Research Electives

Cell Biology and Physiology Research Electives

During the fourth year, opportunities exist for many varieties of advanced clinical or research experiences.

Ghazaleh Ashrafi, PhD
510 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-273-5518
Uncovering novel regulators of glycolytic and mitochondrial metabolism at the synapse and their role in the pathology of Alzheimer’s disease.

Kendall J. Blumer, PhD
506 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-362-1668
Signaling mechanisms in cardiovascular and neurological disorders.

Clair Crewe, PhD
1127 Couch Biomedical Research Building
Phone: 314-362-3240
Understanding extracellular vesicle (EV)-mediated signaling during homeostatic and pathologic metabolic regulation.

Sergej Djuranovic, PhD
514 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-362-9706
Molecular mechanisms of translational control; cellular processes regulated by changes in RNA metabolism.

Denis Goldfarb, PhD
406 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-273-3669
Computational mass spectrometry, proteomics, and their applications in biology.

James E. Huettner, PhD
4929 South Building
Phone: 314-362-6628
Excitatory amino acid receptors and synaptic transmission in the central nervous system; neural differentiation of embryonic stem cells.

Silvia Jansen, PhD
4900 South Building
Phone: 314-273-1853
This lab’s focus is on elucidating the molecular mechanisms that regulate the architecture, dimensions and dynamics of actin filament networks and then tuning them to support essential cellular functions that range from cell migration and cytokinesis to neurogenesis.

David J. Kast, PhD
4900 South Building
Phone: 314-273-1852
The long-term goal of this lab’s research is to understand the fundamental cellular and molecular mechanisms that drive the biogenesis and dynamics of intracellular membrane compartments, including the endocytic vesicles, the endoplasmic reticulum, the Golgi apparatus and the mitochondria.

Vitaly Klyachko, PhD
501 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-362-5517
Mechanisms and regulation of neurotransmitter release at individual synapses; functional roles of presynaptic processes in synaptic plasticity and information processing.

Polina Lishko, PhD
1127 Couch Biomedical Research Building
Phone: 314-362-6672
The role of bioactive lipid signaling and bioelectricity in the physiology of the inverted epithelia of the brain and retina. Physiology and pathophysiology of steroid signaling in reproduction, aging and neurodegeneration.

Michael Benjamin Major, PhD
406 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-273-3669
The Major lab studies how perturbation of specific signal transduction pathways contributes to the initiation, progression and dissemination of cancer.

Colin G. Nichols, PhD
9611 BJC Institute of Health
Phone: 314-362-6630
Ion channel biology; multiple levels of analysis from the molecular basis of channel function to in vivo physiology and disease.
David J. Pagliarini, PhD
1127 Couch Building
Phone: 314-273-2330
We are an interdisciplinary team of scientists driven to understand the biochemical underpinnings of mitochondrial dysfunction in human diseases. Together, we integrate large-scale methodologies with traditional biochemistry to investigate the modulation, adaptation, and basic metabolic function of mitochondria.

Slavica Pavlovic Djuranovic, PhD
416 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-362-6675
Identifying new targets and possible therapies to treat malaria.

David W. Piston, PhD
4912 South Building
Phone: 314-362-9121
The intracellular and intercellular dynamics of cells within the islets of Langerhans play a key role in the regulation of blood glucose levels. The islets are made up of different cell types, but very little is known about the interplay between the different cell types and how this affects their secretion of various hormones. The islets’ a-cells secrete insulin in response to increased blood sugar and also in response to neurotransmitters and hormones. Glucagon also plays a key role in blood glucose homeostasis, and it is secreted by the islets’ a-cells. High glucose levels inhibit glucagon secretion from a-cells within the islets but not from dispersed a-cells, and the mechanism underlying this phenomenon has not been defined. We use quantitative live cell microscopy to measure single-cell parameters within intact islets held within microfluidic devices in order to expose them to spatially heterogeneous levels of various stimuli. The resulting data are fit using mathematical models of islet functional dynamics, which we are continually modifying to better fit the observed islet physiology.

Sheila A. Stewart, PhD
7610 BJC Institute of Health
Phone: 314-362-7437
Delineation of the molecular mechanisms by which aged stromal cells contribute to tumorigenesis and the molecular mechanisms that ensure high-fidelity telomere replication and genomic stability.

Amber N. Stratman, PhD
416 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-273-7928
Mechanisms regulating blood vessel formation, stabilization, and blood flow sensing during development and disease.

Heather L. True-Krob, PhD
413 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-362-3934
Biological consequences of yeast prions, in both their capacity to function as novel epigenetic elements and their utility to serve as a tractable model for the analysis of protein misfolding and aggregation that occurs in several neurodegenerative disorders.

Zhongsheng You, PhD
514 McDonnell Sciences Building
Phone: 314-362-9893
Studies of the cellular responses to DNA damage and their cancer relevance, focusing on the functional interplays between the DNA damage checkpoint, DNA repair and chromatin structure.