

## **Society of Systematic Biologists Program Director's Report**

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### **Summary**

In mid-March, I became the SSB program director, replacing David Weisrock. At that point the SSB workshops and Symposia and for the 2020 meeting had been chosen.

After the cancellation of the in-person 2020 Evolution meetings, I contacted the organizers of the symposia and workshops to see if they were interested in hosting an online version of their symposium, or if they would prefer to try to hold their symposium in 2021. I am sorry to say that I neglected to contact the organizers of any SSB spotlight sessions to offer them a chance to present their events online. This fell through the cracks in my transition into the program director role and was not an intentional action (in fact, I am not certain that spotlight sessions were affiliated with one of the 3 societies – they may be inherently joint events).

One of the workshops (organized by Mirarab, Pokorny, and Warnow) may present the oral presentation portion (not the “hands-on” portion) of their event online. The others preferred not to present online.

The SSB graduate student reps, Kinsey Brock and Luke Campillo, have done an amazing job organizing an excellent set of participants (Dr. Brian Atkinson, Dr. Kory M. Evans, Dr. April Wright, and Dr. Rosana Zenil-Ferguson) for the “Fireside Early Career Research Chat” event that is a part of the joint ECR<sup>2</sup> event.

I contacted Erick Matsen about online events, because he has run the very successful “Phyloseminar” series for years. He has offered to help train someone to run an online talk in the style of phyloseminar, or to present an SSB session on phyloseminar at some point. This may be a good option for continued efforts in the Spring of 2021, but his Fall 2020 is booked, so this is not an option for online events this fall.

### **Proposals for short-term actions**

1. I propose that we offer the 2021 symposium slots to the previously accepted symposia and workshops. If any choose not to re-offer their workshop, then I think we should advertise to fill the remaining spots.
2. If the symposium organized by Mirarab, Pokorny, and Warnow would like to present online, I will find a moderator and ensure that the presenters are aware of the Code of Conduct.

### **Specifics on each SSB event for the canceled 2020 meeting**

*Symposium 1: “PhyloCode 2020: Naming the Tree of Life”*

Organizers: Nico Cellinese and Michael Donoghue

*Response:* strongly preferred to wait until 2021 Albuquerque meeting

*Symposium 2: “How do we make decisions about data and analyses in systematic biology? It depends!”*

Organizers: Natya Hans, Alexandra Hernandez, and Chloe Nash

*Response:* preferred to wait until 2021 Albuquerque meeting

*Workshop 1: “Using simulations to learn about data on phylogenetics and comparative studies”*

Organizers: Daniel Caetano

*Response:* preferred not to present in an online form. I need to contact Daniel to see if he would like to present this workshop at the 2021 meetings.

*Workshop 2: “Robust tree inference from large phylogenomic datasets”*

Organizers: Siavash Mirarab, Lisa Pokorný, and Tandy Warnow

*Response:* Still open to presenting the talk portion of this workshop sometime in the late summer of Fall. Now that the dates of the ECR<sup>2</sup> event are set, I need to get back in touch with them to see if they want to go ahead with an online event, or postpone until 2021. The “hands-on” portion of their workshop would be easier to do in person, but their source of participant funds may not be available as late as 2021.

#### ***Ad hoc funding requests***

No requests since I have become the program director. I did not find any pending funding requests in the e-mail log for the [programdirector@systematicbiologists.org](mailto:programdirector@systematicbiologists.org) account.