



Johannes Hell, Ph.D.
Professor
Pharmacology



Dawn Quelle, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Pharmacology



Kevin Rice, Ph.D.
Professor and Division Head
MNPC



Andrew Russo, Ph.D.
Professor, Molecular
Physiology & Biophysics
Director, Biosciences Program



David Wiemer, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Chemistry

A Message from the Program Director

We renewed our TG in 2007 with four NIH funded positions in the first year (2007-08; up from three in 2006-07) with the recommendation for six positions from the second year forward. However, we subsequently learned that those recommendations are not a “given,” particularly in this time of the budget shortfall at NIH. In fact, programs are revisited each year and the number of slots awarded is based on the pool of applicants. They can be adjusted upwards as well as downwards. Thanks to your participation, we have been able to document a consistent pool of 12-16 excellent applicants each year for the past four years and consequently were able to convince our program administrator that the program merited an increase to five slots this year. In addition, the program administrator has made an internal recommendation to further increase the TG positions to six in 2009. However, we have been cautioned that it will be critical that we again receive applications from 14 or more excellent students in spring 2009. I understand the disappointment of many that so few new appointments could be made this year, particularly as there were over 14 applications received for consideration. However, as the majority of trainees remain on the TG for two years, only two new awards could be made this cycle. The Advisory Committee shared your disappointment that more students could not be appointed to the program. We anticipate that a large number of students will rotate off the TG next year, making a larger number of positions available.

Without the outstanding applications we receive each year from interested students and trainers, the program would not be what it is, a truly excellent training opportunity in pharmacological sciences. I also want to thank the trainers for their active participation, be it by lecturing in one of our courses (especially in Principles of Pharmacology or Advanced Problem Solving in Pharmacological Sciences), participating in the seminar series and TG luncheons, and encouraging their students to apply to our program.

Best Regards,
Johannes W. Hell, Ph.D.

New and Current Trainees

We welcome our two new appointees to the training grant: Jacqueline Smits (mentor—David Wiemer, Chemistry) and Larry Gray (mentor—Shahram Khademi, Biochemistry). Uche Maduka (mentor—Johannes Hell, Pharmacology) also joins the training program courtesy of support provided by the Graduate College. These individuals join our current trainees (and trainers): Erin Allen (Jonathan Doorn, MNPC), Amanda Fenner (Robert Kerns, MNPC), Julie He (Mark Anderson, Internal Medicine and Physiology), Pat Houlihan (Yuriy Usachev, Pharmacology), and Tyson Shepherd (Ernesto Fuentes, Biochemistry).



Current trainees (pictured front to back, left to right): T. Shepherd, J. Smits, U. Maduka, J. He, P. Houlihan, L. Gray and E. Allen. Not Pictured: A. Fenner

Current Trainers

Anatomy & Cell Biology

Botond Banfi
Robert Cornell
John Engelhardt
Chuck Yeaman

Anesthesia

Tim Brennan
Donna Hammond
Toshi Kitamoto

Biochemistry

Kris DeMali
Ernesto Fuentes
Shahram Khademi
S. Ramaswamy

Chemistry

Greg Friestad
Lei Geng
Amnon Kohen
Dan Quinn
David Wiemer

Internal Medicine

Mark Anderson
John Colgan
Don Heistad
Ray Hohl
Michael Welsh
Mary Wilson

Microbiology

Gail Bishop

Medicinal & Natural Products Chemistry (MNPC)

Jonathan Doorn
Michael Duffel
Robert Kerns
Horacio Olivo
Kevin Rice

Pharmacology

Rory Fisher
Johannes Hell
Dawn Quelle
David Sheff
Stefan Strack
Yuriy Usachev

Molecular Physiology & Biophysics

Sarah England
Michael Henry
Scott Moye-Rowley
Andy Russo
Deborah Segaloff

Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Science

Kathleen Sluka

MIKI Meeting

As done in every year, we participated in 2008 in a local symposium. This year it was the MIKI meeting organized by several students, including program trainees, from MNPC in the College of Pharmacy, with guidance from Dr. Kevin Rice, Division Head of MNPC and Co-Director of our TG program. MIKI stands for Minnesota, Illinois, Kansas, Iowa and is an annual meeting on medicinal chemistry attended by trainees and faculty of institutions in these four states. This year's meeting was held April 25-27, 2008 in Iowa City. Nearly all previous trainees remaining on campus and current trainees presented posters. These posters were grouped together and attracted an unanticipated number of visitors. Many participants were more than happy to not exclusively view posters on medicinal chemistry but also presentations from our trainees from other areas which reached from NMR studies of protein binding domains to behavioral studies in genetically altered mice. We received enthusiastic feedback from many of our trainees on how well they felt their posters were attended and how encouraging and helpful the comments and suggestions were.



Daniel Kahne, PhD
2008 MIKI
Keynote Speaker

Upcoming 2009 Meetings

The next local meeting we will attend is the CCOM Research Week April 14-15, 2009. This symposium is an annual event which is focused on biomedical research. It features several poster sessions, one specifically for graduate students from any department.



A second local meeting we will attend is the American Chemical Society Meeting October 20-23, 2009. The meeting will be held at the Sheraton in Iowa City, coinciding with National Chemistry Week - "Chemistry: It's Elemental." During this week of increased visibility for our field, we are fortunate to have ACS President-Elect Thomas Lane, Ph.D. tentatively scheduled to attend. Themes for the meeting will include energy, health, and environment, all of which are not only "elemental" but also will showcase topics of regional and local importance.

Summer Activities

During the academic year our main forum for regularly coming together is the weekly pharmacology seminar. During the summer we have three mandatory luncheon meetings for current trainees and their trainers. These meetings fulfill several critical functions. They promote discussions among participants in an informal setting that help shape the program. They also provide an opportunity to fulfill our requirement to continue training of students in the responsible conduct of science beyond the standard course that is taken only once. The three summer 2008 meeting dates and their respective hosts are:

July 24 – Department of Chemistry, David Wiemer, Ph.D., Topic: *Intellectual Property*

July 30 – Department of Pharmacology, Johannes Hell, Ph.D., Topic: *Collaborations: Their Advantages and Potential Problems*

August 14 – Division of Medicinal and Natural Products Chemistry, Kevin Rice, Ph.D., Topic: *Academic Job Searches: Employer's vs. Employee's Perspectives*

We're on the Web!

<http://pharmacy.uiowa.edu/mnpcphar/pages/pharmacosciences.htm>

Tel: 384-4732 Fax: 335-8930 Email: johannes-hell@uiowa.edu