



SIUE School of Pharmacy Clinical Professor to Present Nationally on Drug Safety

by Megan Wieser

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EDWARDSVILLE – In the pharmaceutical world, ensuring safety in the way in which prescription drugs are distributed and understanding their adverse effects, is of the utmost importance for patient protection.

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville School of Pharmacy (SOP) Clinical Assistant Professor Fred Gattas, PharmD, BCNP, FAPhA, will share his expert knowledge on the topic of pharmacovigilance with the nearly 6,000 pharmacists and student pharmacists attending the American Pharmacists Association's (APhA) Annual Meeting and Exposition March 20-23 in National Harbor, MD.

The event unites “pharmacists from all experience levels and practice settings, including community, independent ownership, research, academia, government and health system.”

Gattas specializes in nuclear pharmacy, and is director of Medical and Safety Affairs for North America at Curium, a radiopharmaceutical manufacturer. At the APhA event, he will discuss the detection, assessment, understanding and prevention of adverse effects and other drug-related events.

“As a profession, we need to be ever attentive to the safety of the drugs we are dispensing,” Gattas explained. “Pharmacovigilance is every healthcare practitioners’ job. Pharmaceutical manufacturers obtain safety information from a variety of places, including the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), other health authorities and literature, but probably the most important is direct and spontaneous reporting from practitioners and clinicians. If manufacturers do not receive these reports from the field on the use and adverse effects of the drugs they manufacture, it inhibits their ability to detect important signals to continually assess the drug’s safety profile.”

In the SOP, he offers students the opportunity to dive deep into the niche specialization of nuclear pharmacy.

“Dr. Gattas is respected in the field of nuclear pharmacy, both regionally and nationally,” said Mark Ruscin, PharmD, professor and chair in the SOP Department of Pharmacy Practice. “Nuclear pharmacy is highly-specialized. The SIUE School of Pharmacy is fortunate to have Dr. Gattas as part of its program, and our students have the incredible opportunity to benefit from his expertise.”

Gattas is a firm advocate for continuing education, noting that after earning a degree, information on pharmaceutical care is no longer “force fed.” Practitioners need to make a concerted effort to advance their education and understanding of care or risk falling behind in knowledge and doing patients a disservice.

“I feel a calling to help promote the profession by being active in educating and performing duties on behalf of various state and national organizations,” he concluded.

Today’s pharmacists improve patients’ lives through the medication and education they provide. Dedicated to developing a community of caring pharmacists, the SIUE School of Pharmacy curriculum is nationally recognized as a model that offers students a unique combination of classroom education, research, community service and patient care. The School of Pharmacy’s areas of excellence include a drug design and discovery core; pediatric practice; chronic pain research and practice; and diabetes research and practice. As the only downstate Illinois pharmacy doctorate program, the SIUE School of Pharmacy is addressing the growing need for highly trained pharmacists in a rapidly growing field.

SIUE School of Pharmacy Clinical Assistant Professor Dr. Fred Gattas will present on the topic of pharmacovigilance at the 2020 APhA Annual Meeting and Exposition.