

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR, DR. JUAN CARLOS ZUNIGA-PFLUCKER

The quote “*Hope springs eternal...*”, from one of my favourite Popes (Alexander Pope), keeps coming to mind as we continue to wish for better times to come, which we all know are soon to arrive along with the Spring, or early Summer. Pope meant for us to focus on humankind’s ability to enact positive change within a great unexplained universe, it was the 18th century after all. But nevertheless, it is a view that still applies today as immunology helps us explain and address what is currently inexplicable.

I look forward to our upcoming Faculty meeting, and to discussing how we have adapted and how we will continue to adapt to the current circumstances. We will also be reflecting on the changes we have made and will be making to our graduate programs, including the new 1st year PhD graduate course (IMM1200, [Scientific Skills for Immunologists](#)), which I hear is going really well and is having the anticipated impact we had hoped. My thanks to Prof. Jasty Singh, Nana Lee and Stuart Berger for making this course a reality.

I would like to thank the dedication and hard work of our Graduate Committee members, who recently met to go over the large number of student applications to join our graduate programs. This is never an easy task and we rely on their insights and judgement to maintain and continue to elevate the academic excellence that our Department has achieved.

The Department continues to reach out to our Postdocs so that we can provide not only a sense of community, but also offer networking and training opportunities. With this in mind, if you a new Postdoc in your lab, please have them connect with Prof. Tania Watts directly to have them included.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DOI FACULTY MEETING – via Zoom

March 29, 2021

11:05 am – 1:00 pm

(Zoom link to be sent directly to faculty and student/trainee leadership)

EASTON SEMINARS – Zoom Webinar

11:05 - noon

March 8, 2021 – Gwendalyn Randolph, PhD

[Emil R. Unanue Professor,](#)
[Department of Pathology & Immunology, Washington](#)
[University School of Medicine St.Louis](#)

"Mechanism that limit dissemination of microbial signals from the intestine"

Host: Slava Epelman, MD, PhD, FRCPC

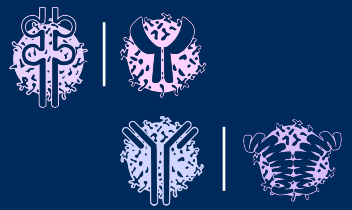
March 22, 2021 – Robert Thimme, PhD

[Medical Director,](#)
[Department of Internal Medicine II, Medical Center –](#)
[University of Freiburg](#)

"Success and failure of CD8+ T cell immunity to HCV and SARS-CoV2"

Host: David Brooks, PhD





STUDENT SEMINARS – Quercus - 10:00-11:00

March 1, 2021

Influence of the microbiota on innate T cell lineages and its effect in IBD

Meggie Kuypers (Mallevaey Lab)

In vitro generation of human CD4 T lineage cells from stem cells

Julius Landas (Zuniga-Pflucker Lab)

March 8, 2021

title TBD

Seungwoo Lee (Watts Lab)

Understanding the effects of microbiome-derived indole compounds on CD8+ T cells in PDAC

Kitty Liu (McGaha Lab)

March 15, 2021

title TBD

Nayanan Nathan (Girardin Lab)

Development of SS1 CAR-T cells with enhanced persistence through scFv humanization

Yota Ohashi (Hirano Lab)

March 22, 2021

Maisha Fiti: defining the role of gender-based violence in HIV susceptibility

James Pollock (Kaul Lab)

title TBD

Annie Pu (Gommerman Lab)

March 29, 2021

title TBD

Juan Diego Sanchez Vasquez (Gehring Lab)

Elucidating cytotoxic mechanisms in DN T cells for enhanced AML therapy

Enoch Tin (Zhang Lab)

GRADUATE PROGRAM UPDATES

PHD QUALIFYING EXAMS

2021 Qualifying Exams will take place in May.

Second year PhD students who are going forward with a Qualifying Exam are reminded of the following dates:

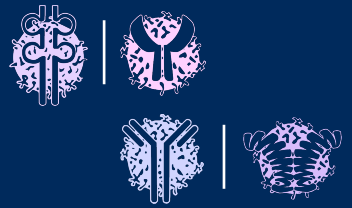
By April 1 – supervisor approves proposal; student sends proposal to supervisory committee members

By April 15 – supervisory committee members approve proposal

([Proposal approval forms](#) should be sent to graduate.immunology@utoronto.ca)

Scheduling of exams and assigning of examiners is underway – your exam date, time, and exam committee composition will be communicated to you in the coming weeks.





IGSA

Dear Immunologists,

We hope that you're having a wonderful start to the New Year so far.

This month marks approximately 1 year since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was this time last year that we began staying home to keep ourselves safe, as well as our loved ones and the vulnerable members of our community especially. Although these efforts were and still are necessary, we recognize that the pandemic has also brought with it a disruption to our personal lives, mental health, and the progress of our research.

As trainees, this may be particularly stressful, and we want you to know that you are not alone and are welcome to reach out to faculty and staff in the department with any of your thoughts or concerns. Remember that your lab mates and supervisor are also there to support you. And the graduate student community is always here for you if you ever feel lonely – so please reach out to members of IGSA whenever you need to! We are here for you.

IGSA continues to hold events to help you stay connected!

- **Stay tuned for more virtual fitness classes!** Itching to get back to the gym already? We have been hosting virtual yoga and high-intensity interval training classes with personal trainers and will continue doing so for the rest of the year.
- **Have fun with friends and meet new people!** In February, we had events like our Valentine's Day Games Night and PowerPoint Battle Night, and shared a lot of laughs! In March, you can look forward to events like our Interdepartmental St. Patrick's Day Trivia Night on March 17th, and our new Cooking with Tiffany series, with its first class beginning on March 12th.
- **Improve your academic prowess!** For those of you with PhD Qualifying Exams this spring, we will be having a virtual Q&A session with Dr. Jennifer Gommerman and a panel of senior students on March 3rd – you won't want to miss it!

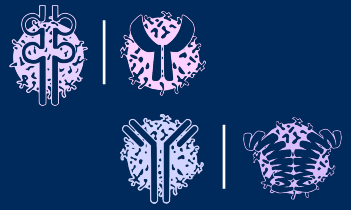
Our students continue to be hard at work in the community, as well:

- **Outreach to high school students!** Season 2 of IMMspire and Immunology Day is under way, as our student teams continue to interact with high school students around Toronto and the GTA about immunology.
- **Student voices for equity!** Our students are working hard on the next issue of IMMpress featuring equity and accessibility in STEM. Keep your eyes peeled for the release date of this upcoming instalment of our student magazine.
- **Wellness personified!** The Graduate Peer Support Network, our student-run mental health and wellness initiative, will hold its next workshop on March 19th, titled Responding to Discrimination through Allyship and Reporting.

Please reach out to utgsu.immunology@gmail.com if you ever need to.

With love,

Anthony Wong and Rashi Gupta
IGSA Co-Presidents 2020-21



IMMSA

Hi everyone,

We'd like to thank those of you who came to join us for our games night; we hope you had fun!

This month, we will be collaborating with the Molecular biology and Immunology Student Association (MIMSA) from UTSC for the Beyond Med School: Careers in Research and Industry event! It will feature Dr. Warren Chan, Dr. Boris Hinz and Dr. Harold Wodlinger as the panelists. If you are interested in learning about what other career options there are other than medicine, please come to the event! It will be held on March 12th at 5pm on Zoom.

We also invited Dr. Bryan Coburn as the speaker for our immunotherapy seminar, which will be held on March 23rd 11-1pm. Feel free to join if you are interested in the relationship between microbiome and immunotherapy.

In addition, IMMSA will be holding our spring elections! From March 10th to the 24th, you can submit your application to run for the following positions: co-presidents (2), vice president (1), secretary (1), Sr. treasurer (1), Sr. events coordinator (1), 4th year representative (1), 3rd year representative (1), ASSU representative (1), graphic designer (1), webmaster (1). Running for co-president requires at least one year of experience on IMMSA. Voting will take place on March 29th to April 6th. Please look for more information and the links to apply in the coming weeks on our social media.

We hope to see you all at our events this month!

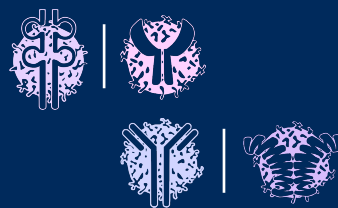
Best regards,

Anita Tia and Phoebe Liu

IMMSA 2020-2021 Co-Presidents

<http://immsauoft.com> | [@immstauoft](https://twitter.com/immstauoft) | [http://facebook.com/IMMSA.UofT](https://facebook.com/IMMSA.UofT)





PUBLICATIONS

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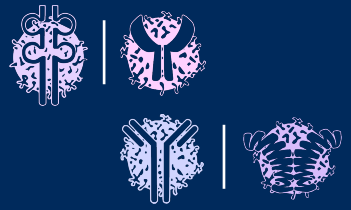
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