



# RESEARCH UPDATE

A WEEKLY COMMUNICATION FROM THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH & SPONSORED PROGRAMS

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

- **March Distinguished Researcher Seminar Series to Focus on Vaccine Development**
  - Norbert Pardi, Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania will be speaking on the Development of Nucleoside-Modified mRNA Vaccines at the March DRS Seminar. Mark your calendar for March 15 from 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. The Department of Biomedical Science is hosting this seminar. We will post access information in advance of the seminar.
- **AACOM Osteopathic Health Policy Fellowship**
  - The [Osteopathic Health Policy Fellowship \(OHPF\)](#) is a year-long leadership training program designed to help osteopathic physicians and other associated health professionals develop the skills they need to analyze, formulate, and implement health policy on the local, state, and national levels. The OHPF is primarily sponsored by AACOM. The program is designed for practicing or teaching osteopathic physicians and other individuals with an established connection to the osteopathic profession. OHPF Alumni include non-physician COM faculty and administrators, physician assistants, state osteopathic association and foundation directors, and hospital administrators. **The Application Deadline is March 31, 2021.**
- **AACOM Annual Meeting (Virtual Meeting)**  
[Registration is Open!](#) The 2021 AACOM Educating Leaders Conference is scheduled for April 20-22 as a virtual conference. Regular registration is \$395 and registration for students/interns/residents is \$225.

## MEDICAL STUDENT RESEARCH

- *Director's Corner*

### The "Science" of a Star Wars Publication

Judging by the title, you might believe that I will be discussing the science behind some of the facets of Star Wars, such as hyperspace travel, an alternative space-time dimension that allows passengers to travel great distances that can only be achieved by traveling at or faster than the speed of light. You might also think I will attempt to discuss the physics of lightsabers, an energy blade made of plasma that serves as a signature weapon of Jedi and Sith, or the awe inspiring engineering of the Death Star, a moon-sized space station armed with a powerful laser that is capable of destroying an entire planet [sorry Alderaan]. Sadly, these elements that are rooted into the core of Star wars will have to be discussed later. However, I will be discussing predatory journals and the involvement of a Star Wars-themed spoof scientific paper that described midi-chlorians, or might I say as a cell and molecular biologist, mitochondrians.

A neurology expert blogged about writing a spoof manuscript that was published by several predatory journals.<sup>1</sup> The published piece was entitled, "Mitochondria: Structure, Function and Clinical Relevance" and authored by Lucas McGeorge and Annette Kin, both of which refer to the creator of Star Wars, George Lucas, and the primary Star Wars antagonist Anakin Skywalker (Darth Vader), respectively. This spoof manuscript was assembled using Star Wars references, contained entire word-for-word passages from the Star Wars saga movies, and described the ever-controversial midi-chlorians. Midi-chlorians are microscopic elements (organelles) living symbiotically in cells that allow individuals to be sensitive to the energy of all life, the Force. Now I'm sure you get the mitochondrians joke by now.

So, what is a predatory journal? A predatory journal uses publishing practices that charge authors to publish their work without checking the manuscript's quality or legitimacy, and essentially functioning as a pay-to-play enterprise. So, how do you identify a predatory journal? The first place to investigate a journal is within the Stop Predatory Journals website (<https://predatoryjournals.com/>). Other potential identifying characteristics of predatory journals may include:

- Unprofessional looking website
- Lacks contact information or contains unprofessional email addresses
- Submission rather than a publication fee
- Very fast (in days or weeks) publication process
- No clear publication date
- Sends spam requests for manuscripts via email
- Journal has a very high acceptance rate
- A small or non-existent editorial board
- Editorial policies that are not transparent
- Not indexed in established journal databases

Why not publish in predatory journals? One word, credibility. The credibility of researchers can be damaged by publishing in predatory journals, which can lead to difficulties in securing grants or even employment. Additionally, these journals usually charge exorbitant fees to publish a paper, and at times may hold the work hostage until the charges are paid. Another concern, predatory journals do not usually have long-term storage policies, which means that the research that is published may not be accessible in the future.

Since there is a severe lack of integrity to the practices used by predatory journals, there are many other examples where authors have used fictitious science papers to target and mock these journals.<sup>2</sup> In this case regarding the Star Wars paper, and especially considering that the paper was poorly written deliberately, I'm *very* sure that the author must have enlisted a method that was once used a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, the Jedi mind trick [while waving their hand], to get the paper published in several of them.

#### References Cited:

1. Haridy, R. Fake Star Wars-inspired Research Paper Published by Several "Predatory Journals". News Atlas. Retrieved from <https://newatlas.com/predatory-journals-tricked-fake-paper/50594/>. Published 2017. Accessed February 11, 2021.
2. Bohannon, J. Who's Afraid of Peer Review? Science. 2013;342(6154):60-65. Retrieved from <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/342/6154/60>. Accessed February 11, 2021.

*Steven J. Ontiveros, Ph.D.*  
Director of Student Research  
ORSP Jedi

- ***New Student Research Reporting Policy***

On February 2, 2021 students were notified of a change in the [Student Handbook Section on Research & Scholarly Activity](#). The essence of this new policy centers on students informing the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs of research plans and activities in advance of beginning a research project, submitting an abstract to a conference, or submitting a communication for publication. The reporting involves completion of a short online form to ORSP to ensure that the research is conducted in compliance with institutional policies, as well as any applicable regulations that the College has a responsibility to comply with. Please feel free to [contact us](#) with any questions that you may have regarding this new policy and associated procedures. Additional information and access to the online forms are available on the [ORSP Medical Student Research Starting Your Research](#) web page or Dr. Ontiveros.

- ***AOA Research Training Grants***

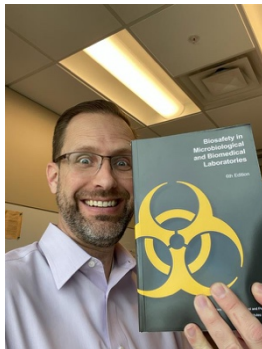
- The [AOA Research Training Grants](#) for medical students program will begin receiving applications this month. The application cycle will open on December 15, 2020 and close on February 15, 2021. These training grants provide up to \$5,000 in funding for medical students and aim to promote the osteopathic approach to care through AOA-funded research. All individuals planning to submit a grant must contact the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs and submit a [Proposal Transmittal Form](#) along with other requisite information at least

five (5) business days in advance of the submission deadline. *Please contact [Dr. Benoit](#) for more information regarding the grant submission process.*

- ***Student Research Support Fund***
  - In support of Burrell College medical student research and creative scholarship endeavors, the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) is pleased to announce the new 2020-2021 Student Research Support Fund and invites student researchers to submit an application. This funding opportunity provides Burrell College medical students with limited funds to support their research and creative scholarship. Applications are available on the [program website](#).
- ***Distinction in Research***
  - The Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) is pleased to announce the [Distinction in Research](#) that will begin accepting applications on **January 15, 2021**. The Distinction is a highly intensive and optional path that provides opportunities for medical students who seek higher levels of mentored research experiences. Contact: [sjontiveros@bcomNM.org](mailto:sjontiveros@bcomNM.org) or [research@bcomNM.org](mailto:research@bcomNM.org)

## RESEARCH LABORATORIES

- ***New CDC Guidelines***



Dr. Woods is excited about the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories. You can obtain a free [print edition](#) (1 per investigator) or access the [PDF version](#) online.

- ***Laboratory Services for Faculty Investigators***
  - The Research Laboratories are pleased to announce a new effort to advance faculty-driven research by offering Laboratory Services in support of college-sponsored research. All you need to do is submit a request using a [Research Services Request Form](#).
- ***Bio-Rad BioPlex 200 Installed in Research Laboratories***

The Bio-Rad BioPlex 200 instrument has been installed in the BioScience Research Laboratory. Kalli Martinez will receive training from the vendor on instrument maintenance and operation and will be available to assist investigators with accessing this new capability. Please contact Dr. Woods or Ms. Kalli Martinez if you have any questions about BioPlex multiplexed immunoassays.
- ***Research Laboratory Access***
  - We wish to remind laboratory users to contact [Ms. Kalli Martinez](#) before visiting the Research Laboratories. We continue to operate at a reduced capacity and it is important that we maintain awareness of laboratory user access.
- ***Human Physiology Laboratory***
  - The IRB and Office of Research are working with Principal Investigators towards a plan for resuming face to face human subjects research in the Human Physiology Laboratory. Each project is being considered on a project-by-project basis from a risk/benefit perspective by the IRB based on information provided by the principal investigators. Assessment of risks and benefits includes those imposed to both subjects and investigators during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Contact the [IRB](#) or [Research Office](#) for more information.

## DATES AND DEADLINES

- Institutional Review Board (IRB) – February 22, 2021; 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.
  - Last day to submit materials for this meeting: February 9, 2021
  - Email: [IRB@bcomnm.org](mailto:IRB@bcomnm.org)
- Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) – March 15, 2021, 12:00-1:00 p.m.
  - Last day to submit materials for this meeting: March 5, 2021
  - Email: [Research@bcomnm.org](mailto:Research@bcomnm.org)
    - The Institutional Biosafety Committee voted to move to a schedule of 4 meetings per year at their last meeting. The 2021 IBC meetings will be on March 10, April 14, July 14 and November 10. Principal Investigators needing approval for Summer Research should submit protocols for either March or April review. For more information contact Dr. Woods or the Office of Research.
- Research Advisory Council (RAC) – February 19, 2021, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
- [Distinguished Researcher Seminar Series](#)
- The Distinguished Researcher Seminar Series will continue as an online series through the Spring Semester.
  - March 15, 2021: 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
    - Development of Nucleoside-Modified mRNA Vaccines. Norbert Pardi, Ph.D., Research Assistant Professor of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania.
      - *Invited and Hosted by Department of Biomedical Science*
  - April 2021: Medical Student Body will invite and host the speaker. Date to be announced.
- **AACOM Annual Meeting (Virtual Meeting)**  
The 2021 AACOM Educating Leaders Conference is scheduled for April 20-22 as a virtual conference. Regular registration is \$395 and registration for students/interns/residents is \$225.

## POLICY & REGULATORY UPDATE

- **Burrell College New or Updated Policies and Procedures**
  - The Biosafety Manual has been updated after undergoing IBC review and is available on the Burrell College website. A minor modification has been made to the Blood-borne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan and we are still finalizing an SOP to inform the process by which Burrell Investigators can document Hepatitis B vaccination.
    - [Biological Safety Manual](#)
    - [Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan](#)
    - Research Laboratories Services Request, [RSP.018](#)
      - ⑩ This policy defines the procedure whereby a Burrell College faculty may request Laboratory Services in support of College-sponsored research projects.
- **Human Research Protection** ○ [AHRQ Guide Notice on Exception to the Use of the Single IRB Review Requirements During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Public Health Emergency](#)
- **CDC**
  - [Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories \(BMBL\) 6<sup>th</sup> Edition](#) **New Edition!** *Download your Free Copy.*
- **World Health Organization**
  - [Laboratory Biosafety Manual, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition](#) (**New Edition**, December 2020)

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, MEETINGS, and NOTICES

- **AACOM Grants to Fund Medical Education Research**

- Apply for AACOM's annual, highly competitive [Research Grant Program](#). Topics of particular interest include those that promote wellness, diversity and inclusion in osteopathic medical education; assess student readiness for residency using Entrustable Professional Activities, milestones or other residency performance measures; and those that advance the selection of students and residents who embrace the osteopathic philosophy and are successful at colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs). Primary investigators must be educators at a US COM. The deadline for applications is March 1, 2021.
- **AACOM [Grants to Reduce Opioid Use in Pain Management](#)**
  - The AACOM Opioid Advisory Task Force is organizing a multi-institutional study on the use of osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM) as an adjuvant to reduce analgesics (including NSAIDs, APAP and opioids) in pain management. The Task Force welcomes both basic science and clinical researchers in the osteopathic medical education community to submit project ideas. The deadline for applications has been extended to February 23, 2021.
- **AOA Grant Opportunities**
  - The [2021 AOA Research Grant Program](#) offers opportunities for grants of up to \$100,000. The deadline for all applications is Monday, February 15, 2021. Please contact the Research Office if you plan to submit a proposal.
- Guidance on new proposal submission and related information is available in MS Teams and on the Research Office Website. Please submit a completed [Proposal Transmittal Routing Request](#) in advance of the deadline. Allow five (5) business days for institutional review and signatures.
- [NIH Weekly Funding Opportunities and Notices](#) – February 19, 2021
- American Osteopathic Association
  - [AOA Research Grants](#) for DOs, MDs, and PhDs
  - [Research Opportunities](#) for resident physicians, fellows and osteopathic medical students
- [Wells Fargo Philanthropic Services](#) (Search for Opportunities)
- [Experimental Biology 2021](#) will be held April 27-30, 2021 as a virtual meeting.
- [AACOM Educating Leaders 2021](#) will be held April 20-22 as a virtual event.
- [American Academy of Osteopathy Convocation](#) will be held March 17-21, 2021 (*Currently being planned as a hybrid event*)

## CLINICAL TRIALS INFORMATION

### • *Clinical Trials Information*

[TrialSite News](#) is a digital media resource dedicated to transparent and open coverage of clinical research trial sites around the globe.

Regeneron is looking for clinical partners in the region to expand ongoing research on monoclonal antibody therapy. Physicians should contact [Dr. Benoit](#) for more information.

## INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

- **Case Report Guidance** ○ Many of you have informed us of your intent to publish a case report. Please consult our [Case Report Publication Guidance](#) for additional information as you prepare your manuscripts for submission. While IRB approval is generally not required for Case Reports, the College expects that authors have secured permission for medical record access and follow all applicable regulations, policies and procedures. Please feel free to contact the [Office of Research](#) if you need additional guidance.
- **Information on Publishing Venues**
  - The Office of Research and the Burrell College Health Sciences Library are available to assist with any questions that you may have regarding appropriate places to publish your research.
- **[Cureus Journal of Medical Sciences](#)**
  - Cureus is an open access peer reviewed medical journal based in San Francisco, CA that offers free publication for articles that follow their author instructions.
- **Journal of Osteopathic Medicine**
  - The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association (JAOA) is now the Journal of Osteopathic Medicine (JOM). The first issue of the new Journal will be out in January.

- [Call for COVID-19 Research Papers](#): The JAOA editors invite researchers to share information and data about their experiences with COVID-19 with the osteopathic community.
- Are you interested in publishing a literature review? The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association has created a video that provides tips for putting together a quality [Systematic Literature Review](#)

## **RECENT AND FORTHCOMING SCHOLARLY WORK BY BURRELL COLLEGE RESEARCHERS**

*(Please email us with your news and we will add it to future Updates.)*

[Email](#) Us Information About Your Scholarly Activity

Include Full Citations in the Correspondence

