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Message from the Head of School

Colleagues, the pace of the year has not diminished since our inaugural newsletter and here we are in mid-August. At that time MSC was preparing our first offerings of the Flexible Foundation Year courses to enable 2nd “tri”mester intake and academic recovery form 1st semester. This has now launched successfully with our Foundation Year team ready with online content and student support, and we enrolled new students into those courses. It is indeed intensive for all concerned, and it has identified administrative difficulties dealing with the inter-semester timing for current students. Solutions to that dilemma are not straightforward. The “Griffith Model” terminology has been superseded by Griffith 2020 and I thank everybody involved in placing our School ahead of the game in preparing for this transition. One of the pillars of Griffith 2020 is Employability, and A/Prof Jessica Vanderlelie’s work on employability contributed to her success in being awarded an IRU Vice Chancellor’s Fellowship to engage with 6 universities around this topic and student success. We also saw successes in research acknowledgment with A/Prof Indu Singh receiving the Inaugural Medical Science Researcher of the Year Award, from the Australian Institute of Medical Scientists, and Prof Jiri Neuzil’s group’s landmark paper being selected for a special issue of Cell Metabolism ‘Best of 2015’. An excellent outcome when Cell Metabolism is a highly ranked journal with a 2014 impact factor of 17. Finally, TS-Expo and Open Day have come and gone for another year. Open Day was a busy event, with a lot of traffic through our activities, and capacity audiences for the MSC presentations. Our Student Ambassadors did an amazing job and I thank everybody who gave up time to contribute to those events - let’s hope it translates into increased “Load” in 2017.

Professor Mark Forwood


Sheng Richa, He Yaowu, Sumaira Z. Hasnain, Ran Wang, Hui Tong, Daniel T. Clarke, Rohan Lourie, Iulia Oancea, Kuan Yau Wong, John W. Lumley, Philip Sutton, John D. Hooper, Nigel A. McMillan, Michael A. McGuckin. MUC13 Protects Colorectal Cancer Cells from Death by Activating the NF-κB Pathway and Is a Potential Therapeutic Target. Accepted, Oncogene, May 2016 (IF 8.4)


Zulfiker A.H.M, Good D.A., Grice I.D. and Wei M.Q.

Cane Toad Skin Extract - Induced Upregulation and Increased Interaction of Serotonin 2A and D2 Receptors Via Gq/11 Signaling Pathway in CLU213 Cells’. *Journal of Cellular Biochemistry* Accepted manuscript online: 13 JUN 2016 | DOI: 10.1002/jcb.25627.

Gq/11 Signaling Pathway in CLU213 Cells’. *Journal of Cellular Biochemistry* Accepted manuscript online: 13 JUN 2016 | DOI: 10.1002/jcb.25627.


In the News

Dr James Cuffe

Manuscript title: Adrenal, metabolic and cardio-renal dysfunction develops after pregnancy in rats born small or stressed by physiological measurements during pregnancy.

Authors: Jean . Cheong, James S. M. Cuffe, Andrew J. Jefferies, Karen M. Moritz and Mary E. Wlodek.

Manuscript and media reports from The University of Melbourne, Radio news bulletins reached over 280,000 listeners, Regional QLD newspapers reaching a print audience of just over 50,000, International online coverage, including online health publications

National Centre for Neuroimmunology and Emerging Diseases (NCNED) Prof Sonya Marshall-Gradinsik

A Griffith study into chronic fatigue has found the condition may be caused by cellular impairments.

It is hoped this may lead to a new clinical way to diagnose the condition, giving sufferers a clear diagnosis earlier. The condition effects nearly half a million Australians.

http://www.newshub.co.nz/nznews

http://www.prohealth.com/library/showarticle.cfm?libid=29038

Prof Jiri Neuzil and Dr Lanfeng Dong

2015 paper in *Cell Metabolism* was one of seven selected for a special issue 'Best of Cell Metabolism' in 2015' from approximately 120 papers. In partnership with Professor Mike Berridge from Malaghan Institute of Medical Research in Wellington.
PhDs Awarded

The School would like to congratulate the following students who have been awarded their PhDs during 2016:

Dr Chung Chinh Ngo ‘Microbiology and Immunology of Otitis Media’
Dr Louise See Hoe ‘Mechanisms and Clinical Utility of Sustained Ligand-Activated Preconditioning’
Dr Alisha Khera ‘Selenium Supplementation Protects Placental Trophoblast Cells from Mitochondrial Oxidative Stress’
Dr Vipin Madhavan Thekke Palasseri ‘Molecular Mechanisms Underlying Adhesion and Regulation of Virulence of Human Enterotoxigenic Escherichia Coli’
Dr Samantha Johnston ‘The Application of the International Consensus Criteria to Assess Prevalence of Chronic Fatigue Syndrome / Myalgic Encephalomyelitis in Australia’
Dr Teilah Huth ‘Investigation of cellular and genetic mechanisms required for natural killer cell cytotoxic activity in chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis’
Dr Karishma Sachaphibulkij ‘Molecular Mechanism of Efficient Treatment of Resistant Breast Cancer using Mitochondria - Targeting Compounds’
Dr Caroline Atkinson ‘The Expression of the Prion Protein (Prp) in Common Cancers and its Role in the Metastasis of Breast Cancer and Development of Chemotherapeutic Drug Resistance in Colon and Breast Cancer’
Dr Matthew Cozier ‘Structural and Functional Comparisons of Human and Zebrafish Galectin-1’

PhDs Submitted

The School would also like to congratulate our students who have submitted their theses during 2016: Berwini (Weng) Endaya ‘Detecting proliferating tumour cells for their molecular characterisation’, Paulina Janecek ‘Mechanisms of Gene Regulation in Alcoholism: Role of α-Synuclein in the Pathophysiology of Alcohol Abuse’, Avinash Kundur ‘An investigation into Gilbert’s Syndrome: Role of unconjugated bilirubin in targeting platelet and haemostatic mechanisms to reduce thrombotic risk factors’, Ji Qi ‘Cane Toad Skin Extracts as Anti-Inflammatory and Anti-Cancer Agents’, Onur Sakiragaoglu ‘Strategies for knockdown of genes that promote cancer growth’, Bing Yan ‘Tumour-initiating Cells of ErbB2-high Breast Cancer - Mitochondrial Characterisation and Elimination with Mitochondrially Targeted Vitamin E Succinate’ and Abu Zulfiker “Compound Identification and Functional Characterisation of Cane Toad Skin Extracts”. A great effort and we look forward to watching your careers progress.
MSC HDR Seminar Series
Each month A/Prof Jason Peart and PhD candidate Lauren Wendt coordinate the School of Medical Science Higher Degree Research (HDR) student seminar series, an opportunity for the school’s HDR community to present their research, discuss new and developing methodologies and share the significance of their chosen field. Since 2016, we have incorporated a variety of ‘power’ workshops and courses by various academics and units within our University. These ‘power’ workshops enable HDR students to engage with, and listen to, academics with expertise in various aspects of medical research. They also aim at assisting students in broadening their knowledge and skills while undertaking their research program. So far our HDR and Honours students have had the opportunity to listen to academics provide insights in how to write a literature review and to understand important information surrounding animal ethics and experimentation. A highlight thus far has been the session run by Griffith University’s own “Toastmasters International” club, an organization that helps its members improve their speaking and leadership skills. This highly interactive session was a refreshing change for our HDR students and proved to be a really positive learning experience for everyone who attended.

MSC Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Heat
The MSC Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Heat took place on Monday, 18 July. Our entrants were judged by Deputy Head of School Prof Nigel McMillan, MSC HDR Convenor (and organiser) A/Prof Jason Peart and Flick Baker, Menzies Executive Officer.
PhD student Tia Griffith (left) won with for her presentation 'Inflamed in the brain', closely followed by Evan Pennell with 'The use of antioxidants in platelets stored for transfusion'.

From left: Flick Baker, Nigel McMillan, Tia Griffith and Jason
Scholarships/Grants

Scholarship
Julia-Rose Satre (right), a student of Medical Laboratory Science. Recipient of School of Medical Science Summer Scholarship and the Indigenous Summer Research Scholarship. Winner of the best seminar at the symposium for the Indigenous Summer Research Scholars, "A quantitative approach investigating the role of COUPTFII in steroid hormone synthesis of bovine ovarian follicles".

Honours Scholarships
Congratulations to Jasmin Botonjic, Stanley Du Preez, Lauren Gurney, Matthew Hedge and Daniel McKeating on their Honours Scholarships of $1,000 awarded by the MSC School Executive.

Paper Finishing Grant
After a panel review process, Dr Ayenachew Bezawork-Geleta, Dr Vinod Gopalan, Dr Helen Irving-Rodgers, Dr Ian Peak, Dr Dean Pountney and Dr Harry Sakellaris were each awarded an MSC Paper Finishing Grant of $3000. Congratulations on the award and we look forward to seeing your paper published.

Learning and Teaching

Flexible Foundation Year
The Flexible Foundation Year offerings launched in 2nd Semester with 77 new student enrolments for MSC, and 90 students repeating courses as part of academic recovery. This suggests that there is considerable potential for greater 2nd-trimester intake from 2017 onwards, possibly with some increase in international students, who form a relatively small component of our current enrolment.

Bachelor of Health Science
Vicky Wheeler has navigated the new majors to our Health science program through approval by the Programs Committee. With Dr Ian Peak, A/Prof Anne Roiko, A/Prof Helen Massa and A/Prof Roselyn Rose’ Meyer, they have spent considerable time in getting this exciting initiative ready for accreditation and in establishing new pathways for our Health Science students. The two new majors are Environmental Health and Environmental Toxicology, which will prepare the students for work as a qualified Environmental Health Officer, trained to investigate, evaluate and respond to threats to human and ecosystem health.

Staff Achievements

Dr Ayenachew Bezawork-Geleta
Was awarded a Young Scientists Program Fellowship for the IUBMB Conference in Vancouver in July 2016.
Open Day was very busy on the Gold Coast with large crowds in our labs and capacity audiences for MSC presentations. Prof Mark Forwood would like to thank all of the academic, administrative and technical staff who attended and contributed a great deal of time and effort to promote our school and programs, and particularly Vicky Wheeler (SAO). The TSH (MSC) team ran through a lot of tests, and helped A/Prof Indu Singh to ensure that the Blood Detectives area in the lab was well managed. The Anatomy facility was open for the first time and received close to 300 visits to the Anatomy Learning Centre.

Academic Excellence Society (ACES)

On Tuesday, 9 August, our School officially launched Med Sci ACES (Academic Excellence Society) for our 1st year students from all programs, who achieved a 6 or above in at least two subjects in their 1st semester. We had an amazing turnout at the inaugural Welcome Breakfast held in the Red Zone, with more than 60 students attending.

Special thanks to Professors Forwood and Perkins who welcomed the students, and to A/Prof Massa who coordinates the group and distributed the Med Sci ACES certificates. Thanks also to A/Prof Jenny Wilson, Dr Leanne Kenway, Dr Abdullah Karaksha and the MSC Admin Team who were there to applaud the students on their awards.

It is hoped that this Society will not only recognise our hard-working, high achieving students but will provide a means for them to find support and connections among their peers.

A/Prof Indu Singh
Awarded the *Inaugural Medical Science Researcher of the Year Award* on the 15th July. The Qld Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business Leeanne Enoch, and the Qld Chief Scientist, Geoff Garrett, announced the winners of the AIMS Medical Science Awards for Queensland to recognise and celebrate the excellence of people working in the Medical Science profession.

A/Prof Jessica Vanderlelie
Awarded *Innovative Research Universities (IRU) Vice Chancellor’s Fellow* for 2016-2019. This highly competitive appointment will focus on student and graduate success. Based at Griffith University, under the direction of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic), Jessica will have the responsibility of working with VCs from six of the IRU universities.

Staff Activity

Dr Natalie Colson developed and hosted a workshop for dietitians on ‘Nutrigenomics: Evaluating the Evidence for Clinical Dietetic Practice’ at the National Dietitians Association of Australia’s Melbourne Conference in May. The workshop was booked out shortly after registration opened and was well received by the participants.

Open Day
**Upcoming Events**

**Learning and Teaching Committee**  
Tuesday, 30 August  
11am—12.00pm  
G11_3..50

**CTR (Intensive) Poster Presentation**  
Friday, 2 September  
Session 1: 9.30am—11.00am  
Session 2: 1.30pm—3.30pm  
Tea/coffee and nibbles available  
G05_2.43

**HDR Seminar Series**  
Tuesday, 9 September  
Tuesday, 4 October  
12.00pm  
G05_2.43

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