

Summer 2021: Student Representatives Board Report

The Botanical Society of America

Officers

Outgoing: Shelly Gaynor (2019-2021)

Current: Imeña Valdes (2020-2022)

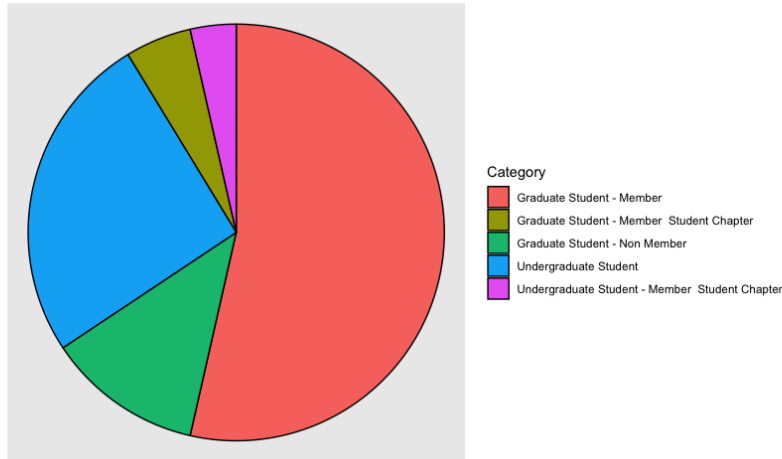
Incoming: Ioana Anghel (2021-2023)

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Part I - Annual Botany Conference

Colloquium and Symposium Student Requirement

In total, Botany 2020 had 562 students, which was about 43% of the total registrations. Compared to 2019, there was a slight increase in students registered for the conference (2019: 497, 40.7%). Of the 562 students at Botany 2020, 398 were graduate students and 164 were undergraduates. In total, students gave 392 presentations (60.9% of total presentations). Within papers and lightning talks, students represented half of the total, respectively 50.2% and 47.1%. The majority of posters were presented by students (76.8%). Only 22.5% of the symposium and colloquium talks were given by students (120 symposium/colloquium talks total. Of those: 4 undergrad talks, 19 grad talks).



If students make up about 50% of the papers presented, why do they only make up 19% of the symposium and colloquium talks? Though symposium and colloquium submission instructions strongly encourage that career stage or “seniority” should be taken into account (see 2020 wording below), it seems that we are consistently accepting symposium and colloquium that do not take students into account with only 19% of the Botany 2020 symposium and colloquium talks being presented by students. This year, symposium proposals only included 6 students, with two symposiums not having any students as speakers - this means only 16% of the symposium talks would be from students. If those two symposium included 1 student each, 22% of the talks would have been from students, which still does not reflect the population of talks presented at Botany each year. We understand that symposia and colloquia are specialized, therefore students may not be at the stage to be included, however we believe students should be included in every symposium and colloquium. Below we propose a very conservative requirement to make sure students are included in colloquium and symposium.

- PLEASE NOTE** that when preparing proposals, colloquium organizers are expected to take into account gender, seniority, nationality, and other attributes traditionally underrepresented in conference colloquia. We encourage proposals whose topics concern newly emerging fields, are synthetic, or that differ from those that have been included in recent Botany meetings.

Proposal #1

Starting during Botany 2022, we require all symposiums and colloquiums to include at least 1 student in their proposal to be approved and continue to encourage organizers to take into account the diversity, including the career stage diversity, of their speakers.

Note: This would have to be approved by the rest of the Botany conference societies.

Botany 2021

1. Navigating the Submission and Peer Review Process Workshop (July 18th, 2021; 9:00 am - 12:00 pm) feat. Brittany Sutherland
 - Navigating the peer review process is tricky. Standards for submission, review, and response to reviewers aren't always formally taught and can be difficult to understand. Those navigating the review process for the first time often must rely on a network of mentors to maneuver a manuscript through submission to acceptance. In this workshop, we provide an introduction to all stages of the peer review process. Topics include writing and formatting cover letters and other submission documents, what happens once a manuscript is received at a journal, constructively responding to reviewer comments, and how to navigate the final stages after acceptance. Hands-on exercises will be included. For example, attendees will be given examples of reviewer comments and asked to work together to craft productive responses, including to 'Reviewer #2' like comments. Workshop attendees will be able to get information from and ask questions of early-career and established authors as well as AJB Editors.
2. Careers in Botany Luncheon (July 19th, 2021; 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm)
 - We are following the same virtual format as last year where students will be placed into breakout rooms and the panelists will rotate between those rooms during the luncheon.
 - This year we have 12 professionals confirmed so far and will contact more for a total of 20. The current panelists come from various careers and career stages such as faculty from PUI, R1, and R2 institutions as well as international faculty, herbarium director/curator, post-doc at a botanic garden, government laboratory, international industry, and international government.
 - We increased the cap from 150 to 175 participants. Last year, we only had about 100 students show up compared to the 150 registered for this event.
3. CV Review Sessions
 - We have offered 5 CV reviewing sessions for 30 students which filled up quickly. We hope this can become an activity that the Early Career Professional Development Committee can provide throughout the year so students have access to adequate resources for professional development.
4. SciComm Celebration (July 19th, 2021; 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm)
 - This is the second time this event will take place and the application process was modified for ease and efficiency. We have received a lot of help from the BSA staff (Amelia and Rich) and the BSA social media liaisons (Jared and Sonal) from the planning to the execution of the event, for which we are deeply grateful! We are very thankful for the free registration gifted to two participants in the SciComm Celebration. We are also grateful for the one-year memberships gifted to all 13 SciCommers included this year.
5. Two Student Socials (July 19th: 6 pm - 8 pm and July 23rd: 5 pm - 7 pm)
 - We decided it was best to hold two student socials this year because networking in a virtual environment is more challenging. We wanted to create a space where

students would be able to meet others at the start of the conference and then meet up again later to solidify those connections.

6. BSA Office Hour

- This office hour is an open space for students and others interested in being involved with BSA to learn more about the society and ways to connect.

7. Facilitated Networking

- [Botany 2021 Networking/Job Board](#)
- Conference-wide breakout rooms

Part II - Connecting with Student Members Outside of Botany

General Update

- [BSA Student Member Resources](#) (Last Updated July 2021)
- Plant Science Bulletin
 - Spring Issue
 - Round up of student opportunities: 5 BSA specific funding opportunities, 12 fellowships, and 22 small grants. We also included information on broader impact organizations, short courses and workshops, and looking for a job in plant science.
 - Included advice on travel funding for Botany 2021, which wasn't needed.
 - Papers to Read for Future Leaders - included 7 papers.
 - Summer Issue
 - Graduate School Advice section that included advice from 8 BSA members on finding balance, planning ahead, and taking care of yourself during graduate programs.
 - Papers to Read for Future Leaders - included 4 papers.
 - Getting to know your new student representative, Ioana Anghel.

Pre-Botany Networking Events

Career and Job Networking (July 2nd, 2021; 3pm est) - 26 people attended

Upcoming:

Networking Social (July 9th, 2021; 3pm est) - 27 RSVPs

Graduate School Mixer (July 16th, 2021; 3pm est) - 23 RSVPs

Early Career Professional Development Committee

Description: The efforts of this committee should include, but are not limited to, implementing mentorship programs within BSA in regard to peer review and grant writing, creating general training opportunities for early career members, and maintaining early career membership. This committee will collaborate with the Student

Representatives on student activities, including CV reviews, at the annual meeting and throughout the year.

We hope this committee will focus on the following:

Outside of Botany

- Implement mentorship programs regarding peer review and grant writing
 - This may include making databases of successful small grant applications ([as suggested via twitter](#))
- Take-over the GRFP Working Group
 - Started in 2020, by Chelsea Pretz. Through this group, 8 students were awarded the GRFP and 2 received honorable mentions.
 - We created a database for BSA members of GRFP application examples. It currently includes 13 botany-specific winning applications (and their reviews).
- Provide CV review opportunities throughout the year.
- Organize professional development events throughout the year
- Create resources for Early Career Professionals

With the Student Representatives

- Help Student Representatives with organizing the Careers in Botany Luncheon and organizing CV reviews