

Lab Manager Community of Practice

FIRST MEETING on Tuesday, April 17, 2017 11:00 am – 12:00 pm, Microbial Science Building 3rd floor atrium

Hosted by Kevin Galles, Nicci Schmidt, Heather Daniels, Isabelle Girard, & Carey Hannan.

1. Attendance

About 45 members of the campus research community joined the kick-off meeting of the Lab Manager / Core Manager Community of Practice. Attendees represented a variety of professional roles from diverse areas of campus.

2. Introduction

The hosts introduced themselves and their interest in building a community to collaborate with colleagues and to build bridges to share expertise and experience. The Community of Practice Model inspires a vibrant learning community, trusting relationships and facilitates generous sharing of knowledge. They emphasized that the community is being developed with the attendees present today. Everyone who is in a lab management role – whether formal or informal – is invited to participate and to contribute to what the community does and becomes – participants are “getting in on the ground floor” with a group of volunteers.

3. Defining and prioritizing issues: What are issues or problems that you would like the community to address?

What do you need help with?

Attendees worked in small groups of ~ 8 – 10 people to answer a guiding question. After discussion, each small group reported out to the larger group. The major themes collected by the larger group were presented on large paper, and attendees used 3 post-it notes to “vote” on their priorities. The themes with (priority votes) were:

- **networking** (33) – sharing people, expertise, and time
- **finding and sharing materials and equipment** (29)
- **managing people** (27) —~~vacation rules, HR guidance, conflicts~~
- data management (16) – archiving, analysis, storage, regulations
- finding process-related resources (11) – good SOPs, quality-control programs, instructions, operations
- onboarding and training of students (10) - undergrads and graduate students and lab staff

4. Addressing issues: what are resources or actions the community could use to help with the 3 top needs?

Attendees had an open discussion with the large group about ideas for each of the top 3 priority areas.

- **networking**
 - expertise directory / online list of skills to share
 - social media presence
 - Microsoft teams (new chat-centered workspace in Office 365)
 - Yammer (new Office365 social network tool)
 - lab forum online from Business Services
 - more in-person events
- **finding and sharing materials and equipment**
 - database for sharing, with info about costs or charges
 - Microsoft teams (example from Surgery Department)
 - Core labs resource website (coming soon)
- **managing people**
 - UW Supervisor training through OHRD
 - Academic Staff Professional Development grants
 - volunteer speakers at events, THRIVE @ UW
 - share HR templates
 - Supervisor Community of Practice – UW Campus Supervisors Network
 - consider different contexts and audiences – undergraduate students, graduate students, post docs or professional staff
 - attracting and retaining diverse staff

5. Next steps and closing

The hosts thanked everyone for attending and engaging, and welcomed further input via email. The hosts will distribute the meeting notes through the email list of attendees and interested people and will review for what makes sense for possible next steps. Suggestions and participation from attendees are welcome!