

Cellular Biology and Anatomy 2019 Retreat

Summerville Campus JSAC Ballroom Tuesday, May 07

Retreat JSAC Ballroom 11:15 – 4:00 pm

11:15 am	Lunches will be available
	Lunch
11:30 am – 12:30 pm	Welcome (Dr. Jian-Kang Chen) CBA update (Dr. Sylvia Smith) Explanation of retreat format to allow discussion (Dr. Jian-Kang Chen)
12:30 pm – 12:45 pm	Graduate Program update (Dr. Mark Hamrick)
12:45 pm – 1:15 pm	Discussion breakout session 1: <u>2 Graduate Program-related needs/concerns</u> (Dr. Jian-Kang Chen) Raffle tickets drawing (Dr. Qingqing Wei): 5 third prize winners
1:15 pm – 1:45 pm	Departmental Group Photograph and Break
1:45 pm – 2:00 pm	Education: Overview of impending medical school curriculum change (Dr. Carol Nichols)
2:00 pm – 2:45 pm	Discussion breakout session 2: <u>4 teaching-related needs/concerns</u> (Dr. Jian-Kang Chen) Raffle tickets drawing (Dr. Qingqing Wei): 5 second prize winners
2:45 pm – 3:00 pm	Research: Imaging Core and Histology/EM Core update (Dr. Graydon Gonsalvez)
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Discussion breakout session 3: <u>5 research-related needs/concerns + 1 retreat format-related concern</u> (Dr. Jian-Kang Chen) Raffle tickets drawing (Dr. Qingqing Wei): 1 Grand prize winner Closing remarks (Dr. Sylvia Smith)

Cellular Biology and Anatomy Summary of the 2019 CBA Retreat

The sixth annual retreat of the Department of Cellular Biology and Anatomy was held Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at the Jaguar Student Activities Center on the Augusta University Summerville campus.

All members of the department were invited to this retreat. Dr. Jian-Kang Chen, Associate Professor was the chair of the retreat. Program presenters included Drs. M. Hamrick, C. Nichols, and G. Gonsalvez. Mrs. Diane Riffe provided excellent administrative support for the retreat. Dr. Chen welcomed the members of the department and invited all to enjoy the lunch.

During the lunch, Dr. Sylvia Smith, Department Chair presented an update of the department highlighting accomplishments over the preceding academic year. The department traces its history back to 1829, when it was established. Then, a very small coalition of professors within MCG, the department has grown to include 94 members, 23 of whom are faculty. The majority of faculty work at the Augusta campus and three full-time faculty reside in Athens, GA as part of the AU-UGA medical partnership. The department boasts 38 staff members and 33 members-in-training. The department budget is ~\$11M. The department has as its core mission the advancement of outstanding research and education. To that end, we currently have 28 active extramural grants totaling ~\$8M. Faculty are principal investigators as well as co-investigators. Over the past 6 years, our faculty have submitted 520 grant applications, has published more than 600 papers and has presented more than 700 abstracts and presentations at meetings. Two of our faculty retired in 2018 and we were pleased to recruit two new investigators, Dr. Xingjun Fan, Associate Professor who studies cataract and oxidative stress and Dr. Sangho Kwon, who studies exosome release and acute kidney injury. Both faculty are establishing their labs and integrating into the department. We noted also new research awards to Dr. Y. Liu and M. Zhang as well as R. Caldwell. Research focus within the department continues in the areas of aging (bone/muscle and other organs), kidney, vision as well as studies related to molecular motors and cilia function. Recognition was given to Dr. M. Hamrick, Regents' Professor who was named the George W. Weiss endowed chair a few months ago. Accomplishments of our two core facilities (Histology/EM and Imaging) were considerable over the past year including a large customer base. Several presentations were made during the retreat: Dr. Graydon Gonsalvez discussed services delivered by and new equipment provided to the cores including a Leica Ultramicrotome UC7, the Airyscan imaging system for the LSM710 scope and a new laser capture microdissection system. Regarding our education mission, CBA delivers 56% of the contact hours for phase 1 and 34% for the entire medical school curriculum. We also are engaged in education for Allied Health and the Graduate School. Several members of the department were recognized for their exemplary contributions including Drs. Nichols, Edmondson, Hryniuk, LeMosy, Gale, Gaddy, Szymik and Pearson. Drs. Pearson and Szymik were recognized by students with Educator of the Year awards. Dr. Nichols discussed the education mission of MCG and enlightened us about the curriculum, which will transition to 18 months of preclinical training followed by 18-months clinical. This is a trend across the nation and the idea reflects a need to address primary care in the state of Georgia. For students opting to complete the 3 years of medical school and then pursue 3 years residency in Georgia (internal medicine, pediatrics, ob/gyn) there are opportunities for debt forgiveness that will likely attract students to this important initiative. There are many other tracks for medical students that would include the traditional residency match program. Dr. Mark Hamrick discussed our graduate program and was quite enthusiastic about the quality of our PhD candidates. Two students defended their thesis in April 2019. There was recognition of our graduate students for their success during Graduate Research Day and the efforts of their mentors to ensure success. Their oversight of the Dr. G. Lombard Kelly lectureship has brought outstanding

keynote speakers to the institution including Dr. Bruce Beutler (UT Southwestern) who will deliver the address on August 15th, 2019. We are extremely proud of the student leadership of this initiative and for the support of Dr. Meghan McGee-Lawrence. Dr. Hamrick praised the faculty for their engagement in the recruitment visits for the graduate program and emphasized the need to continue to be involved in these forums to meet students and share the exciting science on-going in CBA. He offered several ideas to infuse more energy in our Fall meet-greet sessions that could include posters of several labs as well as an off-campus follow-up dinner. A number of faculty would like to attract students to their laboratories. The graduate program reflects the intersection of our research and education mission and is a point of pride for all!

The remainder of the retreat centered on addressing issues/concerns that were raised by the faculty. Dr. Chen met with each faculty member prior to the retreat to learn of issues that should be addressed by the department. Included among these were: (1) ways to enhance graduate student recruitment, which included how best to advertise the great science on-going in the department; (2) research needs including the Seahorse instrument, ways to store dry-ice; (3) improvement needs for ordering equipment; (4) best practices for apprising faculty of their research funds balances; (5) strategies for educator faculty to enhance education research. There was lively discussion in the breakout groups of all of these topics and several action items were identified. Over the course of the coming months, it is anticipated that we will see implementation of a more robust advertisement of our graduate program and the science in which we excel, identification of Seahorse facilities and other research needs, incorporation of new instruments in our cores, options that faculty can utilize regarding ordering, and a more responsive account-informing system. This was truly a retreat of introspection, self-reflection and discussion to allow us to rejuvenate ourselves and continue the outstanding accomplishments that have characterized this department for many decades! Thanks to all participants in our fruitful discussions!

During the break, we convened on the lawn outside the ballroom for a group photo following which we enjoyed cake in honor of the Weiss professorship for Dr. Hamrick.