

Dental Research News



Research Development Office
Faculty of Dentistry
(902)424-2545

BIOMATERIALS SCIENCE PhD SUCCESS

Amin Rizkalla is to be congratulated on being awarded his PhD. Amin has been working in the Biomaterials Science Laboratory for the past two years on his project involving the synthesis of glass materials for biomedical use. The work represents a significant contribution to our basic understanding of the synthesis of glass materials using wet chemical methods. We are delighted that Amin is able to join the Division of Dental Biomaterials Science as a part time Faculty Member.

SPATE OF SPEECH DISORDERS

The apparent spate of speech disorders which appeared to strike the faculty, staff and students during the summer can now be explained. It was due to the wearing of dental appliances as part of a research project in Biomaterials and Prosthodontics aimed at evaluating the relative corrosion of different forms of base metal alloys.

SUMMER STUDENTS

The thirteen students involved in the various research projects worked very hard during the summer. This was seen as a very successful year, with the students involved having a most rewarding and enriching experience. From all reports we can look forward to some meaningful data being presented and published based upon the efforts of students and faculty supervisors.

IADR PRESENTATIONS!

Early indications are that we will have a record number of papers being presented at the IADR meeting in Montreal next March. The RDO estimates that as many as 20 abstracts may be submitted for the October 1st deadline.

COMPUTING FACILITY

Room 2602 in the Dentistry building is the location of the Carlton Campus Computer lab (CCCL). The lab is equipped with 10 Macintosh and 7 IBM - PC compatible microcomputers. Word processing, statistical analysis, graphing - charting, spread sheet, drawing and painting programmes are available. Dental Faculty members are invited to use the lab facilities. Faculty who require assistance have the same recourse as students to manuals and student assistants. Faculty may also contact Academic Computer Service staff for further assistance. The RDO will arrange for special workshops to be set up through CCCL if sufficient interest is indicated by faculty members.

EPIDEMIOLOGIST

The search is well underway for the appointment of an epidemiologist in the Division of Community Dentistry. The Search Committee have developed a short list and interviews are to be conducted. Significant opportunities for clinical epidemiological research exists for our faculty within the Atlantic region. The appointment of a faculty member with a background in epidemiology will act to stimulate increased research in this subject area.

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

Dr. Ruth Duncan, an internationally renowned scientist from the University of Keele England visited the Division of Dental Biomaterials Science and the Department of Pharmacy on the 7th August 1987. Dr. Duncan gave a Seminar for the Faculty and staff of Dentistry and Pharmacy entitled "Soluble Polymers Used for Controlled Drug Delivery Following Oral and Systemic Administration".

On the 25th September we are honoured to have a visit by Dr. John McLean from England, who will be delivering our H.J. MacConnachie Memorial Lecture.

BROWN BAG RESEARCH THINK TANK!

A series of 'brown bag' lunch time sessions will start in the new year dealing with various aspects of research. Look out for more news on this.

IADR DEADLINE!

The abstracts for the IADR have to be in Washington DC by the 1st October. Plans are in hand to send a package of all of our abstracts submissions from the Faculty on Tuesday 29th September.

STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

Other international visitors from the UK this summer were present as part of our student exchange research elective programme. Duncan Black and Joseph Gamba from Dundee University in Scotland were able to conduct their elective research projects within a period of five weeks and produce some meaningful data. The one project worked on by Joseph involved chemical analysis of the level of fluoride in various glass materials. Duncan was involved with a project studying opacity of castable glass (Dicor) and the colour imparted to it by various luting cements. Both projects proved to be very successful and with luck should result in presentations being made at the IADR meeting in Montreal next March with the names of Duncan and Joseph of Dundee University being recorded as co-authors of the papers. In addition to their research projects in the laboratory the boys were able to meet a wide cross-section of Canadians when playing rugby and golf or when sailing. Thanks are due to our students, staff and faculty who made this a very successful experience for our visitors. Last year we had a student from the University of Wales Elfyn Samuels and we have a further student from the University of Birmingham England who will be participating next summer. These visits by students have proved to be very successful, the careful selection and supervision of the research projects has resulted in a meaningful and worthwhile research experience for the students who are able to return home and present the results of their Elective Project. A number of our own students have expressed an interest in making visits to either the University of Wales, Dundee or Birmingham with whom we have this arrangement.

LETTERS OF INTENT

Many faculty are gearing up for grant applications with three letters of intent having been submitted to federal funding agencies. Two letters of intent have been forwarded to Health and Welfare Canada (NHRDP) one of these deals with "Oral Health Outcomes of a Dental Health Programme for Mentally Handicapped Adults Living in Group Homes" this has been submitted by N. Prowse, T. Mitchell, G. Jackson and M. Forgay. The second deals with the safety of dental materials and the occupational safety of dental personnel. This project deals specifically with the potential health hazard posed by the use of mercury in dentistry. The six individuals involved in the proposed project are Dr's Cunningham, Foong, Jones, McCurdy (Path Inst.), Moss (Path. Inst.), and Sutow.

A further letter of intent has also been submitted to MRC for a Programme grant. This is a modified re-submission of a previous grant application of last year. The title being "Synthesis, Evaluation, Application and Biological Testing of Biomaterials". The 8 individuals involved are Dr's Foong, Graham, Harsanyi, Howell, Jones, Kwak (Chemistry), Mezei (Pharmacy) and Sutow.

RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR SERIES

The seminar series dealing with presentations of ongoing research within the faculty, gets underway with an opening to the programme with Dr. Bob Fournier Assistant Vice President and Dr Ken Zakariassen our Dean, Addressing the question 'Why Research?'. This type of opening session was found to be most successful last year. The title of the first session reminds me of an examination question set by a psychology professor which simply asked the question 'Why' the student achieving the best grade produced the answer 'Why Not'!

MRC BUDGET INCREASE

A supplement to the MRC budget has been announced by the federal government. The total funds now available for grants and scholarships have been increased to \$170.9 million.

DENTAL CARIES IN TUDOR TEETH!

I came across this interesting topic in the Alumni magazine of my Alma Mater The University of Birmingham England. My former colleagues Dr's Foster and Corbett were given the opportunity of studying the skulls and teeth of human remains recovered from Henry VIII's flagship "Mary Rose" which capsized and sank in the Solent on the 19th July 1545, the wreck of which was discovered in 1971. As many as 700 archers, soldiers and sailors may have been on board. The remains of some 179 individuals were recovered from the wreck and 68 calvaria and mandibles have been matched. These remains are said to exhibit the modern pattern of dental caries (in fissures on the surfaces of posterior teeth and interproximally) 84% had caries and 13% evidence of dental abscesses which perforated the bone. The group exhibited a greater percentage of caries than any other medieval or 17th century population.

Derek.W.Jones September 1987

Research Development Office
Faculty of Dentistry
(902)424-2545