

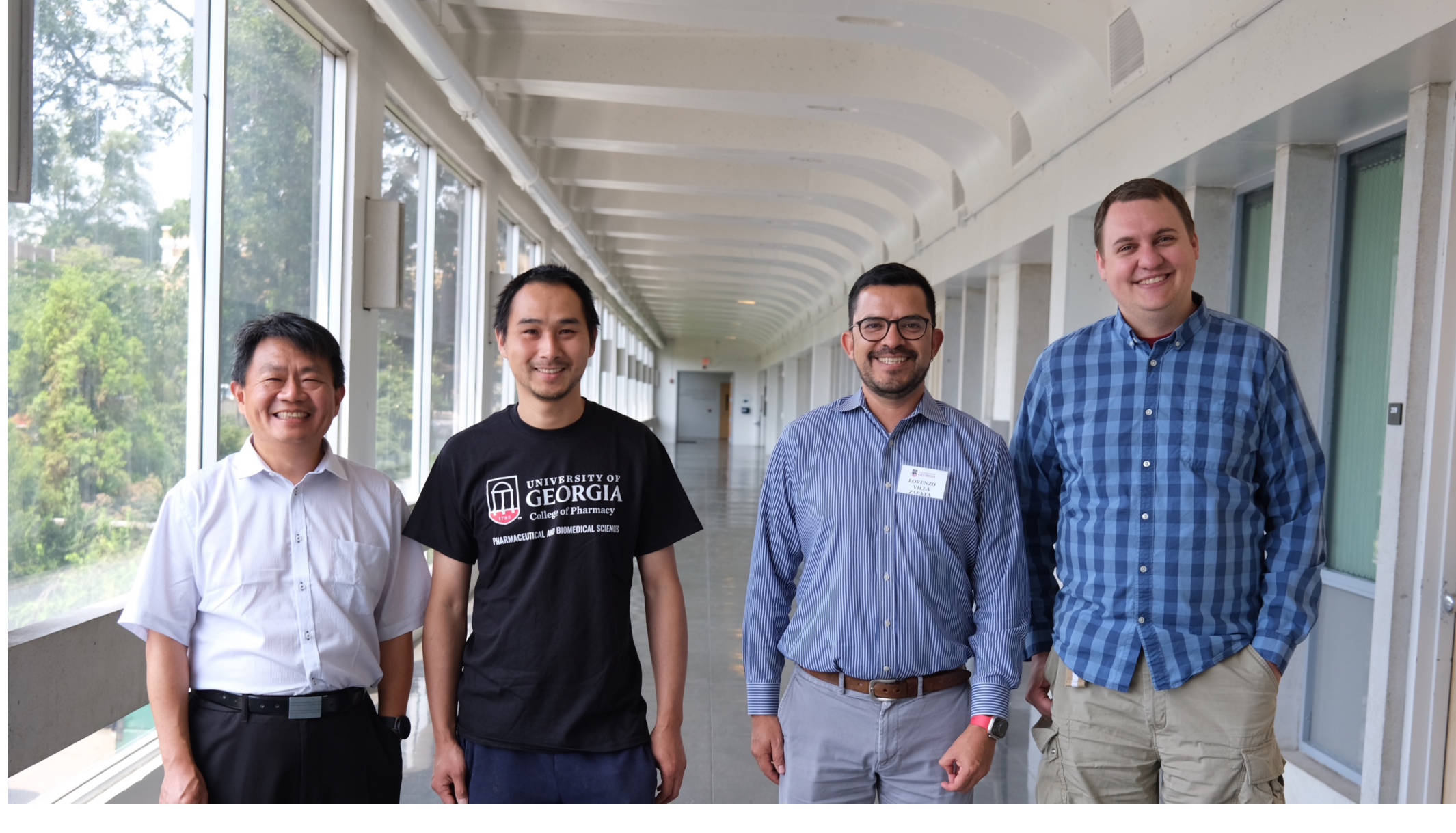
# PHARMDAWG

## weekly

Special Edition!

August 3, 2023

### UGA Pharmacy Welcomes New Faculty to College



Dr. Yaguang Xi, Dr. Bin Yi, Dr. Lorenzo Villa-Zapata, Dr. Blake Billmyre, (Not pictured: Dr. Niying Li and Dr. Matthew Schmidt)

A new Department Head for Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences, along with five new faculty members will highlight the start of the 2023–2024 academic year at the College of Pharmacy.

Dr. **Yaguang Xi** is the new head of the Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences Department. Joining him in PBS are Dr. **Blake Billmyre**, Assistant Professor, and Dr. **Bin Yi**, Associate Research Scientist. The Department of Clinical and Administrative Pharmacy has gained three new faculty members. They are Dr. **Lorenzo Villa-Zapata**, Assistant Professor, Dr. **Niying Li**, Assistant Professor, and Dr. **Matthew Schmidt**, Associate Professor.. These new faculty members will be located on the Athens campus.

Drs. Billmyre, Villa-Zapata, and Li are a part of the Precision One Health cluster in UGA's [Data Science and Artificial Intelligence](#) initiative. Dr. Schmidt is the first faculty member to be hired in the Translational Education Research in the Health Professions cluster.

Commented Dean Kelly Smith, “On behalf of our faculty and staff, I welcome these new colleagues to UGA and the College of Pharmacy. I am confident that, individually, these faculty members will make a significant contribution to our college’s research, scholarship, and service mission. Collectively, they will enhance the already stellar reputation for which our college is known. This upcoming academic year is filled with hope and promise, in large part, because of our outstanding faculty.”

The following offers a brief glimpse of the new faculty members. For a complete overview of these new colleagues, including their background, experience, and accomplishments, [see here](#). New staff members will be highlighted in the next issue of PharmDawg Weekly on August 10.

## Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences

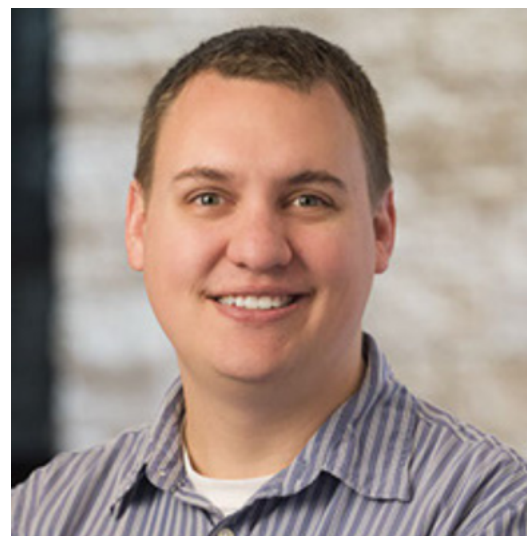


**Yaguang Xi**, MD, PhD, MBA, UGA Athletic Association Distinguished Professor in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, is the new Department Head for Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences.

Remarked Dean Smith, “Dr. Xi’s research accomplishments, extensive teaching and mentoring experiences, and leadership in building research collaborations make him immensely qualified for this role. His vision aligns directly with the teaching foci of PBS, and I am certain he will guide the department in an upward trajectory.”

Originally from China, Dr. Xi previously served as the Amgen Professor of Oncology, Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Genetics, and Associate Director for Translational Research in the LSU-LCMC Cancer Center, at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in New Orleans, LA.

**Bin Yi**, PhD is a new associate research scientist in Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences. Dr. Yi served at LSU Health Sciences Center as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Genetics and a program member of Stanley S. Scott Cancer Center and Core Director of IVIS system in Louisiana Cancer Research Consortium.



**Blake Billmyre**, PhD is a new assistant professor in Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Sciences, with joint appointment in the College of Veterinary Medicine’s Department of Infectious Diseases. Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, Dr. Billmyre completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Maryland in cell biology and molecular genetics. After completing a fellowship with the National Institute of Health, he moved to North Carolina to earn his PhD in genetics and genomics from Duke University, and afterward, he moved to Kansas City to complete a postdoc from the Stowers Institute for Medical Research. He is a member of the Genetics Society of

America.

## Clinical and Administrative Pharmacy



**Niying Li**, PhD joins the Clinical and Administrative Pharmacy department as an Assistant Professor. Dr. Li recently completed her postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Utah’s College of Pharmacy. She earned her Ph.D. in Health Services Research in Pharmacy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a MSc in Health Systems and Public Policy from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, and a B.S. in Pharmacy from Guangdong Pharmaceutical University in China.

**Lorenzo Villa-Zapata**, PhD is a new Assistant Professor in the Clinical and Administrative Pharmacy department.

Joining us from Mercer University, Lorenzo has lived in multiple places throughout the United States but is originally from Concepción, Chile. Lorenzo earned his professional pharmacy degree from the Universidad de Concepción and his Ph.D. in Pharmaceutical Economics, Policy and Outcomes from the University of Arizona, where he was recognized as a Fulbright fellow. He then completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Colorado in Denver’s College of Pharmacy at the Center for Pharmaceutical Outcomes Research.



**Matthew Schmidt**, PhD joins us with a primary appointment in the College of Education as an Associate Professor of Learning, Design, and Technology. Dr. Schmidt's work focuses on creating virtual reality interventions for individuals with autism and developing mHealth and eHealth solutions for individuals with disabilities and lifelong medical conditions, their families, and their providers. Before joining the University of Georgia, Dr. Schmidt held tenured positions at the University of Florida and the University of Cincinnati.

### Position Postings

Current job openings within the College of Pharmacy are listed below. Click the job title for more information.

#### Post-Doctoral Associate

G/R20835P  
Pharmacy-Pharm & Biomed Sci  
Grad/Research/Student/Temp

#### Assistant Research Scientist

F1606P  
Pharmacy-Pharm & Biomed Sci  
Faculty

#### Post-Doctoral Associate

G/R22906P  
Pharmacy-Pharm & Biomed Sci  
Grad/Research/Student/Temp

#### Administrative Assistant – Temporary

G/R22899P  
Pharmacy-External Affairs  
Grad/Research/Student/Temp

#### Development Coordinator – Temporary

G/R22898P  
Pharmacy-External Affairs  
Grad/Research/Student/Temp

## Calendar

For a full list of student events, view the [DSAC Calendar](#).

### SATURDAY, AUGUST 12

PharmD Class of 2027 White Coat Ceremony

10:30 am | UGA Performing Arts Center

### WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 16

First Day of the Fall 2023 Semester

All Day | Classes Begin

Have a submission for the *PharmDawg Weekly*?

Email [PharmDawg Weekly](#). Include a 2-3 sentence write-up, any

photos or graphics, and a contact person.