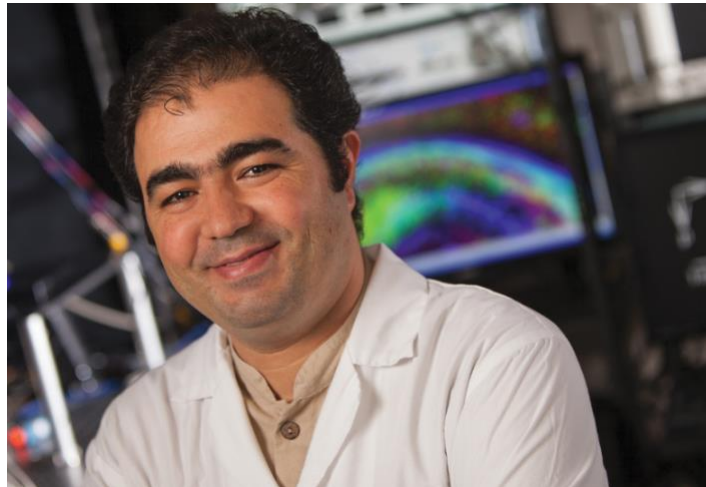


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Dr. Majid Mohajerani named first recipient of Dr. Bryan Kolb Professorship/Chair in Neuroscience

A new professorship created at the University of Lethbridge honours the legacy of one of the most influential figures in establishing the study of neuroscience and neuropsychology. It's first appointee is a rising star who continues to push the boundaries of the field.

Dr. Majid Mohajerani has been named the first recipient of the Dr. Bryan Kolb Professorship/Chair in Neuroscience, which carries a five-year term that may be renewed once for a second five-year term.



The award is an endorsement of the outstanding research Mohajerani has conducted since joining the U of L as part of the Government of Alberta's Campus Alberta Innovation Program (CAIP) Chairs plan in 2014. At the time, Mohajerani had been serving as a research associate at the International School for Advanced Studies in Trieste, Italy and at the University of British Columbia, and selected the U of L above a number of suitors.

"This is a very important appointment for the University and the Department of Neuroscience," says the U of L's Dr. Erasmus Okine, provost and vice-president (academic). "Majid's advanced work, primarily associated with the study of cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease, has led to a better understanding of how the brain ages and the underlying biological processes associated with the development of Alzheimer's disease. He continues to attract significant research funding support and push the boundaries of his field as well as the reputation of the Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience (CCBN)."

Mohajerani studies the neural basis of memory and its disorders. His research group concentrates on neural dynamics, with particular emphasis on sensorimotor integration and memory systems. The group combines optical imaging, electrophysiology and behavioural methods and computational tools to understand how different brain areas communicate with one another and how memory is encoded and consolidated, or motor movements are generated based on sensory inputs.

“It is a tremendous honour to be selected as the inaugural holder of a professorship named after my brilliant mentor and colleague Bryan Kolb. Bryan is truly a legend in his field. His research has revolutionized the way we think about neuroplasticity, among many other subjects. Having had the opportunity to work with Bryan over the last six years, I can also say he’s as kind and generous a colleague and mentor as one could hope for,” says Mohajerani. “He has been instrumental, together with Drs. Ian Wishaw and Robert Sutherland, in building the CCBN into what it is today. By allowing me to focus on my research programs, this professorship will greatly help me to do my own part in advancing our understanding of the cerebral cortex, and in maintaining the profile of the CCBN as a leading institute for brain research in Canada.”

Kolb, after whom the professorship is named, is a legendary figure in the study of neuroscience. He was the first to demonstrate how the regrowth of brain cells accompanies restoration of brain function and also the first to show, with Dr. Terry Robinson, that psychoactive drugs change neuronal structures and networks permanently and in a manner such that later neuroplasticity is altered.

In 1980, he co-authored with colleague Dr. Ian Wishaw, the textbook that helped define the field of neuropsychology. *Fundamentals of Human Neuropsychology* is now in its seventh edition and is regarded a seminal work in the field. He was key in establishing the CCBN and remains a primary investigator. He is a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, and in 2016, Kolb was inducted as an Officer of the Order of Canada.

To view online: <https://www.uleth.ca/unews/article/dr-majid-mohajerani-named-first-recipient-dr-bryan-kolb-professorshipchair-neuroscience>

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