

Physiology and Pharmacology

November 2022 Newsletter

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Hello everybody,

It has been a busy few months with lots of stuff going on! It was great to have the Research Day and Stevenson lecture in person again, finally – fantastic posters and presentations, and a very stimulating buzz all day. Thanks to all who helped to organize, as well as to all participants.

The busy schedule will continue with our external review next week. We will distribute the results from that review once we receive them and hope for some constructive feedback to help the Department move forward.

And right after the term is nearing its ends, with final exams, term papers etc. While this will keep many of us occupied, please also check out below for our holiday luncheon and another fundraiser. I hope to see all of you in a less formal setting before the end of the year!

A quick personal update. As many of you know, I am dealing with a rare and weird cancer called Adenoid Cystic Carcinoma. I do have some lung metastasis and while they are slow growing, it has become time to tackle them. I have started chemotherapy with a VEGFR inhibitor about a week ago. I feel very little side effects so far and plan to continue work as usual but can't exclude that I will need to slow down a bit at some point. I appreciate all the moral and practical support from many of you and will continue to include updates here.

All the best!

Frank

Welcome

- ✧ Aysha Terra Turgeon – Administrative Assistant, PhysPharm Admin Office
- ✧ Xiaoyu (Max) Wang – Postdoctoral Associate with Adrian Owen
- ✧ Amr Mousa – Graduate Student Assistant with Rithwik Ramachandran
- ✧ Samantha Jones – Graduate Student Assistant with Christine Bell

Congratulations

- ✧ To the Poster Award Winners from our 2022 Research Day:

J. Malcolm O. Arnold Cardiovascular Award

- Amin Manji - Supervisor: Sean Gill

Cancer and Cell Biology

- Stephanie Wojtowicz - Supervisor: John DiGuglielmo
- Honourable Mention Danielle Colussi - Supervisor: Peter Stathopoulos

Clinical & Basic Pharmacology Award

- Daniel Taylor - Supervisors: Ute Schwarz/Aze Wilson
- Chen Jun Gao - Supervisor: Rithwik Ramachandran

Developmental Biology

- Aswin Sureshkumar - Supervisor: Chris Pin

Reproductive Biology, Endocrinology & Metabolism

- Karly Masse - Supervisor: Van Lu
- Akasham Rajagopaul - Supervisor: Tim Regnault

Neuroscience

- Oren Princz-Lebel - Supervisors: Tim Bussey/Lisa Saksida

Bone & Joint

- Lynn Huong – Supervisors: Tom Appleton /Frank Beier
- Jeffrey Hutchinson - Supervisor: Cheryle Seguin

New Student

- Sanjog Brar - Supervisors: Len Luit/ Rithwik Ramachandran
- Amr Mousa - Supervisor: Rithwik Ramachandran
- Ryleigh Van Neck - Supervisors: Len Luit/ Rithwik Ramachandran

- ✧ To the winners of our Annual Graduate Student awards:

- Bill Bottom Award – McKenzie Carter
- Hari and Gudrun Sharma Award – Mandy Wang
- Esme Walker Award – Zachary Easton
- Gordon J. Mogenson Award – Sergiu Lucaciu
- Margaret P. Moffat Award – Alex Peidl
- George W. Stavrakys Award – Virginia Wolfe
- Physiology and Pharmacology Graduate Student Council (PPGSC) Award – Mandy Wang
- David T. Armstrong Award - Zuleika Leung

- ✧ To graduate students for the completion of their degrees:
 - Kaiyuan Wang – MSc (Qingping Feng)
 - Tianhe Li – MSc (Donglin Bai)
 - Xiaoyi (Jessie) Wang - MSc (Christopher Pin)
 - Jihoon Kwon – MSc (Ute Schwarz)
 - Nazihah Rasiwala – MSc (David Hess)

- ✧ To Adrian Owen on becoming a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

- ✧ To Dan Hardy on winning the 2022 Dr. Joseph Gilbert Research Contribution of the Year Award from Lawson Research.

- ✧ To Nicole Campbell on her OCUFA Teaching Award.

Research Committee Update

The in-person 2022 James A.F. Stevenson Distinguished Lecture and Research Day, held on Tuesday, November 1, 2022, was a huge success! Our keynote speaker was Dr. Tak Mak, Professor of Medical Biophysics and Immunology at the University of Toronto, Director of the Campbell Family Institute for Breast Cancer Research at the Princess Margaret Hospital.

A big thank you to our trainee speaker, Sergiu Lucaciu, faculty speaker Van Lu, all poster presenters (59), judges and captains (39), and admin staff for their help and support organizing, participating in and running this event.

The 2023 Charles W. Gowdey Distinguished Lecture and Research Day will be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2023. More details to follow.

The next virtual Lunch and Learn session will take place on Thursday, January 19, 2023. Our speaker will be Tom Appleton, presentation topic: “Single cell RNAseq and Spatial Transcriptomics”; host: David Hess.

REMINDER: The Research Chairs of the Basic Science Departments in Schulich are creating an inventory/database of research equipment located in these seven Departments. This type of list will be useful for planning future equipment grant applications, when looking for alternatives while awaiting repairs and/or could promote new collaborations, for example. **Please send a list of research equipment, housed in your laboratory, valued at \$50,000 CAD or greater by Friday, December 2, 2022** to Penny Sim (psim@uwo.ca) and Peter Stathopoulos (pstatho@uwo.ca).

Undergraduate Studies Update

We are coming up to the end of our fall semester, which includes final exams for semester's courses and midterms exams for our full year courses. The exam schedule has been posted, and courses have been scheduled to have their exams occur between December 10th and 22nd. Please make sure to have your exams sent to Michele with ample time.

Exam Central would prefer for these to be printed 10 days prior to the exam date. It would help with coordination of all of our exams if finalized copies of the exams were sent to print at least 3 days prior to the exam date. This is particularly essential for sending copies to Accessible Education for students who write with accommodations.



We ask that you have your exams marked and final grades calculated within 7 days of the exam date. For students who are unable to write your exam, we have one departmental makeup exam date, and we have set that for Tuesday, January 10th. Times will be determined depending on how many students you have that require a makeup. As with other evaluations worth 10% or more, students will need to have their absence approved by the academic counselling office.

We are continuing to work on semester 2 OWL sites and will be in touch with each course manager to discuss the details of your course sites, as we prepare for January. Our departmental intern, Meghan, will continue to assist in this process. If you require her help with a technical or visual aspect of your course, feel free to reach out to inquire about her availability.

Graduate Studies Update

The Canada Graduate Scholarships - Master's (CGSM) deadline is December 1, and the Ontario Graduate Scholarships (OGS) competition will open December 7 with a submission deadline of February 1. Please see the SGPS external funding page for details:

https://grad.uwo.ca/finances/external_funding/index.html

For those interested in transferral from the MSc to PhD program, please note that this process requires advisory committee approval and submission of the completed Request for Transfer from Master's to Doctoral Degree Form to SGPS before the end of the fifth term of registration. Given the Western holiday closure and time required to complete the process, we recommend holding advisory committee meetings to approve a transfer no later than the week of December 5.

EDID Committee Updates

The 2021/2022 EDI-D survey reports is now posted on our website (under “Ongoing Departmental and Western Initiatives”:

https://www.schulich.uwo.ca/physpharm/about_us/equity_diversity_inclusion_%20and%20decolonization.html

The EDI-D committee has identified the following actionable items from the EDI-D survey:

- ✧ Create information resources for all department stakeholders (students, post-docs, staffs and faculties) to help them address EDI-D related issues.
- ✧ Updating Department website to add EDI-D related resources.
- ✧ For concerns related to graduate students, team up with Grad Council.

The EDI-D seminar was held as a part of Department seminar series on November 7th. The speakers were Sydney Kruth (Acting Director of Human Rights Office) and Dr. Sukhveer Bains (Acting Associate Dean of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonization)

Health and Safety Committee Updates

Western’s Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee wish to remind faculty, staff, and students that the use of gloves is **prohibited** outside of the laboratory. Further information can be found at: https://www.uwo.ca/hr/safety/topics/protective_equipment.html



[Protective Equipment - Human Resources - Western University](#)

Protective Equipment Glove Selection. The Glove Selection document contains important information about glove selection and use. Eye Protection. This page describes the process for obtaining protective eyewear on campus. There is also a link to the University's Eye Protection Program.

www.uwo.ca

COVID Updates: Masks remain required in educational spaces including board rooms and research labs and continue to be available at all Western libraries. Vaccine booster deadline has been extended to January 9th, 2023. COVID vaccines are available on campus at Thames Hall, room 3189. For more information visit, <https://www.uwo.ca/coronavirus/vaccine.html>.

Reminder that the 2nd floor MSB/DSB First aid contacts are Hailey Hunter and Christie Vanderboor. Regardless of where you are situated, ensure that your laboratory knows the contact and location of a first aid kit in your area.

Social Committee Updates



The social committee is making plans for an in-person holiday luncheon before the holidays. Details to be finalized and distributed soon. Save the date: **Dec 9th, afternoon.**

We will also once again be fundraising for local charities:

✧ **London Food:** we will distribute collection bins at various locations (outside Department office in Medical Sciences Building, Dental Science Building, Robarts, Victoria Hospital, and St. Joseph's Hospital).

✧ **My Sister's Place:** gift cards or cash donations will be collected in the Department office.

If you have suggestions for future Departmental social events or would like to join the committee, please reach out to one of the committee co-chairs Matt Grol (mgrol2@uwo.ca) or Van Lu (vlu24@uwo.ca).

Special Updates

✧ Congratulations to Dr. Cheryle Séguin on securing Taylor Swift concert tickets for her daughter!

Fall Seminar Series

The Department of Physiology and Pharmacology 2022 Fall Series All lectures will be held at 3:00 p.m. in MSB 384 unless otherwise noted	
	<p>Date: Monday, November 21 (hosted online via Zoom)</p> <p>Speaker: Karen Echeverri, PhD Associate Scientist, Bell Center for Regenerative Biology and Tissue Engineering, Marine Biological Laboratory, University of Chicago</p> <p>Title: <i>"Molecular mechanisms of regeneration: insights from axolotls"</i></p> <p>Host: Gregory Kelly</p>
	<p>Date: Monday, November 28 (hosted online via Zoom)</p> <p>Speaker: Filip Bednar, MD, PhD Assistant Professor, Department of Surgery, University of Michigan</p> <p>Title: <i>"Tuning the pancreatic cancer immune response"</i></p> <p>Host: Christopher Pin</p>
	<p>Date: Monday, December 5 (MSB 384 and Zoom)</p> <p>Speaker: Saman Maleki, PhD Assistant Professor, Department of Oncology, Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, and Medical Biophysics, Western University</p> <p>Title: <i>"Microbiome-based strategies to sensitize tumors to immunotherapy"</i></p> <p>Host: Christopher Pin</p>
This Seminar Series is Sponsored by the Mogenson Trust. Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry	