

Dear MBlers,

this semester has certainly had profound impact on our department. A lot of things have changed or are in the process of being changed. Mathias will begin as head of the Department of Biomedicine from September. Øyvind will therefore take the position of head of MBI with Rune as his deputy. Thomas starts his position at Biomedicine in August and his group will move there at the end of that month.

Given these developments, the Faculty Board decided recently to accelerate the merger between MBI and BIO to ensure a proper functionality. The formal merger is scheduled to be enacted from January 2018 followed by a transition period of 6 months. Both the MBI leader team, Ørjan Totland (Head of BIO and then of the merged department) and the faculty leadership agree that this merger provides a number of opportunities to improve and strengthen molecular life sciences at the faculty. It is important to all to make this transition as easy and smooth as possible and we can assure everyone that there will be a minimum of changes that might affect the work environment as we know it at MBI (some more Info below). All of us (Andrea, Øyvind, Mathias) are, of course, open to discuss any concerns you might have. Do not hesitate to ask, in case you have questions! But we also need to hear about your thoughts and ideas for the merged department to take them with us in the discussions.

The Faculty Board also approved the report from the "Molecular Life Sciences" working group that was led by Mathias and has provided several concrete suggestions how this rapidly evolving field could be strengthened, both short- and long-term. We will closely watch and support the faculty's efforts to pursue these possibilities. Given the structural re-organization of MBI, the current situation actually provides unique opportunities to make big steps forward in this area, with MBI being at the core. Since both Thomas and Mathias retain some of their research activities here, this is also a chance to eventually establish closer ties to the medical faculty as well.

Four new positions in molecular biology are to be filled within the near future (2 following those of Rein and Mathias, a bioinformatics position and a new position to be announced in the fall). It will be fascinating to see the new people contributing to a lively environment and exciting research – and not least, excellent teaching.

We wish to thank Andrea for her excellent and enthusiastic work for ~15 years at MBI. She has been the heart and the soul of the department. We are happy she got the offer to become head of administration at the Department of Geosciences, a challenge that she is looking forward to. But she will still be with us (at least 50%) until the end of the year!

We would like to thank all MBlers for their dedicated work and great efforts! Given that three of our colleagues have been on sabbatical, it is impressive that the teaching went so smoothly! And we can't wait for Nathalie and Aurélia coming back now, certainly full of energy and enthusiasm!

Finally, we are grateful to our students, in particular, Heliks for their continuous efforts to maintain the quality and identity of molecular biology! This is not just important for a good atmosphere here at MBI, but your voice is also heard in the faculty!

We wish everyone a relaxing and exciting holiday time and look forward to meet the upcoming challenges with enthusiasm, dedication and an optimistic smile!

Mathias and Øyvind

Research and research training



New PhD - Daniel Thiel

We congratulate Daniel Thiel who defended his PhD-thesis today, 29. June. Daniel has been a PhD-fellow in Andreas Hejnl's group at the Sars International Centre for Marine Molecular Biology. Daniel's thesis was entitled:

Evolutionary and behavioral analysis of neuropeptides in bilaterians

Teaching and student matters

Nye mastergrader

Denne fine gjengen har avsluttet sine mastergradsstudier med avsluttende eksamen og offentlig presentasjon av masteroppgaven:

Silje Hjørnevik
Åsta Ottesen
Tonje Merethe Røssland
Nina McTiernan
Therese Rønvik Eidsnes

Vi takker alle for den store innsatsen de har lagt ned i prosjekt og studier og for at de har vært med på å gjøre instituttet til et spennende og godt sted å være for ansatte og studenter. Lykke til videre!

New faces



Espen Bariås

PhD-fellow, NucReg/Lipidstruct
(Halskau)

Staff news

Espen Bariås started as a PhD-fellow in April, holding a 4-year UiB-stipend. He will be working in the Lipidstruct group which is part of the NucReg research programme. He will be supervised by Øyvind Halskau, with Aurelia Lewis as co-supervisor.

The two vacant professorships after Rein and Mathias will be filled as soon as possible. We have, following the Department council's (Instituttrådet) advice, asked that applicants for the first of these (replacing Rein) are considered also for the second professorship. The quality of the candidates and other formal considerations will determine whether this will actually be possible. Two of the three candidates selected to give trial lectures and interviews, Gray Pearson and David Micklem, recently presented their lectures. The trial lecture and interview with the third candidate, Kathrin Thedieck, is scheduled for August 21.

Additional professorships. In addition to these two professorships, MBI has also been granted a new professorship in Bioinformatics. This is part of a strategic initiative at UiB with strong support from Bergen forskningsstiftelse (BFS), to strengthen the area of Bioinformatics in Bergen. A second new professorship within the field of molecular life science will also be established. Although the professorship is not formally bound to MBI, it

Calendar

PhD-defense, Marianne Goris



Foto: Marc Niere

Friday 30. June, 10:15
Stort auditorium, Datablokken

Functional investigation of the human N-terminal acetyltransferases Naa60 and Naa80

will be announced within core areas in molecular life science identified by the working group appointed by the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences and is likely to become part of the molecular biology research environment at the new merged department.

Friday seminar 30. June 13:30



Foto: University of Copenhagen

Friday 30. June, 13:30, N-terminalen

[Prof. Frank Hauser](#), Department of Biology, University of Copenhagen:

Evolution of GnRH-like neuropeptide signaling systems in protostomes



Andrea Grimnes will leave MBI to become Head of administration at the Department of Geosciences. Andrea will continue her work at MBI until the end of the year, but will share her time between MBI and GEO (50% each) from 1. September.

Samuel Furse will leave his post doc position at MBI from early September to take on a new engagement as a researcher at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

Thomas Arnesen will leave his position at MBI to start a new engagement as professor at the Department of Biomedicine (80%). He will relocate with his group during August. However, Thomas has accepted a continued employment at MBI in a 20% position. Thus he will contribute to teaching at the Department also in the future, and some of the group's research activities will still be located here. The group will therefore keep some office- and lab space at MBI for future activity.

Sommerfest!



The NAT-group. Thanks to all present and former members of the group for all your efforts and contributions during the MBI-years.



Mathias Ziegler has - as you all know, accepted the position as Head of department at the Department of biomedicine. He starts his new engagement 1. September. In the near future much of the group's research will still take place at MBI, but the Molecular Bioenergetics and Signalling group and it's activities will gradually be transferred to his new department.



The NAD-group. Thanks for great work so far, for renewing our PhD-celebrations and for all your contributions over the years.

MBI info

MBI and BIO merger and management

As previously informed during the MBI general assembly in May, the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences' board handled the proposal to merge the Departments of biology and Molecular biology in their meeting 15. May. The merger was indeed decided by the board, and the the two departments will be merged as of 1. January 2018.

So far this is what has been decided regarding management and further process:

- Ørjan Totland will be the Head of the new merged department.
- Øyvind Halskau will serve as Head of department at MBI between the date Mathias Ziegler leaves the position (1. September) and 1. January.
- The heads of the two departments have been asked to work out a proposal describing how the departments can be reorganised to function as one single unit as of 1. January.
- A formal process for any reorganisation of staff following the merger will not start until after 1. January.



-The newly appointed Head of administration at the Department of biology, Terje Restad, former Head of administration at the Department of geophysics, will become the Head of administration for the merged department
-Andrea Grimnes will become head of administration at the Department of Geosciences, and will thus leave the department from 1. January 2018.



Reorganization of the faculty's accounting system

Starting in September, the faculty will have a centralized accounting system. There will be two nodes, one at Marineholmen and another in Real-fagbygget. It has been decided that the node at Marineholmen will be placed within MBI. This will cause some re-organization of the office area where our administration is currently located.

We welcome the new people from the faculty administration!

We are particularly happy that Margun will also be in this node, even though her responsibilities will not be related to MBI anymore. Thank you so much Margun, for many years of excellent work and service for our department!



*Big thanks to Martin Jakubec
for all the great pictures*

God sommer!