

Panel Information for Roundtable Open Session

Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations of Graduate Students and Postdoctoral Scholars: The Current Landscape and History of Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Scholar Labor Movements

Emily Ackerman

Dr. Emily E. Ackerman is a postdoctoral researcher in the Systems Biology department at Harvard Medical School. Her work in the Lahav Lab uses computational methods to understand the p53 signaling dynamics of cancer cells. She completed her Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering at the University of Pittsburgh where she was supported by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute as a Gilliam Fellow. Emily is devoted to activism surrounding labor issues and disability justice both inside and outside of academia with a particular interest in the interaction between disability, technology, and education. She has published writings and spoken publicly on her identity as a disabled woman in computational science and her experience with the way science and technology fields exclude disabled voices. She has served as a committee member for two NASEM projects addressing the advancement of disabled scientists and researchers, as well as on the NIH ACD Working Group on Re-envisioning NIH-Supported Postdoctoral Training. In addition, Emily serves on the board of directors of Future of Research where she co-leads the Labor Task Force, a project aimed at assessing and improving the labor conditions of academic workers.

Don Dixon

Don Dixon is currently an Astrophysics PhD candidate and student researcher at Vanderbilt University. His primary doctoral research focuses on connecting stellar rotation and interacting binaries to better understand how stars can gravitationally influence the evolution of one another. Don's research experience has given him technical expertise in handling large datasets, especially those from intensive telescope surveys. Additionally, Don is the lead organizer for the Black Academic Support and Advisory Group (BLASAR), a black networking apparatus for STEM scholars. He also has experience mentoring students ranging from high school to graduate school on python programming and astronomy research projects. A couple of Don's significant accolades include a \$500 most outstanding student publication award and a \$10,000 scholarship from the Cal-Bridge program. Don started his higher education at Chaffey Community College studying physics before transferring to Cal Poly Pomona and declaring as a physics major. Upon finishing his bachelor's degree in physics Don started graduate school through the Fisk-Vanderbilt Master's-to-PhD Bridge Program where he received his master's degree in physics from Fisk University before transferring to Vanderbilt University for PhD.

Bill Mahoney

Bill Mahoney is the Associate Dean for Student and Postdoctoral Affairs in the University of Washington (UW) Graduate School, an Associate Professor of Laboratory Medicine & Pathology in the UW School of Medicine, and the Director of the Molecular Medicine and Mechanisms of Disease (M3D) PhD program. He has a long-standing interest in professional development towards careers in STEM, focusing on graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty at UW. He is a Board member for the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA), serving as Vice Chair for 3 years, where he represents and advocates for ~20,000 postdocs and ~240 institutions. In addition, his is a member of the Graduate Career Consortium – an organization providing an international voice for graduate-level career and professional development leaders.

Trent McDonald

Trent McDonald is a staff organizer for the Rutgers AAUP-AFT, the union for faculty, postdocs, and grad student workers across the State University of New Jersey. Trent is the main organizer for the STEM research workforce on campus and has written about higher ed organizing in a number of publications. He is a third-generation unionist from Appalachian Ohio and is eager to organize for improved working conditions for STEM researchers in the years to come.

Gary Rhoades

Gary Rhoades is Professor of Higher Education. After serving as President of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) in 2004, from January 2009 to June 2011, he served as General Secretary of the American Association of University Professors in Washington, D.C., during which time he also sat on the American Council on Education's Board of Directors. Rhoades has served as Professor and Director of the Center for the Study of Higher Education from 1997-2009, and as Center Director and Head of the Department of Educational Policy Studies and Analysis from July 2012 to July 2020. He has been a faculty member at the Center for the Study of Higher Education since August 1986. Rhoades' scholarship focuses on the restructuring of academic institutions and of professions in the academy, and on comparative higher education, in work on university marketing. In addition to his books, *Managed Professionals* (1998, SUNY Press), and *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy* (with Sheila Slaughter, 2004, Johns Hopkins University Press), Rhoades is now working on a new volume, tentatively entitled, *Organizing 'Professionals': Academic Employees Negotiating a New Academy*, and is framing another book being conceptualized, *Managing to be Different: From Strategic Imitation to Strategic Imagination*.