

## Summary of AAPS Italian University Network Student Chapter Scientific Program on Pharmaceutical Technology and Drug Delivery

Published: June 1, 2007

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**KEYWORDS:** Nanotechnology, drug delivery, AItUN, student chapter.

The American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) Italian University Network Student Chapter (AItUN), the first student chapter based in Europe, was founded May 2006 at the University of Perugia. AItUN, whose members hail from 13 Italian Universities, held its first annual meeting, *Pharmaceutical Nanotechnology & Drug Delivery* at the University of Ferrara on March 9, 2007. The event was generously supported by AAPS and the Consortium TEFARCO Innova. Other supporting organizations included the "Associazione Docenti e Ricercatori Italiani di Tecnologie e Legislazione Farmaceutiche" (ADRITELF), the consortium ASTER, and the Universities of Ferrara and Salerno. The program commenced with a welcome by Pharmacy Dean, Professor Rosario Rizzuto, followed by remarks from the AItUN Chair, Gaia Colombo, PhD. Professor Robin Bogner, PhD, University of Connecticut, a member of the AAPS Student/Postdoc Outreach and Development (SPOD) Committee, represented AAPS at the meeting.

The scientific program was comprised of 4 invited lectures, 4 short oral communications, and a poster session:

- The plenary session included a presentation by Alexander T. Florence, PhD, Emeritus Professor at the School of Pharmacy, University of London, on *Pharmaceutical Nanotechnology: is small always better?* during which he critically reviewed the colloidal systems investigated in the past 35 years and highlighted the lack of basic knowledge on their behavior and fate in the body;
- Assistant Professor Stefano Salmaso, PhD, University of Padova, described the use of modified cyclodex-

trins as a versatile platform for targeting and delivering drugs, illustrating how these formulation strategies can improve critical physicochemical and biopharmaceutical drug properties;

- *Nanoparticles and Brain Targeting* was presented by Giovanni Tosi, PhD, University of Modena-Reggio Emilia, during which modified PLGA nanoparticles were shown to cross the Blood-Brain Barrier and successfully target drugs to the brain parenchyma; and
- Giuseppe De Rosa, PhD, University of Napoli Federico II, showed the potential of newly-synthesized cationic lipids for the formulation and delivery of oligonucleotides, illustrating a stable formulation with better performance than those present on the market.

The 4 short oral communications included:

- Stefano Barbieri, University of Parma, *Progesterone Loading in Lecithin/Chitosan/Isopropyl Myristate Nanoparticles for Buccal Delivery*;
- Teresa Mencherini, University of Salerno, *Plant Extracts as Dermoactive Ingredients: Analytical, Biological and Technological Studies*;
- Luisanna Ostacolo, University of Napoli Federico II, *Design and Development of Biodegradable Micelles of Amphiphilic Copolymers with Novel Architectures: An Application to the Delivery of Anticancer Drugs*; and
- Aurélie Schoubben, University of Perugia, *Preparation and Characterization of Ferulic Acid Liposomal Formulations*.

The program featured 18 posters from which 3 grants were awarded, and a decision was made to hold the 2008 scientific meeting at the University of Perugia. The high quality of the scientific contributions was noted and the participation of almost 100 scientists was felt to be outstanding.

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