session content.

Summary

The meeting covered updates on the ARO Scholar Program, special session planning, Coffee Hour series, JARO manuscript progress, and Pre-MidWinter Meeting virtual session planning. Key themes included improving review processes, finalizing session logistics, and enhancing transparency and accountability.

Decisions Made (Consolidated)

- Task group will finalize ARO Scholar awardees and standardize review criteria.

- Special session abstract withdrawal and transfer approved; DMAC session will proceed with five speakers.
- Coffee Hour details confirmed for December 10.
- Manuscript draft to be completed by early December.
- Pre-midwinter virtual session scheduled for January 14; brainstorming on December 4.

Action Items (Consolidated)

- **Jarnail**: Send Doodle poll for ARO Scholar subtask group meeting.
- **Kristin Johnson**: Update Scholar guidelines; coordinate abstract transfer; provide recordings.
- **Charanjeet Kaur**: Resend Coffee Hour details.
- **Agudemu Borjigin**: Schedule brainstorming meeting for virtual session.
- **Carolyn McClaskey**: Share manuscript draft; start email thread.
- **Committee/Task Group Members**: Review manuscript; prepare ideas for virtual session; assist with Scholar program updates.