

Physiology and Pharmacology Newsletter

September 2019

Welcome to the latest edition of the Physiology and Pharmacology Newsletter. If you have items for future newsletters, please let me know – fbeier@uwo.ca. Awards, grants, invited lectures, new lab members...

Welcome everyone to the Fall term! A special welcome to our incoming 4980 students as well as all new graduate students and postdocs! I hope I will see all of you at the corn roast this Thursday – if you have not responded, please get in touch with Olga right away.

Another exciting academic year is ahead of us. We are continuing to develop our undergraduate curriculum. As most of you have heard, Anita Woods will be our new Undergraduate Chair and will spearhead this initiative. Thanks a lot Anita for stepping up to this important role! Please support Anita in her efforts.

Anita is taking on this leadership role earlier than expected because Brad Urquhart has been appointed Associate Dean for Basic Medical Sciences Undergraduate Education at Schulich. Congrats Brad, you are a perfect fit for this crucial role. We look forward to working with you. And thank you very much for your leadership of our Undergraduate Committee over the last years – below you will find his last undergraduate report.

With Brad becoming a member of the decanal team, Cheryle Seguin will continue as Assistant Chair.

As always, any feedback is welcome.

Frank

Congratulations!!!

- Congratulations to Dan Hardy and team for a three-year grant from Heart and Stroke!
- Congrats to Taylor Schmitz for receiving the 'Young Scientist Lectureship Award' from the International Society for Neurochemistry

To our graduate students for the completion of their degrees:

MSc

- Elizabeth Greco (supervised by Doug Jones and Qingping Feng)
- Saranga Sriranganathan (Lakshman Gunaratnam)
- Gillian Petroff (Sean Cregan)
- Rianne Beach (Dale Laird)
- Jamie Ching (Dale Laird)
- Matthew Borrelli (Marlys Koschinsky)

PhD

- Anish Engineer (Qingping Feng)
- Daniel Lorusso (Jeff Dixon and David Holdsworth)
- Melissa Crawford (Lina Dagnino)

Welcome

To all our new graduate students:

- Malina Barillaro – Rennian Wang
- Andrew Bell – Tom Drysdale
- McKenzie Carter – Tom Appleton and Trevor Birmingham
- Carlene Cihosky – Tim Regnault
- Grace Dionne – Andy Watson
- Michael Dunphy – Marlys Koschinsky
- Mohammed Ellakany – Don Welsh
- Jeffrey Hutchinson – Cheryle Seguin
- Nika Khajehdehi – Julio Martinez-Trujillo
- Sergiu Lacaciu – Dale Laird
- Daniel Lam-Sidun – Nica Borradaile

- Kendrick Lee – Dan Hardy
- Zuleika Leung – Andy Watson
- Aminmohamed Manji – Sean Gill
- Mickenzie Martin – Chris Pin
- Victor Mirka – Rithwik Ramachandran
- Yehia Moharrem – David Hess
- Megan Noble – Peter Stathopoulos
- Carmen Ng – Peter Chidiac
- Meg Schurrman – Rennian Wang
- Christian Sirko – Peter Stathopoulos
- Brent Tschirhart – Qingping Feng

Welcome also to all of our 4th year Honors students!!

Undergraduate Studies Updates

We say this every year but it's amazing how fast the summer goes and now the academic year is literally just around the corner. Classes start on Thursday September 5 and this is also a big day for our undergraduate program as the interviews for 4980 research projects take place that day as well. You should have received your interview time but if you are unsure, please ask Michele and she can clarify for you. The Annual Corn Roast follows interviews and we encourage as many people to attend as possible. This is a great event for our undergraduate students to see the lighter side of our department and get to know their professors, teaching assistants and department staff.

A reminder of a few changes you will see this year in undergraduate education. The term has been reduced from 62 days to 60 days so this will result in most classes losing one or more teaching days. The new self-declared absence policy comes into effect starting September 1. While the reporting portal is not open yet, the general policy is as follows: *"For any absence (except religious and varsity) up to 48 hours for course work 30% and under students will need to use the online self-reporting tool to notify instructors. Students will be allowed 2 missed 48 hour periods per academic year. Beyond two they must see an advisor with official documentation."* We will keep you posted when the process for reporting is finalized. Finally, full week Fall study break will be back again this year but the timing will be changed. Fall study break will be

the week of November 4-8 and you should not expect 4980 students to be in the lab at this time.

Finally, it's my last few days as Undergraduate Chair. I'd like to thank our students, staff and faculty for this great experience. I've learned a lot and working as group I think our undergraduate program is in great shape. I know Anita Woods who will take over in this role on September 1 will be outstanding and I look forward to seeing our program continue to grow under her leadership. ~ Brad

Graduate Studies News

Welcome to all of our new graduate students. Please remember to sign the letter of understanding with your supervisor and GSR.

Please also remember that the New Graduate Student Orientation is being held on September 9th from noon – 1:30 p.m.

Research Committee News

Gowdey Lecture and Department Research Day on November 5, 2019:

Dr. David Nutt informed us last week with an apology that he would not be able to give the 2019 Gowdey Lecture due to a health issue. Members of Research Committee had an emergency meeting with Frank Beier for possible candidates. We were all relieved when Dr. Anne-Claude Gingras accepted Frank's invitation right away to deliver the 2019 Gowdey Lecture. The committee would like to thank Frank for his timely help and Dr. Gingras for accepting our invitation at such short notice.

Dr. Anne-Claude Gingras is a senior investigator at Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute and Professor at University of Toronto. She holds the Canada Research Chair in Functional Proteomics and the Lea Reichmann Chair in Cancer Proteomics. Dr. Gingras is an expert in mass spectrometry-based proteomics, a technology that enable the identification and quantification of proteins from biological samples. She develops tools to better understand how proteins associate with one another to perform their activities. For more details, please visit Dr. Gingras' lab website <http://www.lunenfeld.ca/researchers/gingras>

Internal Speakers for 2019 Department Research Day:

Two internal speakers have been selected by the Research Committee to present at 2019 Department Research Day. They are Pierre Thibeault (PhD Candidate from Ramachandran Lab) and Dr. Andrew Pruszynski, Assistant Professor. Both have agreed to present at the Department Research Day on November 5, 2019. Congratulations to Pierre and Andrew for being selected as this year's internal speakers, and we look forward to their talks.

Calendar

- Thursday Sept. 5 – 4980 interviews and Corn Roast!
- Monday Sept. 23, 2:00 pm – Department Meeting (please note new day and time because of the altered 3rd year lab schedule)
- Tuesday Nov. 5 – Gowdey Lecture and Department Research Day
- Upcoming Physiology and Pharmacology Seminars (3:30 pm in MSB384)
 - Sept. 23 - Kevin Nixon (PhD candidate in Jamie Kramer's lab): *"Mushroom body-specific gene regulation by the SWI/SNF chromatin remodeling complex"*
 - Sept. 30 – Geoff Kerr (PhD candidate in Cheryle Séguin's lab): *"Investigating pathways associated with intervertebral disc degeneration and back pain"*