

Physiology and Pharmacology

May 2023 Newsletter

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Hello everybody,

It looks like summer has arrived – maybe not according to the calendar, but we have summer weather, and the campus has settled into its quiet summer mode. I hope you can enjoy the calmer days, focus on your research and other priorities, and also plan some time off campus. Please note our Potluck Picnic on June 12 at Gibbons Park.

Meanwhile, we are tying up workload planning and preparing for the new way of performance evaluation for faculty members. Preparations are also underway for departmental leadership come July 1; we will notify everyone as soon as possible. Rest assured the Department will be taken care of.

Finally, I want to thank Dan Hardy for representing the Department at Tutis Vilis' Celebration of Life. Tutis made many important contributions within and beyond our Department, and it is great to see him celebrated.

Enjoy your June!

Frank

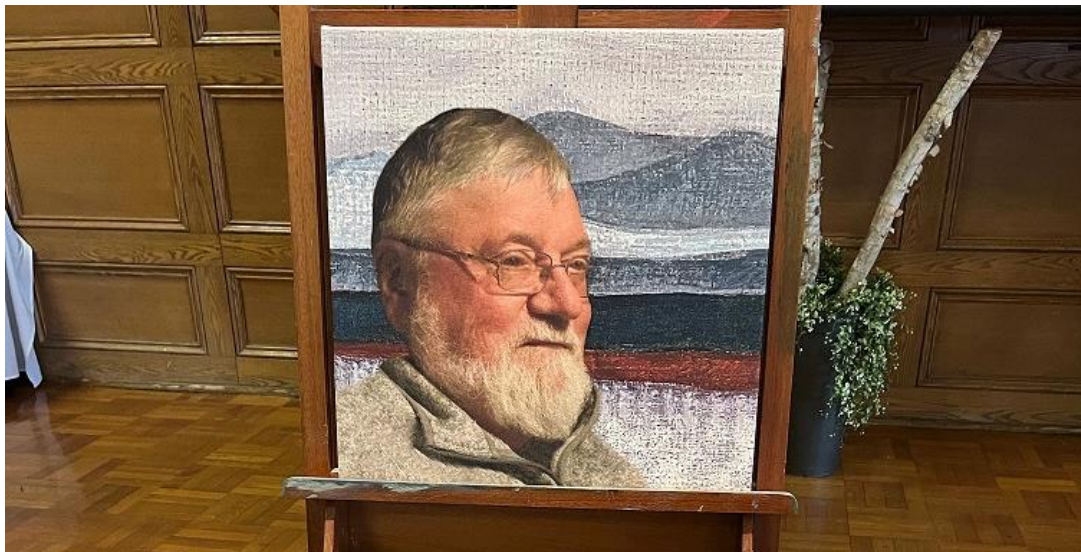
Welcome

- ✧ To our new graduate student:
 - Faizan Chauhan –Vania Prado/Marco Prado
- ✧ To our new postdoctoral associate:
 - Hadir AlQot – Jane Rylett
- ✧ To all of our summer research students and volunteers

Congratulations

- ✧ To our Faculty Award Winners:
 - Andrew Pruszynski – Faculty Scholar
 - Nicole Campbell – Edward G. Pleva Award for Excellence in Teaching
 - Stefan Everling – Dean's Award of Excellence, Research
 - Wataru Inoue – Schulich Excellence in Education Award, Undergraduate
 - Christine Bell – Schulich Excellence in Education Leader Award, Undergraduate
 - Nica Borradaile – Schulich Excellence in Education Leader Award, Graduate/Postgraduate
- ✧ To graduate students for the completion of their degrees:
 - Davika Jaywardena – PhD (Sean Gill)
 - Renee Pang – MSc (Michael Rieder)
- ✧ To our Graduate Student Award Winners:
 - OGS Award**
 - Zina Abdin (Mark Chandy/Grace Parraga)
 - Jennifer Carleton (Tom Drysdale)
 - Danielle Colussi (Peter Stathopoulos)
 - Emma Graham (Rudolph Veldhuizen)
 - Ermina Hadzic (Frank Beier)
 - Sergiu Lucaciu (Dale Laird)
 - Sukanthathulse Uthayabalan (Peter Stathopoulos)
 - Aminmohamed Manji (Sean Gill)
 - CGSM Award**
 - Arine Pawakian (Peter Stathopoulos)
 - Agnes Terek (David Hess/Lauren Flynn)
 - Ryleigh Van Neck (Qingping Feng)
 - Fang Chi Wang (Cheryle Seguin)
 - CGSD Award**
 - Mohammed Ellakany (Don Welsh)
 - Kendrick Lee (Dan Hardy)
 - Dr. Suzanne M. Bernier Memorial Award in Skeletal Biology**
 - Ermina Hadzic (Frank Beier)
 - Lindau nominee and Gold Medalist**
 - Aminmohamed Manji (Sean Gill)

Celebration of Life for Tutis Vilis



On Sunday, May 7th, Western University honoured Physiology and Pharmacology Professor Emeritus Dr. Tutis Vilis with a Celebration of Life at the Great Hall. Colleagues, friends, and family were on hand to provide great tributes to his wonderful legacy in research and teaching. They also spoke to his love for his family and community, his passion for the arts, and his devotion for protecting the environment. Dr. Vilis' artwork was highlighted as well.



Undergraduate Studies Update

Congratulations to all our graduating students! Convocation for undergraduate students graduating from the Basic Medical Sciences program will take place on Tuesday June 20th at 10 AM. Thank you in advance to the volunteers from our department who help serve on this day to help making convocation a success. We will be recognizing our Gold Medal Award winners in an afternoon program, where the names of these awardees will be officially published, and undergraduate students honored at that time.



As we plan for the upcoming academic year, our year end undergraduate program meeting, June 1st, will discuss changes that will affect our plans for subsequent years of teaching. This includes the last year of using our current learning management system (LMS), Sakai, to the move to a new platform, which will fully in use by the summer of 2024. The demand for our courses and the modules within our department remain high, so with that, we will continue to plan for delivering quality education, within the demands for spaces in our courses.

A reminder to all faculty, that you will be asked to submit brief descriptions of research projects for our incoming fourth year thesis program undergraduate students. Dr. Zach Easton will be coordinating the summer organization, in preparation for the fall/winter term, so please look out for those requests from him over the next few weeks.

Graduate Studies Update

With summer coming, please remember the importance of graduate student time off to support personal and/or family wellness. Please see the SGPS policy below for details.

Regulation 4.10 TIME AWAY FROM STUDIES and VACATION TIME

Full-time graduate students in research-based programs are expected to be active in their program for all three terms of the university year, as specified in Section 4.03. While engaging in their program, we recognize that personal time (i.e. time away from studies) is beneficial for student health, well-being and academic achievement. It is acceptable and expected that Supervisors, Supervisory Committee Members and Graduate Chairs will discuss expectations around students' study and research schedules; they will mentor students and support their need for time off and their pursuit of work/life balance. Time away from studies must take into account the impact on timely progression and the impact on research and other responsibilities.

It is expected that students devote a reasonable number of hours each weekday to study and to research. It is acceptable for students to take days off. In making these time management decisions, it is expected that students will learn to discern when time away from studies supports academic productivity, and when it undermines timely progression.

In addition to the above, students are entitled to be away from their studies and research responsibilities during:

- *the closing of the University from late December until early January*
- *statutory holidays when the University is closed*
- *religious holidays in accordance with University policy*

Graduate students are also entitled to at least two weeks of vacation time from their studies per year.

Research Committee Update

The Research Committee Chairs of the seven basic science departments in Schulich continue to meet regularly. Most recent updates from our meetings:

- ✧ Schulich has set up a core facility working group to define mission-critical core facilities, centralization/merging, fee structures and CFI-JELF strategies
- ✧ Financial support from Schulich for equipment outside any core facility is not forthcoming
- ✧ Schulich equipment aid grants will likely be re-introduced as a mechanism to support smaller equipment repairs/maintenance, where funds will be diverted from the Schulich Collaborative Seed grant program
- ✧ Schulich will be implementing a “standardized” approach to assess research productivity by faculty, through the purchase or design of software that integrates with existing research identification databases (e.g. ORCID, Web of Science, CCV)

- ✧ Schulich recognizes that low graduate student stipends are an issue, yet financial support for increased stipends is unlikely. Any additional graduate stipend support will likely have to come from operating grants

PLEASE NOTE THE DATE CHANGE: The 2023 Department of Physiology and Pharmacology Gowdey Distinguished Lecture and Research Day will now take place on Monday, November 6th, 2023. Our Distinguished Lecturer will be Jennifer Lippincott-Schwartz from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. Dr. Lippincott-Schwartz uses cutting-edge fluorescence imaging-based technologies to study cell polarization, motility, fusion, metabolism, organelle trafficking and other cellular processes to understand how cells communicate in the normal and diseased brain.

Many thanks to Dr. Hiroyuki Igarashi for presenting a very informative May Lunch and Learn workshop on image analysis in fluorescence microscopy. Our next **Lunch and Learn** presentation will take place in the fall. Dr. Oana Birceanu will present a primer on using R for basic statistical analysis in the life sciences. As always, please send your Lunch and Learn topic suggestions to Peter Stathopoulos and Aysha Turgeon.

Tiffany Zhao is continuing her work updating Faculty biographies on the Departmental website this term. Please let Peter Stathopoulos know if you would like your biography updated.

Health and Safety Committee Updates



Tony Hammoud announced his retirement from the position of Health and Safety Consultant here at Western in early May. Many of you know Tony and will have interacted with him over the years. Tony has served Western for 35 years in various areas of health safety including Radiation Safety, Construction Safety, Management of Hazardous Waste, access to Controlled Substances, Transportation of Dangerous Goods, Emergency Response and Biosafety. Tony has been so helpful to our Department over the years in maintaining good health and safety policies. We are

sorry to see Tony leave, but wish him all the best in his retirement. Tony will be around on campus until the end of July, if you haven't had the chance to say goodbye.

With the summer approaching, a reminder to supervisors, staff, volunteers, and students of proper lab attire. This includes:

- Long pants
- Long hair tied back
- Closed toe and heel shoes (no sandals or ballet flats)
- Socks

MSB/DSB located labs had inspections on May 25th, they went very well! Thank you for your hard work and compliance. A few reminders out of this:

- WHIMIS labels must be the new purple and white ones.
- Coffee makers, toasters, microwaves and fridges must be plugged in to the wall outlets, they cannot be on a power bar.
- Eye washes must be purged weekly.

Social Committee Updates



Save The Date for our next social event:

Potluck Picnic

June 12, 2023

12 – 2 PM

Gibbons Park Pavilion (#2 on map)

Rain or shine (hoping for shine obviously)!

Food, outdoor activities and fun!!



If you wish to contribute food, please click [HERE](#) to fill in the spreadsheet.

- ✧ Next fundraiser: Ice cream social Aug 2023 - Following the success of last year's Ice Cream Social, we will again be fundraising for the London Food Bank. Watch for details of this event near the end of summer.
- ✧ Changes to the Social Committee:

Matt Grol will be stepping down as the Social Committee Co-chair in July 2023. Thank you Matt for keeping the Committee going during the last couple of years and spearheading important fundraising initiatives at our social events. Welcome Faraj Haddad for stepping in as the new incoming co-chair.

We are also in the process of updating our Social Committee Membership list. If you are interested in joining the Social Committee to help shape future Departmental events, please reach out to one of the committee co-chairs Van Lu (vl24@uwo.ca) or Faraj Haddad (fhaddad2@uwo.ca). Everyone is welcome!

Winter/Spring Seminar Series

The Department of Physiology and Pharmacology 2023 Winter/Spring Series All lectures will be held at 3:00 p.m. in MSB 384 unless otherwise noted	
	<p>Date: Monday, June 5 (MSB 384 and Zoom)</p> <p>Speaker: Stephanie Wojtowicz, PhD Candidate</p> <p>Title: <i>“Characterizing how 1,4-Dihydropyridines and Functionally Related Compounds Inhibit TGFβ Signalling”</i></p> <p>Host: John DiGuglielmo</p>
	<p>Date: Monday, June 12 (MSB 384 and Zoom)</p> <p>Speaker: Tom Lin, PhD Candidate</p> <p>Title: <i>“Structural and Mechanistic Elucidation of the EF-hand in LETM1 Ca²⁺/H⁺ Antiporter function”</i></p> <p>Host: Peter Stathopoulos</p>
This Seminar Series is Sponsored by the Mogenson Trust. Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry	