

UT News

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May 28, 1986

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*****Dr. James Stull appointed
chairman of Department of Physiology

DALLAS--Dr. James T. Stull, former associate dean of the Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas, has been appointed chairman of the Department of Physiology. He will assume the post June 1.

A multi-talented scientist who is familiar with experimental approaches from several disciplines, Stull has been called a "biochemical, pharmacological physiologist." His primary faculty appointment since coming to the health science center in 1978 has been in the Department of Pharmacology, first as associate professor and then as professor.

Stull received his Ph.D. training in pharmacology at Emory University and then performed a post-doctoral fellowship in biochemistry at the University of California at Davis, with funding from the Damon Runyon Memorial Fund for Cancer Research.

He served as adjunct assistant professor of biochemistry at UC-Davis and as assistant professor and then associate professor of medicine at the University of California at San Diego. During this period, 1973-78, he was an established investigator of the American Heart Association.

Stull has witnessed a general shift in the basic sciences over the past years. "The basic biomedical sciences are not as distinct and compartmentalized as they once were," he says. "In my own studies on the regulation of muscle contractility, for example, we have used techniques from molecular biology, biochemistry, pharmacology and cell biology as well as physiology."

He says the physiology department is now particularly strong in neuroendocrinology and cardiovascular-respiratory physiology. As chairman he anticipates building the department with individuals from a variety of backgrounds and recruiting new faculty that complement the other basic sciences and clinical departments.

"Particularly exciting for me is the possibility of coordinating new faculty recruitment with other departments in order to strengthen new areas of the sciences," says Stull. "We need a spectrum of approaches to solve experimental problems."

Stull says he received initial encouragement to join the health science center faculty from UTHSCD President Charles Sprague and from Dr. Jere Mitchell, director of the Moss Heart Center and acting chairman of the Department of Physiology until Stull's appointment. "Drs. Sprague and Mitchell were committed to building the health science center into the strong research institution it is now," Stull says.

Stull says he is grateful to persons in the graduate school for the experience he gained there. "It has been a pleasure serving the graduate school and its dean, Dr. Bill Neaves," he says. "In particular it has been great working with Abby Freeman, assistant to the dean, who has the distinction of training a dean of the medical school, a dean of the graduate school and now a chairman of the Department of Physiology."

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