

Speaking of Science 2011 - Report

The annual Speaking of Science conference for research students in the sciences took place on Thursday 5th May 2011 in the Graduate Centre at Cardiff University and attracted 48 students from various schools. Once again, the event was a huge success and was enjoyed by all who attended.

Run in conjunction with the University Graduate College, this popular conference provided a valuable opportunity for postgraduates to give talks and present posters across a wide range of subjects and disciplines, and to find out about research being pursued in other science schools.

The conference opened with guest speaker Dr Rhys Jones, a reptile specialist, environmental consultant and researcher, whose talk was entitled 'PhD, a journey (and what to do when you get there)'.

There were 22 talks throughout the day given by students from various schools including MEDIC, PHYSX, ENGIN, BIOSI, OPTOM, COMSC, PSYCH, EARTH, DENTL and SOHCS. 16 posters were also presented and were of a very high quality.

The day ended with a cheese and wine social, during which prizes were presented as follows:

Oral Presentations

Room A

1st Prize (£100): Paulina Bravo, MEDIC

2nd Prize (£50): Paul Rimmer, SOHCS

Room B

1st Prize (£100): Marisol Vazquez, BIOSI

2nd Prize (£50): Georgina Powell, PSYCH

People's Choice Prizes

Poster (£50) – Sian Morgan, OPTOM

Talk (£50) – Rachel Kent, PSYCH

Poster Presentations

1st Prize (£50): Victoria Robertson, BIOSI

2nd Prize (£25): Matthew Dray, BIOSI

The conference was organised by staff from the University Graduate College and the following students:

David Maidment (Cardiff School of Psychology)

Sara Alsadani (Welsh School of Architecture)

Jessica Steventon (Neuroscience)

Katerina Mylona (Cardiff School of Dentistry)

Manjunath Balehosur (Cardiff School of Engineering)
Leila Duarte (Cardiff School of Biosciences)
Steven Gardner (Cardiff School of Optometry)
Kate Walker (Cardiff School of Earth Sciences)
Joanna Zajac (Cardiff School of Physics)
Hanan Khalil (Cardiff School of Healthcare Studies)

Feedback from the Conference

'A very relaxing environment to give a talk and discuss work with a varied group'

'It was great to see the range of research that goes on in the University. Also an opportunity to make links with different departments'

'A very organised and informative, relaxed environment'

'A comfortable environment to prepare you for a larger conference'

'A broad-ranging conference for a day of refreshing science explained in an easy-to-understand way'

**If you would like to get involved with Speaking of Science 2012, please email
UGC@cf.ac.uk**

Being involved in its organisation is a valuable and enjoyable experience. The time commitment allows for almost any first or second year postgraduates to be involved with the organising committee, who have full reign over all conference details. The process allows you to see firsthand what needs to be considered when organising a conference but in the safe knowledge that there is a strong level of support provided by the experienced staff in the University Graduate College Office.

Not only will being involved develop your organisational skills but it also gives you the opportunity to look more critically at your peer's work judging both posters and talk presentations. For the majority of postgraduates, including myself, this is the first opportunity for this and it's an extremely useful learning exercise.

Furthermore, there is also the opportunity to meet people from other Graduate Schools whom, usually, you would have very little contact with. This is demonstrated in the fact that all but one Academic School was represented in this year's SoS event and in my opinion this is one of the unique features of SoS.

Finally, I really can't speak highly enough of this event and I warmly recommend being involved in whatever capacity you can!

'Charles Cox - PhD student, PHRM'