

Group A's remarks at the 2009 GEM4 Summer School's Graduation Ceremony

delivered by Paul Simonson

Group A would like to thank the organizers of GEM4 for putting together a fantastic summer school program. To begin with, we had many lovely lectures on the micro and nano. We now speak fluently of microfluidics, we integrate integrins in our casual conversations, we know the finer points of FIONA, we no longer feel tense about the tensegrity model, we have tweaked our knowledge of tweezers, and we no longer fret about FRET. Indeed, our dendritic spines and neural synapses have multiplied, and it is with some regret that our cells must migrate back to our laboratories of origin, but we find some comfort in knowing that our friendships will live on as long as Facebook is functional. Furthermore, we would like to thank the organizing committee for the never-ending supply of cookies, without which we would be in danger of auto-digestion.

Now, we would like to briefly recount some of the experiences of Group A:

In our cell culture module, we learned how to transfect cells and image actin filaments. Some of the lab members were concerned about the biosafety of the lab module until the lab instructors said that there was no concern and that we could probably drink the cell culture and be okay. One of the group members later reported that the cell culture tasted pretty good.

In the microfluidics lab, we learned that neutrophils migrate in a chemokine gradient. We also learned that some group members have a fear of blood. One member in particular had to be supported to keep from fainting and exclaimed that drawing blood was much worse than dissecting the rat tails at home. Needless to say, this group member plans to stay out of the clinic in the future.

It is with some regret that we report that one of the members mistook "real-time polymerase chain reaction" for "real-time rest and relaxation." However, upon further investigation, it was discovered that Table 3 bribed the dean of veterinary sciences to dope this student's ice cream with extra tryptophan in an effort to garner more rewards for best PCR reactions.

Regarding the speed "research exchange of ideas session," Group A was in fact able to see through Jimmy Hsia's very *thinly* veiled speed dating session. He had clearly put together this session to help his engineering friends find a date for Friday night. Notwithstanding our knowledge of this plot, we would like to report to you that this plan did work: we are happy to announce three engagements. However, due to Proposition 8, one of these will not be finalized until the parties return to Spain*.

* Please note that group A would like to make it *clear* (in case you were not sure) that this was just a joke. ☺

Again, we would like to thank the organizing committee for organizing this great summer school. We would like to show a token of our appreciation by presenting them with this plaque (present plaque).