

PHARMACYCONNECT

NEWSLETTER



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DEAN'S MESSAGE



Associate Professor Dr Mogana Sundari Rajagopal, Dean

At UCSI University's Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences (FPS), we believe that a strong future depends on a foundation of excellence and embracing technology; and one built daily through leadership in education, research, and community engagement.

It is with great pride that the Faculty has successfully organised the International Conference on Pharmaceutical and Allied Sciences (IRCPAS 2020) with the theme "21st Century Frontiers: Synergising the Research" on 7 to 8 March 2020, preceded by pre-conference workshops on 6 March. These sessions were principally designed to enhance the exchange of knowledge and new discoveries in science and related fields of applications. Additionally, the gathering enabled the building of a productive dialogue between participants of different nationalities and invaluable opportunities for networking among international institutions and industry partners.

On a grave note, Malaysia was no exception to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that brought about immense changes in higher education. Pharmacists, the medication experts were also among the frontliners involved in fighting the disease. During this period, the faculty saw a turnaround from existing student-centred blended learning to full online teaching. We have adopted various virtual learning technologies, E-learning tools, and strategies that support effective online learning. The Faculty applies the simplest and most effective methods of teaching for our students to achieve the results they desire. Students are also provided training and personalised online mentoring during these challenging times. Various online platforms are used to ensure transparent communication between the faculty, students, and the community. The Faculty also organised 5 Complementary Programmes (CCPs), 3 webinars, and 2 forums online on self-development and various skillsets for students to participate in the continuous learning during this period of #StayAtHome and #StudyFromHome.

We understand that this is a challenging time and have learned that when all the oars are rowing in the same direction, we rise to the challenge and adapt to changes that once seemed improbable. We are leaning into care over productivity. The Faculty is witnessing servant leadership in action. Rest assured, we ensure quality in all that we do, conducting ourselves and processes with ethics, professionalism and teamwork. As we move through this crisis, I am reminded of a quote from Maya Angelou: "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

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PHARMACYCONNECT newsletter is a bimonthly publication of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences (FPS), UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur.



FPS ORGANISED IRCPAS 2020

On 7 to 8 March 2020, FPS organised the International Research Conference on Pharmaceutical and Allied Sciences (IRCPAS 2020) themed “21st Century Frontiers: Synergising the Research”, in collaboration with University Muhammadiyah Purwokerto (UMP), Indonesia at Le Quadri Hotel, Kuala Lumpur.

The 2-day conference was launched by Dato' Peter Ng, Group Founder and Group Chief Executive Officer, UCSI Group; Academician Senior Professor Dato Dr Khalid Yusoff, Vice Chancellor and President of UCSI University; Professor Dr Phang Siew Moi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Postgraduate; Associate Professor Ir Dr Jimmy Mok Vee Hong, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic, Students and Alumni Affairs; and Associate Professor Dr Mogana Sundari Rajagopal, Dean, Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences.

Professor Dr Joseph T DiPiro, Dean, School of Pharmacy, Virginia Commonwealth University (USA) was the Keynote Speaker and the main highlight of IRCPAS 2020.

Other invited speakers included Professor Dr Wong Tin Wui (UiTM), Professor Dr Mohammed Azmi Ahmad Hassali (USM), Professor Dr Nor Hadiani Ismail (UiTM), Professor Dr Khozirah Binti Shaari (UPM), Professor Dr Shamsul Azhar Shah (UKM), Professor Dr Chung Lip Yong (UM), Associate Professor Dr Mohd Makmor Bakry (UKM), Professor Dr V Gopal (Mother Theresa Institute of Health Sciences, India), and Dr Didik Setiawan (UMP, Indonesia).

More than 250 delegates from Malaysia and abroad participated in the conference and presented their research in the form of poster and oral presentations. A forum discussion titled “Breaking Down the Status Quo; Transformation of Pharmacy Practice” was also among the highlights of the conference. The delegates witnessed exciting dance and musical performances during the gala dinner session themed “Cultural Melting Pot”. The conference also provided a perfect platform for scientific and social networking, for the delegates.

FPS HOSTED PROF DR JOSEPH T DIPIRO



FPS had the privilege of hosting Professor Dr Joseph T DiPiro, Dean, School of Pharmacy, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), USA, as the keynote speaker at the IRCPAS 2020.

Professor Dr DiPiro has graced several important positions during his illustrious career including the President of American College of Clinical Pharmacy. He is the Editor of the renowned book “Pharmacotherapy: A Pathophysiologic Approach”, which is widely regarded as the holy grail of evidence-based pharmacy practice.

His speech at IRCPAS 2020 focused on opportunities and challenges in the 21st century for clinical pharmacy practitioners. He also talked about the integration of pharmacy education and practice and use of AI and genetics in pharmacy practice in a forum discussion titled “Breaking Down the Status Quo; Transformation of Pharmacy Practice”.

Taking the partnership between UCSI and VCU to the next level, a MoU was formalised between the two universities during Prof DiPiro's visit. The MoU will facilitate exchange programmes, research attachments, and pharmacy practice experiences for students from both universities. FPS extends sincere gratitude to Professor Dr DiPiro for his contributions to IRCPAS 2020 and the partnership between UCSI and VCU!



STUDENT ACHIEVER: PEARLY CHIA ZHI QING



The research team, formed by Pearly Chia Zhi Qing, a year 4 BPharm (Hons) student of FPS and her supervisors Assistant Professor Dr Ashok Kumar Janakiraman, Assistant Professor Dr Habibur Rehman, and Associate Professor Dr Mogana Sundari Rajagopal had won the Silver Award (Asian Youth Innovation Awards) for their invention “Cocoa Butter: an Alternative for Fast Melt Tablets” at Malaysia Technology Expo 2020, which was held on February 20 to 22 in Kuala Lumpur. Their achievement has made FPS proud once again!

MARWAN MAKI



Marwan Maki, a PhD (Pharmaceutical Sciences) student of FPS has won the Best Oral Presentation Award at IRCPAS 2020 that was held on 7 to 8 March 2020 at UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Many congratulations from FPS to Marwan for his achievement!

UCSI-UMP PARTNERSHIP @ IRCPAS 2020

FPS and University Muhammadiyah Purwokerto (UMP), Indonesia had taken a step further in their partnership with UMP serving as the primary collaborator of UCSI University in organising the IRCPAS 2020 on 7 to 8 March 2020.

Dr Didik Setiawan, Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, UMP, was one of the invited speakers. He shared his insights on inter-professional collaborative research and research findings on health economic evaluation of vaccination policy in Indonesia.

Dr Nunuk Aries Nurulita, Head of the Professional Programme, UMP, secured the 3rd Best Oral Presentation Award for his presentation titled “Role of Cholesterol-Lowering agents in Sensitivity of Anticancer Drug to Breast Cancer Cells”.

Many other faculty members from UMP participated in the conference as oral presenters. UMP staff also excelled on the entertainment side with their lively performance during the IRCPAS Gala Dinner!



STAFF SPOTLIGHT: P VIJAYARAJKUMAR



He has supervised 16 masters and 6 PhD students research projects to date.

Dr Palanirajan has also received many awards during his career, such as Young Scientist Award by Pharma Help Line Society, India in 2010; Promising Researcher Award by UCSI University, Malaysia in 2016; Brown Medal for developing *Carica Papaya* capsules for dengue patients from the Ministry of Higher Education, Malaysia in 2017; and InnoCente Award by SERVIER international, USA in 2018.

Associate Professor Dr Palanirajan Vijayarajkumar, Head of Pharmaceutical Technology Department, FPS has published his research findings in many high impact journals such as Chemical Reviews (Impact factor: 54. 30). His research is focused on development of novel drug delivery systems.

Additionally, one of his research formulations has been included in “Sample records for formulations show good” by US Federal Science in 2018. In 2019, he received the Best Researcher Award from FPS, UCSI University.

COMMUNITY PHARMACY INTERNSHIP @ UMP, INDONESIA

Students of BPharm (Hons) programme of FPS – Gan Li Kee, Bong Zheng Chao, Aleen Chai Yee Hui, and Koh Yih Yen visited Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto (UMP), Indonesia as part of a student exchange / community pharmacy internship programme for one month.

The programme started with technical sessions on introduction of community

pharmacy system conducted by Dr Dina, history of UMP pharmacy faculty by Dr Asmi, universal healthcare coverage system by Dr Didik, community pharmacy internship by Bu Elza, and laboratory works for stem cell therapeutic effect on cancerous cell research by Dr Nunuk.

All the students were placed in a community health centre managed by the government, and learned to prepa-

re and fill drugs according to their respective prescriptions. They also had the chance to conduct counselling sessions with patients, prescription screening, pharmaceutical care, and inventory management.

The students would like to extend their gratitude to FPS, UCSI University and UMP for providing them with this exciting opportunity!



FPS WORKSHOP FOR STUDENTS OF SMK GAJAH BERANG

On 20 February 2020, FPS conducted a workshop for a group of 40 students of SMK Gajah Berang, Melaka at UCSI University, Kuala Lumpur Campus. The workshop was aimed at stimulating students' interest towards the pharmacy field and career as a pharmacist.

The workshop started with a talk by Mr Por Choo Shiuan, a lecturer in clinical pharmacy, who gave a complete picture on FPS and the progression fr-

om secondary school / pre-university into a pharmacy degree programme. Laboratory manager Mr Hardave Singh Bhall gave the students a laboratory tour, where he briefed them about the laboratories around UCSI University and the equipment available in those laboratories.

Students also got to experience hands-on laboratory activities as they were divided into 3 groups. The session was conducted by lab techno-

logists Ms Norlida, Mr Anas, Ms Shamala, Mr Hadzirun, and Mr Kent.

The activities included preparing capsules, suppositories, and the operation of tablet punching machine; followed by a pop quiz to evaluate the students on their learning from the workshop. Finding the sessions to be very interesting and useful, the students had expressed their interest to attend similar sessions in the future!



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: CHAN POOI YEE



Chan Pooi Yee, a fully registered pharmacist, graduated from FPS, UCSI University in 2012. She completed her Master of Clinical Pharmacy Practice and is now a Senior Pharmacist at Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, Ipoh. She serves in the cardiology rehabilitation ward,

with active participation in Warfarin MTAC, heart Failure MTAC, and inpatient anticoagulant team. Handling thousands of cardiology cases per year, Pooi Yee takes pride in improving the quality of life of her patients. Working at the front line of healthcare, she believes that there is a huge demand for specialisation of jobs in the pharmacy profession.

Besides the traditional role of dispensing medicines in community, Pooi Yee envisions a future where Malaysian pharmacists can specialise in different therapeutic areas such as cardiology, endocrinology, respiratory, and so on.

Telling about her experience at FPS as a student, Pooi Yee says "I cannot thank everyone enough at FPS for the amazing experiences that have helped shape my career!"

Did you know...

Three Covid -19 vaccine candidates are already there in the phase II clinical trials

RESEARCH @ FPS

Kudos to the staff and students of FPS as they continue their journey towards excellence in research through grants worth more than a million Ringgits. These grants are vital for supporting and enhancing the quality of the research work being carried out by undergraduate, masters and PhD students of FPS.

Apart from research grants, the FPS staff are actively collaborating with eminent research universities and institutions including Nihon Pharmaceutical University (Japan), University of Nottingham (UK), Universiti Malaya, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi MARA, MAHSA University, and Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM), to name a few.

The faculty will continue to work in line with the vision of UCSI University to foster excellence in research.

STAFF ACHIEVEMENT



Associate Professor Dr Mogana Sundari Rajagopal, was invited to deliver a talk at "International Conference on Natural Products and Human Health-2020" on 27 to 29 February 2020 at University of Delhi, India. The conference was organised by Deshbandhu College, University of Delhi. She was also the speaker at the Pre-Conference Workshop titled "Issues and Challenges for Development of Phytopharmaceutical Drug" on February 26, 2020 at Delhi Pharmaceutical Sciences and Research University in New Delhi, India.

STUDENT EVENT: YOUTH X TALK

The student body of FPS, UCSIUPSA, organised Youth X Talk in 2019. The talk featured prominent speakers sharing their experience in work and entrepreneurship, which helped students to discover potential opportunities beyond the traditional roles of a pharmacist.

The speakers for the talk were Ms Jess Chong, Chief Pharmacist of Park@City and a recipient of Malaysia Top 100 Most Influential Young Entrepreneur 2018; Miss Bernice Choy Wen Yan, Co-Manager of Tokyo Jazz Swing Concert 2019 and Public Engagement Director for Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society Young Pharmacist Chapter; and Mr Yeo Keh Hau, Business Development Manager in Advanx Health and sub-working committee lead at Digital Health Malaysia.



A SNEAK PEEK INTO FPS

Did you know that:

- FPS offers the first-ever Master of Clinical Pharmacy Practice programme with a community pathway in the whole of Asia.
- FPS offers the only mixed-mode of MSc Pharmaceutical Technology programme in Malaysia with a thoroughly industry-relevant curriculum.
- All masters programmes offered by FPS offer PRP pathway to Malaysian Pharmacy Graduates.
- All postgraduate students of FPS are eligible to avail themselves of conference funding during their studies.



FPS offers both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes with the emphasis on serving the community.

Doctoral Programme

- Doctor of Philosophy (Pharmaceutical Sciences)

Masters Programmes

- MSc Pharmaceutical Chemistry
- MSc Pharmaceutical Technology
- Master of Clinical Pharmacy Practice

Degree Programmes

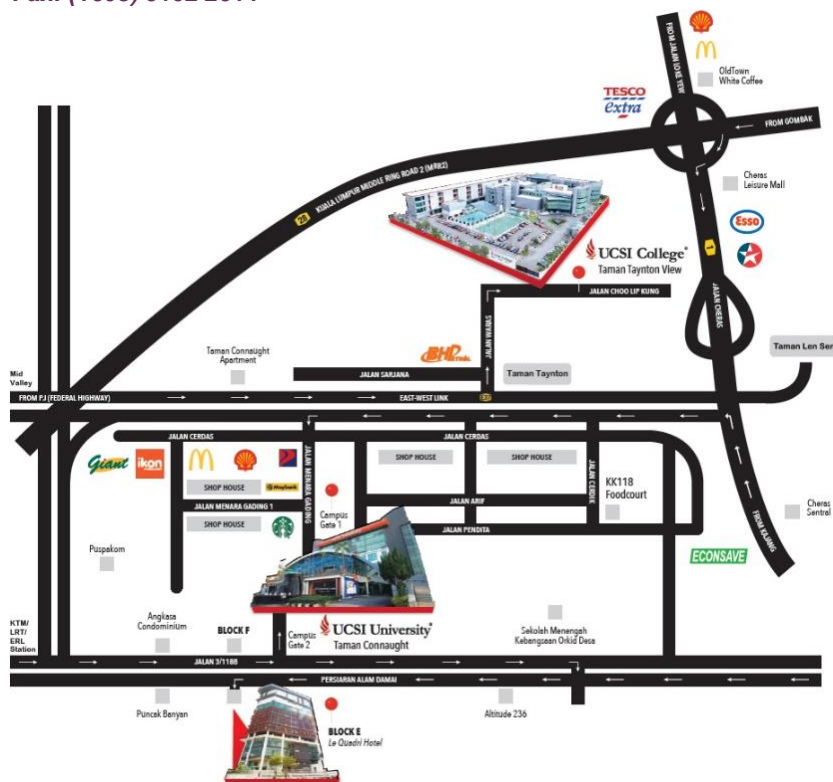
- Bachelor of Pharmacy (Hons)

Foundation Programmes

- Foundation in Science (Pharmacy)

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Mr Muhammad Ahsan
Mr Yap Chuan Sheng
Assistant Professor Dr Ashok Kumar
Janakiraman

UPCOMING EVENTS @ FPS

- Webinar on “Introduction of Solid Lipid Nanoparticle for External Applications” by Associate Professor Dr Palanirajan Vijayarajkumar on 27 May 2020
- Webinar on “Computational Molecular Modeling for Drug Designing” by Assistant Professor Dr Anand Gaurav on 29 May 2020
- Oath Taking Ceremony on 21 June 2020
- Webinar on “Now Most Ordinary People May Pass A Basic Course of Epidemiology. What Do We Know More?” by Assistant Professor Fazlollah Keshavarzi on 18 June 2020
- Webinar on “Should You Major in Pharmacy or Pharmaceutical Sciences?” by Assistant Professor Dr Chew Yik Ling on 24 June 2020

