

PRESS RELEASE

Evolutionary medicine experts to gather at FSU

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TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Some of the biggest names in evolutionary medicine will be in Tallahassee Feb. 25 and 26 for an international conference at The Florida State University. Registration for the conference, “**Evolutionary Medicine: Contributions to the Study of Disease and Immunity**,” is free and open to the public. The keynote speakers include one of the founders of the evolutionary medicine field — Dr. Randolph Nesse of the University of Michigan — and the co-author of the field’s first textbook, Sir Peter Gluckman of the University of Auckland (New Zealand). Also scheduled to speak are Kathleen Barnes, of the Johns Hopkins Center for Global Health; Paul Ewald, director of the Evolutionary Medicine Program at the University of Louisville; and Michael Ruse, the Lucyle T. Werkmeister Professor of Philosophy at Florida State University. Evolutionary medicine is the application of evolutionary knowledge to the understanding and treatment of health and disease. Nesse has described it this way: “We’re trying to understand why natural selection has not made the body better, why natural selection has left the body with vulnerabilities. For every single disease, there is an answer to that question. And for very few of them is the answer very clear yet.” “Evolutionary medicine is on the cutting edge of how we think about health and disease,” said Joseph Gabriel, an assistant professor in the FSU College of Medicine and a member of the conference’s organizing committee. “It’s tremendously exciting to have some of the leading experts in the world come to Florida State University to discuss the topic with us.” Nesse is a professor of psychiatry and psychology and the director of the Evolution and Human Adaptation Program at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. He is the author of “Why We Get Sick” (1995; co-written with the now-late George Williams), the founding document of the field. Gluckman is a University of Auckland Distinguished Professor and one of New Zealand’s most highly decorated medical scientists. In 2001 he was awarded New Zealand’s highest scientific award, the Rutherford Medal. He served as the first Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister of New Zealand, and is the founding director of the Liggins Institute, home of the Centre for Human Evolution, Adaptation and Disease. Gluckman is the co-author of “Principles of Evolutionary Medicine,” the first textbook on the topic. The two-day conference will be held:

FRIDAY, FEB. 25
8:30 – 5:30
AUDITORIUM
FSU COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

AND

SATURDAY, FEB. 26
9:30 – 5:30
ROOM 1024
KING LIFE SCIENCES BUILDING

Register for the conference and find a complete schedule at www.bio.fsu.edu/FowlerII/. For a map of the Florida State campus, go to <http://map.campus.fsu.edu/index.aspx>. Cosponsors of the conference are Florida State’s College of Medicine, Department of Biological Science, and History and Philosophy of Science Program. Support for the event comes from the Frank and Yolande Fowler Endowment in Modern Molecular Biology and the William H. and Lucyle T. Werkmeister Endowment Fund.