

The Microbial Ecology and Evolution (MEE) community met for a retreat 12/12/2017 at ASM headquarters. Four COMS members were in attendance (Vic DiRita, Siobain Duffy, Morgan Langille, Jay Lennon), three ASM officers (Stefano Bertuzzi, Timothy Donohue, Mann Yates), the ASM Journals Chair (Patrick Schloss) and a mix of invited MEE researchers, ranging from postdocs to senior scientists (Maria Bautista, Vaughn Cooper, Melissa Duhaime, Will Harcombe, Kostas Konstantinidis, Sam Diaz Muñoz, Elizabeth Ostrowski, Matthew Shrenk, Thea Whitman).

The purpose of the retreat was to

- Define the mission of our community within COMS and ASM

- Identify the horizons of MEE research

- Identify opportunities for ASM to play a greater role in promoting MEE research

- Prioritize steps to increase MEE researcher engagements with ASM and the annual Microbe meeting.

Mission of Our Community

The group suggests that this best reflects the breadth and focus of our science within the COMS is "Ecology, Evolution, and Biodiversity (EEB)." We recommend that the corresponding Microbe track be renamed to this as well.

Discussion at the retreat surrounding the name led us to draft the following vision statement, which highlights both research and education goals.

Ecology, Evolution, and Biodiversity (EEB) Vision Statement

We study processes underlying variation at

Testing quantitative predictions from theory and models

Moving from descriptive approaches for microbiomes to quantitative measurements, population genetics of microbiomes

Integration of microbial evolution into K16 classrooms, medical and nursing curricula

Proposed EEB Subtracks

not only can bring more EEB researchers to the Microbe meeting, but increase the exposure of all attendees to our research.

We will work with the ASM social media team to develop either a Twitter account (our preference) or a hashtag to promote and aggregate ASM EEB information. We will aim for at least 25 tweets a year. One use of the account will be to poll the community to better understand its needs (e.g., why do you or don't you publish in ASM journals?). In an email complement to this, we will work with ASM membership to develop a listserv with members affiliated with Divisions N and R.

The EEB members of COMS will make ourselves available to the Journals Board Chair to assist with review of editors and editorial boards and suggestions of potential EEB researcher additions if he chooses.

Overall, the retreat was quite productive and enjoyable. Attendees greatly appreciated the facilities at ASM headquarters, and the organization and hospitality of many members of the ASM staff. In particular, the retreat could not have been as successful without the efforts of Cheryl Meyer. We thank ASM for the opportunity to brainstorm and plan as a community.