

Pharmaceutical Chronicle

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Shannon Kinney Named Program Coordinator for Master of Science in Pharmacogenomics Program

The WNE College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences has officially announced a new Master of Science in Pharmacogenomics (MSPGx) to start in fall 2022. This degree is a one-year stand-alone program, as well as a PharmD/MSPGx dual degree option, for those that would like to work in the field of precision medicine. A Dual degree option for Biology and Health Science majors is also being developed. The curriculum integrates all major aspects of this field, from basic genetics to clinical implementation, including introductory and advanced medical genetics and pharmacogenomics, genetic data analysis and laboratory techniques, genetic counseling, and clinical research. Dr. Shannon Kinney, who has taught the required Principles of Genetics and Genomics course, PGx-focused independent studies, and experiential electives throughout her career in the Doctor of Pharmacy program, championed the establishment of the MSPGx program and was named the Program Coordinator. "I am very excited to help teach and mentor the next generation of PGx experts, whether they want to conduct the research that continues to revolutionize the field or be involved in the application of those findings to optimize patient care." Applications are ongoing for the program and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Students who may be interested are encouraged to apply or reach out to Dr. Kinney for further advice



Clinton Mathias Named Program Coordinator of the New MS in Pharmaceutical Sciences Program

We are excited to announce that Dr. Clinton Mathias, PhD, MSc has

been appointed as the Program Coordinator of the new MS in Pharmaceutical Sciences (MSPS) program within Department of Pharmaceutical and Administrative Sciences. This program is designed to prepare students for a career in the biomedical and pharmaceutical sciences both in academic research and drug industry settings. In addition to being offered as a stand-alone program for students desiring to obtain a Master's degree in this area, the University will also provide dual degree options for pharmacy students and as well Biology, Chemistry, Health Science and Biomedical Engineering undergraduate majors. Students enrolled in these dual degree programs would save a year, completing both degrees in five years instead of the traditional six.

The four focus areas mentioned by Dr. Mathias are: Pharmacological and Biomedical Sciences, Pharmaceutics and Drug Delivery, Medicinal Chemistry and Drug Development, and Pharmacoeconomics and Healthcare Data Analytics. Applications are ongoing for the program and will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Students who may be interested are encouraged to apply or reach out to Dr. Mathias for further advice.

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Ola Ghoneim Gives Keynote Address at International Conference

Dr. Ola Ghoneim was a keynote speaker at the first International Conference of the College of Pharmacy-Delta University for Science and Technology held in Cairo, Egypt from Nov 20-21, 2021 (DU-PHARM-2021). The conference's theme was "Innovative Research and Education in Pharmacy and Bioscience in COVID Era." Dr. Ghoneim presented on the use of educational games in her Principles of Medicinal Chemistry course to engage all students, especially those who opted to learn remotely via Zoom. The presentation was very well received by the audience, and several potential collaborations arose from the extrapolation of such educational methodologies in other disciplines and in other countries, such as Egypt. Dr. Ghoneim received the DU-PHARM 2021 plaque for her significant contribution.



Kathleen Bielecki-Wilken Named Laboratories Manager and Instructor

Congratulations to Kathleen Bielecki-Wilken on her recent promotion to Laboratories Manager and Instructor. Kat has worked with the WNE

College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences since July 2011 as the Laboratories Manager, and the promotion was made to recognize her significant contributions to the PharmD curriculum. "Ms. Kat," as she is affectionately called by the students, plays vital roles in the pharmaceuticals laboratory course, professional pharmacy practice lab, sterile products lab, and our cosmeceutical laboratory elective. In these roles, she has earned certificates in sterile compounding and non-sterile compounding from the University of Florida, Gainesville, as well as becoming a member of the Society of Cosmetic Chemists. In addition to her teaching roles, she maintains her role as laboratory manager for both the teaching and research laboratories for the pharmacy and COPHS graduate program.

College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences Receives Grant For Research Involving Anti-Cancer Treatment Drug

Western New England University's College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences was recently awarded a \$300,000 research grant from Quercis Pharma. The grant, *The Role of Isoquercetin and/or Zafirlukast in the inhibition and possible treatment of cancer and such other diseases* is a four-year grant that will allow further development of the University's patented work on Zafirlukast in combination with Quercis's patented Isoquercetin blend.

Isoquercetin belongs to a family of compounds known as *flavonoids*. Flavonoids, found in many fruits, vegetables, and wine, are rich in antioxidants and have been shown to provide multiple health benefits. This study will further explore the use of Isoquercetin and its potential synergism with Zafirlukast as a potential treatment for cancer and thrombotic diseases which are significantly more common in cancer patients. The combination of these two agents may help prevent this significant issue as Zafirlukast has the ability to inhibit thrombosis without altering bleeding times.

The grant will fund a PhD studentship in the laboratory of Dr. Daniel Kennedy, Chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical and Administrative Sciences and Professor of Pharmacology. Dr. Kennedy's laboratory explores a new class of drugs that can potentially treat diseases such as cancer, heart attacks, strokes, and pulmonary emboli. This work will expand on Dr. Kennedy's current NIH funded study exploring Zafirlukast for this purpose which is undergoing a Phase II clinical trial.

"This grant will further establish WNE as the preeminent institution in pharmacy and pharmaceutical science education in Western Massachusetts," says Dr. Kennedy. "WNE students have the opportunity to work with internationally renowned faculty on their innovative research projects through our professional PharmD program or graduate program in Pharmaceutical Sciences or Pharmacogenomics."