



Women in Science and Engineering Initiative
McMaster University

Year End Report 2012-2013



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THE MCMASTER WISE INITIATIVE

The WISE Initiative was formed after a survey of female graduate students conducted during the summer of 2006 revealed a strong need for a forum at McMaster University in which female graduate students can identify, discuss, and learn about gender-related issues specific to their field of work and study.

Mission:

The McMaster Women in Science and Engineering (WISE) Initiative is an integrated network of academics and professionals in science and engineering, whose mission it is to support, celebrate and advocate women in science and engineering at McMaster University.

Objective & Strategy:

Our main objectives are to create a supportive network of female mentors, increase issue-specific education for students, and facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and communication. The WISE Initiative uses a multifaceted approach, through:

Support:

- Networking: Social events and mentor list
- Fostering academics: Professional development workshops and our annual multi-disciplinary research conference (CREST)
- Showcasing research by female students in science or engineering

Celebration:

- Movie nights showcasing women in science
- Invited speakers (female industry leaders and academics)

Advocacy:

- Instigating and facilitating discussion with senior administrations regarding women in science and engineering
- Communicating with other WISE groups across Canada



2012-2013 WISE INITIATIVE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Department	Email
Mackenzie Becker	Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour	beckem2@mcmaster.ca
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Molly Pottruff	Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour	pottrum@mcmaster.ca
Talena Rambarran	Chemistry and Chemical Biology	rambart@mcmaster.ca

For a directory of the 2013-2014 Steering Committee, see Appendix 3.



WISE INITIATIVE EVENTS (2012-2013)

Meet n' Mingle Reception - for Students & Faculty (October 23, 2012)

Graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and faculty in the sciences and engineering were invited to attend a reception held at the new Phoenix Bar & Grill. This event was co-hosted with the School of Graduate Studies who generously sponsored the reception. The main objectives of the event were to provide a networking opportunity for students and faculty in different departments, to promote the WISE Initiative as well as recruit new members, and to highlight the mentor program. The reception was well attended and well received.

Planetarium Show (November 20, 2012)

All interested students and faculty were invited to attend a private showing of 'Life in the Universe 2: The Search' at the McMaster University W. J. McCallion Planetarium.

Meet n' Mingle 2 Reception - for Students & Faculty (January 23, 2013)

Graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and faculty in the sciences and engineering were invited to attend a reception held at the new Phoenix Bar & Grill. This event was co-hosted with the School of Graduate Studies who generously sponsored the reception. The main objectives of the event were to provide a networking opportunity for students and faculty in different departments, to promote the WISE Initiative as well as recruit new members, and to highlight the mentor program. The reception was well attended and well received.

WISE TED Talk Night (February 27, 2013)

Two hours of top-rated, inspirational TED talks by influential female scientists, engineers, and leaders. The event was open to all and dinner was provided.

WISE Current Research in Engineering, Science, and Technology (CREST) Annual Meeting (April 5-6, 2013)

Our 7th annual research conference, formerly the WISE International Women's Day Conference, was held on Friday April 5th and Saturday April 6th 2012. The conference program included an exceptional keynote speaker, two workshops, two career panels, as well as oral presentations. Approximately forty presenters, both female and male, participated in the conference, including students from neighbouring universities. Approximately 100 people attended the conference.

Below are the highlights of the events at the conference. A detailed event summary can be found in the conference proceedings, which are available on request or via our website.



WISE Current Research in Engineering, Science, and Technology (CREST) Annual Meeting (*continued*)

Keynote Speakers

We were very excited to host Dr. Marilyn L. Fogel as our keynote speaker this year.

Dr. Fogel is internationally recognized as a pioneer in the use of stable isotopes for understanding fundamental processes in ecology, paleoclimatology, biogeochemistry and astrobiology. Her work includes investigating how life originated on Earth as well as assessing signatures of life which can be used to determine if and how life might have originated and functioned on other solar system bodies such as Mars. Dr. Fogel has published over 150 papers in refereed journals and books. She was a senior staff scientist at the Carnegie Institution of Washington's Geophysical Laboratory from 1979 until 2012. Dr. Fogel is a member of National Research Council's Space Studies Board, a founding member of the Committee studying the Origin and Evolution of Life, and a Co-Investigator on Jet Propulsion Laboratory's and Carnegie Institution of Washington's NASA Astrobiology teams.

Research Presentations

The conference featured oral presentation sessions by approximately forty students from different faculties. The talks were judged by post-doctoral and faculty volunteers based on clarity of presentation and ability to communicate to a general science audience. Two winners were recognized with prizes made possible through our funding.

Oral Presentation Winner:

Alyssa Cobb, McMaster University, Physics and Astronomy

Workshops and Career Panels

This year we had two workshops and two career panels at the CREST conference. The first workshop was on the topic of anxiety and depression in graduate school. Led by psychologist Dr. Nathan J. Cooper, this workshop aimed to teach participants about using cognitive behavioural therapy as a framework for understanding the interaction between situations, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. The second workshop was on the topic of using social media to build a women's network. Presented McMaster alumni career coach Dr. Catherine Maybrey, this workshop discussed the benefits of LinkedIn and Twitter and provided practical tips for maximizing and managing one's online presence. Additionally, we presented two very popular career panels discussing career opportunities within academia as well as "outside the Ivory Tower". Our seven female panelists shared their personal experiences and offered invaluable advice for charting a unique career path.

See Appendix 2 for a list of WISE Initiative events from 2006-2013.



FINANCIAL REPORT (2012-2013)

The WISE committee approached various internal and external sources to raise the necessary funds to cover our budget. We were thrilled to receive many positive words of encouragement for our initiative. Even in these difficult economic times, we were able to raise approximately \$6,000. **A full list of our 2012-2013 Sponsors can be found in Appendix 1.**

The committee worked hard throughout the year to ensure that our expenses did not exceed the budgeted cost for our activities. Much of the budget was put aside for the conference, and as a result less money was spent on other events.

TABLE 1: General Expenses (2012-2013)

	Item Total
Administrative (e.g., advertising, supplies)	\$132.00
Social Events (see list of WISE events, pp. 3).	\$1,164.00
Meet n' Mingle Reception*	\$0.00
WISE CREST Annual Meeting	\$11,015.80 (see Table 2)
Subtotal (without conference):	
	\$1,296.00
Total Expenses:	
	\$12,311.80

**Sponsored by the School of Graduate Studies*

TABLE 2: Expenses for WISE CREST Annual Meeting (2012-2013)

	Description	Item Total
Administrative	Advertising, room and equipment rentals	\$97.50
Food Services	Breakfast, lunch, wine & cheese social, coffee	\$5,849.07
Finishing Touches	Workshop and keynote speaker gifts, prizes	\$467.25
Conference Package	Conference bags and proceedings	\$2,963.17
Travel	Flight, hotel, and travel expenses for the keynote speaker	\$1,638.81
Total Conference Costs:		\$11,015.80



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We will continue to host professional development workshops, provide an opportunity for student research presentations, and aim to attract international keynote speakers for CREST 2014. Our goal for 2014 is to increase conference attendance via an assertive advertising campaign.

Throughout the year, we will provide a mix of networking and professional development opportunities at our monthly social events. This year WISE will be teaming up with Let's Talk Science in a community outreach project to engage young girls in science and engineering and access the factors that influence girls choosing to pursue science and engineering studies. This endeavour will consist of hosting a free of charge science and engineering camp on campus for girls in grades 6 and 9, utilizing questionnaires before and after the activities to measure any changes in the attitude toward science and engineering as a result of the small group female only learning environment. Please see WISE's 2013-2014 Prospectus for a list of upcoming monthly events.



APPENDIX 1

WISE INITIATIVE 2012-2013 SPONSORS

The 2012-2013 WISE Initiative steering committee would like to extend their great appreciation to the following McMaster sponsors, without whom our goals would be impossible to achieve. We would also like to thank Vanessa Hayward from the School of Graduate Studies, and the wonderful office staff in the Departments of Chemical Engineering, Chemistry & Chemical Biology, and Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour.

Diamond: >\$1000

School of Graduate Studies

Platinum: \$1000

Faculty of Engineering
McMaster Origins Institute

Gold: \$500-\$999

Department of Chemical Engineering
Department of Mathematics & Statistics
Department of Psychology, Neuroscience & Behaviour

Silver: \$250-\$499

Department of Biomedical Engineering
Department of Material Science & Engineering
Department of Mechanical Engineering

Bronze: \$100-\$249

Department of Chemistry & Chemical Biology
Department of Civil Engineering
School of Geography & Earth Sciences

Other

Titles Bookstore



APPENDIX 2

WISE INITIATIVE EVENT HISTORY

2012-2013 Events

Meet n' Mingle Reception - for Students & Faculty (October 23, 2012)
Planetarium Show (November 20, 2012)
Meet n' Mingle 2 Reception - for Students & Faculty (January 23, 2013)
WISE TED Talk Night (February 27, 2013)
WISE Current Research in Engineering, Science, and Technology (CREST) Annual Meeting (April 5-6, 2013)

2011-2012 Events

Student/Faculty "Meet & Mingle" Reception (September 14, 2011)
Movie & TED Talk Night (October 19, 2011)
WISE Colloquium (November 16, 2011)
WISE Charity Trivia Night (December 7, 2011)
Planetarium Show (January 18, 2012)
WISE Initiative 2012 CREST Conference (March 2nd & 3rd, 2012)
WISE TED Talk Night (April 18, 2012)
'Muffins n Mentors' (November 30, 2010 - January 14, 2011)
'Muffins n Mentors' - Dr. Terri Lewis (October 26, 2011)
- Dr. Leyla Soleymani (December 5, 2011)

2010-2011 Events

Welcome Pub Night (September 15, 2011)
Student/Faculty "Meet & Mingle" Reception (October 20, 2010)
TED Talk Night (November 17, 2010)
'Muffins n Mentors' (November 30, 2010 - January 14, 2011)
"1 Piece of Advice" (December 8, 2010)
Planetarium Show (January 20, 2011)
"A Treatment for Death by PowerPoint" (March 3, 2011)
WISE Initiative 2011 CREST Meeting (March 11-12, 2011)
'Muffins n Mentors' - Dr. Robin Cameron and Dr. Alison Sills (November 30, 2010)
- Dr. Laurel Trainor and Dr. Sue Becker (January 14, 2011)
- Dr. Sheila Singh (March 3, 2011)



APPENDIX 2 (continued)

2009-2010 Events

WISE Student/Faculty Meet & Mingle (October 29, 2009)
WISE Dinner and Movie Night, "Water" (November 10, 2009)
WISE Potluck and Movie Fundraiser (December 2, 2009)
WISE Initiative 2010 International Women's Day Conference (March 5-6, 2010)

2008-2009 Events

WISE Movie Night, "The Women" (April 8, 2009)
WISE Initiative 2009 International Women's Day Conference (March 6-7, 2009)
WISE Mentor Event (December, 2008)
WISE Movie Night, "Asking Different Questions: Women and Science" (November 10, 2008)
Welcome Social at the Hub (October 29, 2008)

2007-2008 Events

WISE Initiative 2008 International Women's Day Conference (March 7 & April 19, 2008)
Movie Night, "Gorillas in the Mist" (February 7, 2008)
WISE Initiative Colloquium 2007: Fall Term
Movie Night, "Proof" (November 21, 2007)
WISE Initiative Social at the Hub (September 18, 2007)

2006-2007 Events

WISE Initiative International Women's Day Conference (March, 2007)
WISE Initiative Colloquium 2006-07: Fall Term
WISE Initiative Colloquium 2006-07: Winter Term
WISE Initiative Round Table Conference, (September, 2006)



APPENDIX 3

2013-2014 WISE INITIATIVE STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Department	Email
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