



USF Chemistry NEWS

News of Interest to
Friends of the Department of Chemistry
University of South Florida

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Late summer 2021

Florida's only Metropolitan Preeminent
Research University

Faculty Recognition

Faculty Awards

Dr. **James Leahy** (Professor and Chair) commended Dr. **Lee Woodcock** (Professor) on receiving the 2021 Faculty Outstanding Research Achievement Award for his latest work on the study of plastic degrading enzymes, with an eye toward eradicating the plastic waste problem.



Dr. Woodcock

Dr. Leahy added, "This is a fantastic feat and certainly worthy of celebration."

Faculty Promotions

Dr. Sherrisse Bryant, Dr. John Osegovic

Both were promoted to Instructor II



Dr. Bryant



Dr. Osegovic

Dr. Arjan van der Vaart
Dr. Lee Woodcock

Both were promoted to Full Professor



Dr van der Vaart



Dr. Woodcock

New Permanent Instructors

Dr. Marilus Castillo



Dr. Frankie Constanza



Dr. Christie Tang



Fall Term -I

USF expected to admit largest freshman class yet: 7,200, and possibly the brightest.

The Fall 2021 Term opened as a regular semester with regularly scheduled classes in open rooms. Opening occurred on Monday August 23rd. Classes were presented as typical lecture (F2F) versions with face masks in place.

Fall Classes are scheduled to end Dec 2 .

Test-free week: Nov 26-Dec 2 .

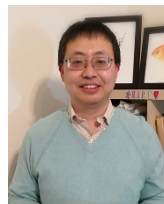
Winter Intersession: Dec 13-Jan 7.

Fall Term -II

CHEMINARS

The seminar program returned to being held in the 200 seat CHM 100 auditorium with some live speakers and a live audience, as well as some on-line presentations

Dr. **Jiangfeng Cai** (USF Preeminent Professor) arranged for colleagues and guests



Dr. Cai

to present 16 Wednesday morning seminars 9:30-10:30am starting September 1st and ending December 1st.

Colloquium

Dr. **Kirpal Bisht** (Associate Professor) noted, “Finally we are having the Colloquium this semester in-person, and it will be on Tuesdays 2.00-3.00 pm.” Students who wished to a present a research presentation at the colloquium, were asked to contact him. to be put on the schedule. He added, “It is a good opportunity to present/listen to the ongoing research in the department.”



Dr. Bisht

Fall Term -III

Classes

Traditional mode classes resumed August 23, and challenges were recognized with the person-to-person (**F2F**) mode.

Some instructors were asked to shift to temporary remote instruction, which was done in an abundance of caution.

Instructors may have been asked resume in-person instruction, when the review team determined the risk was sufficiently low.

Instructors were also asked to the extent possible to accommodate those students who could not attend in person – because they are isolating, quarantining, or have high risk family members at home.

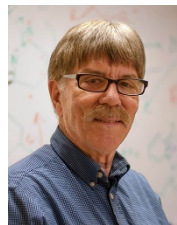
These were challenging times for instructors, who are to be commended for their special efforts.

Athletics

USF football returned to full capacity for games at Tampa's Raymond James Stadium. For the first time, the U. of Florida team was scheduled to play the USF Team in Tampa (September 11th).

Persons you may know

Dr. **Wayne Guida** (Professor) had a leadership role at Vineyard Camp, an international Christian children's camp in Westfield, North Carolina, during several weeks in June and July 2021.



Dr. Guida

Dr. **Gerry Meisels** (Professor and former Provost) has retired and been granted emeritus status. Dr. Meisels is the founding director of the Coalition for Science Literacy (CSL). He came to USF in 1988 as Provost and Chief Operating Officer.



Dr. Meisels

Dr. **William (Bill) Swartz** passed away peacefully on July 17, 2021, surrounded by his family.



Born on August 16, 1944, in Braddock, Pennsylvania, he was the oldest son of the late **William E.** and **Catherine Swartz**. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Chemistry from Juniata College (1966) and his PhD in Chemistry from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1971).

He moved to Florida in 1972 to accept a position as a Chemistry professor at USF.

He rose through the ranks and later become Chairman of Chemistry. After 14 years in academia, he left USF to become the Laboratory Manager for the General Electric Pinellas Plant in Pinellas County. At the time of his death, he was the President and CEO of Constellation Technology Corporation in Largo, FL.

Dr. **Mike Zaworotko** (Chair, 1999-2013) and his wife **Grace Zaworotko** former Chemistry staff member celebrated their 13th wedding anniversary in July in Limerick, Ireland.

Commencements

USF Spring and Summer Commencements were held August 21-23 to the Yuengling Center for the 124th commencement. These covered Spring 2021, as well as summer 2020, and accommodated changes caused by COVID demands.

About 3,000-degree recipients were scheduled representing 39 states and 78 nations. And 16 undergraduates earned perfect GPA.

Masks were required of all graduates, regardless of vaccination status.

Chemistry graduate students who were eligible to attend included: **Sami Abdulkadir**, **Elena Bray**, and **Michael Williams** graduating with their PhD.; and **Brooke Vitale** graduating with her MA.

University Administration

Dr. **Steven Currall**, President and Professor announced (July 19) his retirement effective August 2.



Dr. Currall

He cited the “intensity” of the work that had put a “strain on my health and my family.”

Dr. Currall had served as president for two years.

Provost **Ralph Wilcox** agreed to serve as acting president until the trustees named an interim leader (see below)

Change of Administration

Rhea Law, a devoted USF supporter, alumna, former Board of Trustees chair, and highly respected community leader was selected as interim president.

It was believed that her deep ties within our community and her stellar leadership abilities will help USF continue our momentum while the Trustees find the next great leader for our university.



President Law

She was appointed interim president on August 2nd. On August 4th she began at 7:00

am. Her office is on the fourth floor of the Patel Center.

She is a fifth generation Floridian, a USF alumna, and former employee at USF starting in 1968 and serving in the Office of Sponsored Research assisting faculty members before graduating and leaving to enter law school.

The newsletter editor remembers many examples of her patience and invaluable assistance with creating proposal budgets.

Her day, full of meetings, also included a visit from Mr. **Travis Miller**, associate director of commencement. He came with a representative from Oak Hall, a family-owned regalia company to take her measurements for presidential regalia for August commencements.

USF Innovation Enterprise

Dr. **Paul R. Sanberg**, FNAI, FRSC., Distinguished University Professor, is now former Senior VP for Research, Innovation & Knowledge Enterprise.

Dr. Sanberg is one of 146 at USF who are among the top 1.5% of all cited scientists in the world.

He is also President and Founder of the National Academy of Inventors.



Dr. Sanberg

He announced the NAI 10th Annual Conference would be held in Tampa Oct. 31

-Nov. 3 at the JW Marriot Tampa Water Street.

Abbreviations

ODS: Office of Division Support

CAS: College of Arts and Sciences

F2F: Face-to-face, as most classes were scheduled to be taught the fall term.

Acknowledgments

Ms. **Kaitlyn Kroner**, Graduate Program Coordinator provided helpful information concerning dissertation defense schedules and results.



Ms. Kroner

Ms. **Paige Romero**, Webmaster, Administrative Specialist, kindly provided valued technical assistance.

Information concerning the resignation off President Currall from an article by **Divya Kumar** *Tampa Bay Times* Staff writer, July 25.

Information about Dr. Swartz from obituary material at Moss Fester Funeral Home, Clearwater.

Ms. **Lorene Hall-Jennings** (Asst. Director for Undergraduate Studies, Tampa Campus) for helpful background information.

News article, **Divya Kumar**, *Tampa Bay Times*, Wed. August 4, 2021: re: **Rhea Law's** first day and related information was obtained from a USF Daily News Report issue.

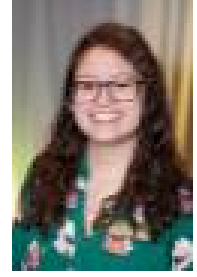
Administration

Chair:



Dr. Leahy

Dr. James Leahy
Professor and Chair
Department of Chemistry
The Florida Center of Excellence for Drug
Discovery & Innovation
Department of Molecular Medicine
University of South Florida
3720 Spectrum Boulevard, Suite 305
Tampa, FL



Ms. Paige Romero

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For past issues you may have missed, please
see the departmental Web page.

News for us or comments?

Please write to: dfmartin@usf.edu