

# Physiology and Pharmacology

## April 2022 Newsletter

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Hello everybody,

Before you think that your chair developed some artistic talent all of a sudden, I want to acknowledge our digital intern Priya Modi for designing this new newsletter template (with help from Anita and Cheryle). Wonderful job, thank you Priya!

As the last exams of the academic term happen, I also want to thank everyone for your contributions to our teaching mission this year. Once again there were many challenges, and once again we excelled at meeting them through the dedicated work of our undergraduate team, our instructors, and our TAs. Your hard and brilliant work is appreciated!

And while we are wrapping up this academic year, my annual workload meetings with all faculty members have begun. For me this is a great opportunity to catch up with all of you, especially those that I don't see on a regular basis. And of course we use these meetings to plan for the next year. As mentioned a few times, our BMSc enrollment will increase substantially, meaning that there will be additional demands on our teaching. I am looking forward to everyone being open to and receptive of my requests!!

The upcoming summer term always is a great opportunity to catch up on research and I hope most of you will be able to do this. I do look forward to this. We will also complete our self study over the next few weeks and share it widely. A great opportunity to reflect on where we are as a department and where we want to go. On this and all over topics, I welcome any feedback, as always.

All the best! Frank

# Welcome

Department of Physiology and Pharmacology is pleased to welcome new members:

- ✧ Sergio Novi Junior – Post Doctoral Associate with Adrian Owen
- ✧ Sheri Saunders – Research Technician with Rennian Wang

## Congratulations

- ✧ To Peter Stathopoulos and Brian Corneil on their Schulich Education Award
- ✧ To Fabiana Crowley on her Schulich Leader Award
- ✧ To Rithwik Ramachandran and Christopher Pin on receiving Dean's Award of Excellence
- ✧ To Cheryle Séguin for receiving funding from the Collaborative Research Seed Grants (CRSG) program at Schulich Medicine & Dentistry
- ✧ To Anita Woods on her Alumni of Distinction Award
- ✧ To Cheryle Séguin on receiving the Vice-Provost Award for Excellence in Collaborative Teaching
- ✧ To David Hess on his reappointment as the Sheldon H. Weinstein Endowed Chair in Diabetes Research at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
- ✧ Congratulations to Zachary Easton for completing his PhD thesis entitled "The Impact of Excess Nutrients, Fatty Acids or Glucose, on BeWo Placental Trophoblast Metabolic Function" (Tim Regnault lab)
- ✧ To Oana Birceanu, Stefan Everling, Dale Laird, Van Lu, and Andrew Pruszinsky on their NSERC Discovery Grants and to Cheryle Séguin and team on their NSERC RTI Grant (good month for Cheryle it seems). Special shoutout to Oana and Van for their first tri agency grants, on their first attempt! Well done!

## Undergraduate Studies Update

We are grateful for the end of term and wanted to thank you all for your ability to adapt as our second semester took some turns with online and then in-person teaching. Also, thank you for your diligence in getting your final grades submitted on time to Michele so that students can be adjudicated for graduation.



We will be holding a year-end undergraduate teaching debrief meeting in mid-May to discuss the challenges and opportunities we have each experienced in our courses. We hope to learn from each other and chat about our plans for the upcoming 2022-2023 academic year. Look for an invitation to provide your availability so that we can select a time where most of you can attend. Our intention is to plan a virtual meeting, so it is more accessible for more people who wish to attend.

Like last year, we expect our Honour's Thesis Course to be highly sought after. In our previous academic year, we were able to offer 76 positions to fourth year students, but had to decline 95 interested, qualified students. Expect an email in mid-May to request how many students you would be able/willing to train, so that we can plan the next year's course size appropriately.

Lastly, we know that there will be an increased demand for our third-year courses, particularly with increased demand for our Physiology & Pharmacology 3000E lab course. To accommodate the larger incoming BMSc undergraduate class, the lab course will be expanded to run 3 sessions per week, instead of 2 sessions. We recognize that this will increase the workload of our faculty participants in an academic year so it will become even more essential that there is a collective responsibility of all members to contribute to the lab course. The plan is that faculty members will participate every other year, to help with the time needed to properly offer an engaging lab experience. We believe that there is great value in providing an excellent lab learning experience to foster science curiosity in our students and faculty participation is an essential component.

## Graduate Studies Update

A final reminder that with the transition to Summer Term graduate students should be aware that the GTA portion of their stipend will end from May 1 through August 31, unless they hold an additional TA position through the summer term.

Summer term is the busiest for thesis exams in our Department and across campus. Please support our students by attending thesis seminars that occur over the summer months. Please also consider acting as an Exam Chair for PhD Examinations in other Departments; these request notifications are sent out periodically by SGPS.

## Research Committee Update



Mark your calendars! We have a special Cardiovascular Journal Club virtual presentation scheduled for Thursday May, 26th at 12:00 – 1:00 pm. Our speaker will be Zhong Wang, Associate Professor in the Department of Cardiac Surgery, University of Michigan. The title of Dr. Wang's seminar is "Dissecting a post-translational modification code in cardiac reprogramming". Please send an email message to Peter

Stathopoulos if you would like your name added to the Cardiovascular Journal Club mailing list, in order to receive the Zoom link information for this and future presentations.

Keep an eye out for details regarding our upcoming summer term Lunch and Learn session. Our speaker will be Kathleen Hill (Departments of Biology and Computer Science). The presentation topic will be on Machine Learning in Biomedical Research. Please send any suggestions for future Lunch and Learn sessions to Peter Stathopoulos or Penny Sim.

Tiffany Zhao (undergraduate student) will continue her work updating faculty biographies over the summer term. If you would like to have your bio updated right away, please let Peter Stathopoulos know and he will arrange for Tiffany to contact you.

## EDIAD Committee Updates

The Department and the EDIAD Committee are working on developing an EDIAD website that will provide updates, general information and resources to all Department personnel.

Analysis of responses from the January 2022 survey has been concluded. A full report with recommendations will be produced.

The EDIAD Committee will work with the Seminars Committee to host a yearly seminar specifically focused on EDIAD-related matters. Suggestions and input are welcome.

## Health and Safety Committee Updates

We had inspections on April 14th, they went really well, thank you all for continuing to work safely! A few recommendations and reminders that were discussed during the inspection:

1. Chemicals and hazardous products are to be labelled as per the current WHMIS standard. Please replace old version of WHMIS labels with the purple border workplace label as needed
2. Configure appliances (coffee makers, fridges, microwaves, tea kettles and toasters) to be powered directly from a permanent outlet if used in office areas. Power bars can be used for computers, monitors and charging phones.

As we welcome new additions to our laboratories, summer volunteer and work study students, please remember that these positions need to be appointed through our department main office AND new appointees need to complete all required health and safety training. Information on training can be found here <https://www.uwo.ca/hr/learning/required/index.html>. All roles must complete all modules under “Required Training for all roles” as well as “Covid-19: Return to Campus Essentials” and “Mental Health Interactive Learning Module”. Laboratory workers should also complete “Laboratory Safety and Hazardous Waste Management” and “Biosafety” depending on the needs of their role in your laboratory.

Please note: as per Western’s latest announcement on April 21st, we will continue to mask in indoor spaces until further notice. You are required to wear your mask at all times when working in laboratories and common spaces unless you are eating and drinking. Thank You.

## Upcoming Seminars

### The Department of Physiology and Pharmacology

#### 2022 Spring Series

All lectures will be held at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom



**Date:** Monday, May 2

**Speaker:** Christopher Pin, PhD  
Professor, Physiology and Pharmacology,  
Oncology and Paediatrics, Western University

**Title:** "A living biobank for personalized medicine in pancreatic cancer"

**Host:** Rithwik Ramachandran



**Date:** Monday, May 9

**Speaker:** Kun Ping Lu, MD, PhD  
Western Research Chair in Biotherapeutics,  
Professor of Biochemistry, and Scientist of Robarts Research Institute

**Title:** "Pin1-Catalyzed Conformational Regulation for Early Diagnosis and Treatment of Dementia and Cancer"

**Host:** Chris Pin



**Date:** Monday, May 16

**Speaker:** Susan Logue, PhD  
Assistant Professor, Department of Human Anatomy and Cell Science, University of Manitoba

**Title:** "The Unfolded Protein Response in Health and Disease"

**Host:** Rithwik Ramachandran



**Date:** Monday, May 30

**Speaker:** Ying Wang, PhD  
Assistant Professor, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, University of British Columbia

**Title:** "TBA"

**Host:** Rithwik Ramachandran

This Seminar Series is Sponsored by the Mogenson Trust.  
Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry

A full list of the Winter/Spring seminars can be found at:

[https://www.schulich.uwo.ca/physpharm/about\\_us/seminar\\_schedule.html](https://www.schulich.uwo.ca/physpharm/about_us/seminar_schedule.html)