
EDITORIAL



A magnificent inaugural event, on 4 March 2005, marked the establishment of a new and original body, the Ecole de Pharmacie Genève-Lausanne (EPGL). Situated on the banks of the river Arve in Geneva, this new structure, arising out of the fusion of the pharmacy departments of the Universities of Geneva and Lausanne, illustrates in a convincing way that it is possible to overcome local difficulties and antagonisms in order to stimulate university development, often still hindered by regional borders.

This present edition of CHIMIA, drawn up in the aftermath of the inauguration, aims to present the new face of pharmaceutical Sciences in the French-speaking part of Switzerland (Suisse Romande) to the scientific community. Oriented intentionally from a scientific viewpoint, this special issue sets out to illustrate the major axes of research which make the new structure a centre of excellence in pharmaceutical sciences in the European arena. To begin this editorial, however, we would like to present certain points which characterize the new centre.



Over 150 staff, 80 doctoral students and 350 students occupy an area of 6000 m² and constitute the heart of the new Section of Pharmaceutical Sciences. However, the EPGL is not constrained by the physical barriers of buildings and a network of scientific and educational interactions spreads throughout the whole region around Lac Léman. This regional implantation is exemplified by a strong partnership with the hospital universities pharmacies in Geneva (HUG) and Lausanne (CHUV), with the medical school located in Geneva and Lausanne, with the Federal Institutes of Technology and also by close scientific and educational ties with the neighbouring Alpine Arc, in particular the Universities of Turin, Grenoble and Lyon. The creation of the EPGL is also an opportunity to reinforce contacts with industry and to develop interactions between the pharmaceutical sciences and inhabitants of the region *via* pharmacists, but also by the introduction of new possibilities such as apprenticeships, new works openings, etc.

The creation of the EPGL coincides with a major restructuring of the European university framework, namely the transition to the Bologna educational model. The EPGL structure gives a golden opportunity to revise the programme of study associated with pharmaceutical sciences. While continuing to assure the primary mission – the transfer of quality education to pharmacists, indispensable actors in the health domain – the EPGL has deliberately chosen an innovative direction in Switzerland by offering a new *modus* of training. Thus, convinced of the importance of the pharmaceutical sciences in the economic environment of Switzerland, EPGL has created a new type of master degree – the master in pharmaceutical sciences. The establishment of this new Master of Pharmaceutical Sciences is open to students who have passed their basic science training (Bachelor degree) in pharmaceutical sciences, chemistry, biochemistry or biology. This quality programme has the ambitious aim of training students in the different facets of drug development and to important contributors to the world of pharmaceutical sciences of tomorrow. The formation of the EPGL has also provided the opportunity to create a Master of Pharmacy, devoted to the training of scientists who wish to exercise the profession of retail or hospital pharmacist. This programme, however, is exclusively for holders of a Bachelor of Pharmaceutical Sciences. The pyramid of training possibilities created by the EPGL is topped by the opportunity to apply for a PhD degree in different areas of research, some of which are presented in this issue. The numerous PhD projects currently underway provide a measure of the vitality of this postgraduate training by the newly created Doctoral School. More details can also be found on our new web page (www.unige.cg/sciences/pharm).

The political and financial strivings of the Cantons of Geneva and Vaud, as well as the wholehearted supported of the officers of the Universities of Geneva and Lausanne has led to the establishment of a modern and dynamic structure, the Ecole de Pharmacie Genève-Lausanne. The teaching staff, researchers, other personnel and students of the EPGL are most grateful for this. Without doubt, the creation of this new entity will engender a new drive and enthusiasm in Western Switzerland, resulting in top quality teaching and research in the pharmaceutical sciences.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PACarrupt'.

Prof. Pierre-Alain Carrupt
Pharmacochimie

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Gurny'.

Prof. Robert Gurny
Président de la Section