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Four Named to Endowed Professorships

April 19, 2013

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – Illinois Wesleyan University President Richard F. Wilson has announced faculty appointments to three new endowed professorships and one existing position. Endowed professorships and chairs at Wesleyan honor faculty members who have distinguished themselves in terms of teaching and student engagement, scholarship and/or artistic achievement, and service at the very highest levels. The formal investiture of the new endowed professors will take place as part of Wesleyan's Commencement on May 5.

The honorees include: Mathematics Professor Tian-Xiao He, who becomes the new Earl and Marian A. Beling Professor of Natural Sciences; Professor of Chemistry Ram Mohan, who previously held the Beling Professorship of Natural Sciences, has been named to the new Wendell and Loretta Hess Professorship of Chemistry; Political Science Professor William Munro becomes the new Betty Ritchie-Birrer '47 and Ivan Birrer Endowed Professor; and History Professor Michael B. Young has been named to the new Robert W. Harrington Professorship.

Tian-Xiao He, Earl and Marian A. Beling Professorship of Natural Sciences

A prolific researcher and author, Professor of Mathematics Tian-Xiao He has published 111 papers and five books. In the past year, his work has appeared in *Journal of Computational and Applied Mathematics*, *Journal of Mathematical Research with Applications*, *Linear Algebra and Its Applications*, *Journal of Concrete and Applicable Mathematics*, and *Journal of Combinatorial Mathematics and Combinatorial Computing*. Textbook titles include: *Analysis, Combinatorics and Computing* (Nova Science Publishers, 2002); *Dimensionality Reducing Expansion of Multivariate Integration* (Birkhäuser, 2001); and *Wavelet Analysis and Multiresolution Methods* (Marcel Dekker, 2000). His research interests include approximation theory, numerical analysis, wavelet analysis, multivariate splines, number theory, theory of functions, enumerative combinatorics and combinatorial analysis.

Along with teaching courses in Calculus I to IV, Wavelet Analysis, Linear Algebra, Analysis I to III, Numerical Analysis, Complex Analysis, Differential Equations and several others, He supervises student research projects each semester and was named Student Senate Professor of the Year. The professor has also served as advisor to Pi Mu Epsilon, national mathematics honor society, and to the Illinois Wesleyan Mathematics Society, and has served on the Academic Appeals Board, Curriculum Council and Nominating Committee.

He earned a Ph.D. at Dalian University of Technology in his native China. Leetsch Charles Hsu, an international expert on combinatorics and number theory, directed his dissertation. He earned a second Ph.D. from Texas A&M University so he could work with Charles K. Chui, an internationally renowned expert on approximation theory.

The Beling Professorship of Natural Sciences was established in 1998 by the family of Earl and Marian A. Beling, commemorating their contributions as humanitarians and philanthropists.

Ram Mohan, Wendell and Loretta Hess Professorship of Chemistry

Mohan is currently on sabbatical teaching in India as a Fulbright-Nehru Teacher



Tian-Xiao He

Scholar, and will return to Illinois Wesleyan in mid-May. A 1985 graduate of Hansraj College in Delhi, India, Mohan earned a master's degree in organic chemistry from the University of Delhi in 1987 and a doctorate in chemistry from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), in 1992. Following that he conducted postdoctoral research at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Mohan's green chemistry research at Illinois Wesleyan has been supported by grants totaling over \$1.2 million from the National Science Foundation, Pfizer Pharmaceuticals, the American Chemical Society Petroleum Research Fund and the Research Corporation for Science Advancement. His work, which has been widely published in scientific journals, focuses on developing environmentally friendly organic synthesis using bismuth and iron compounds. Bismuth and its compounds are non-toxic and attractive from a green chemistry perspective. In 2011, the Illinois Heartland Section of the American Chemical Society named Mohan Chemist of the Year. He received the distinguished alumni award from UMBC in 2002 and the Henry Dreyfus Teacher Scholar award in 2001.

During his time at Illinois Wesleyan, Mohan has co-authored 55 articles with IWU undergraduates as co-authors. A 2007 review article on the reactivity of ionic liquids in the journal *Tetrahedron* was one of the top 50 most cited articles in 2007-2008. He has also been invited to speak at several universities and pharmaceutical companies worldwide.

The Wendell and Loretta Hess Professorship of Chemistry was created in 2012. Wendell Hess, himself a professor of chemistry, served IWU for 27 years in such roles as department chair, Director of Science Programs, twice as Associate Dean, Dean of the University, Provost and as Acting President in 1988.

William Munro, Betty Ritchie-Birrer'47 and Ivan Birrer Endowed Professorship

The 2012 winner of the Kemp Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence, Professor of Political Science William Munro is a scholar of the politics of state formation and development in the global south, as well as the international food economy. He is the author of *The Moral Economy of the State: Conservation, Community Development, and State-Making in Zimbabwe* (Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1998), and co-author of *Fighting for the Future of Food: Activists versus Agribusiness in the Struggle over Biotechnology* (University of Minnesota Press, 2010), which explores the debate over genetically modified seeds.

His scholarly works have been published in academic journals such as the *American Journal of Sociology*, *Comparative Politics* and *African Rural and Urban Studies*, and he has contributed book chapters to texts such as *Reconstructing Biotechnologies: Critical Social Analysis* (Wageningen Academic Press, 2008) and *Frontiers of Commodity Chain Research* (Stanford University Press, 2008).

Munro joined the Illinois Wesleyan faculty in 2000. He earned a doctorate in political science from Yale University, a bachelor's and master's degree from Cambridge University, and a bachelor's from Natal University in South Africa.



Ram Mohan



William Munro

At Illinois Wesleyan, Munro has served as a director of the International Studies program, director of the John and Erma Stutzman Peace Fellows Program, and co-coordinator of the Development Studies Team. He has also served as a faculty advisor to the IWU chapter of Amnesty International and to the International House on campus. He was a member of the Committee for a Sustainable Campus and the first-year advisory board. He also served as chair for the Technos Award Selection Committee. Munro is a member of the African Studies Team and the International Studies Steering Committee.

The new Betty Ritchie-Birrer'47 and Ivan Birrer Endowed Professorship is a result of a major gift in support of the *Transforming Lives Campaign*. The professorship is open to qualified members of the faculty in Psychology or any of the Social Sciences.

Michael B. Young, Robert W. Harrington Professorship

Young specializes in the history of early modern England and Europe from the Renaissance to the French Revolution. He is the author of three books about the reigns of King Charles I and King James I of England. The most recent, *James VI & I and the History of Homosexuality* (New York University Press, 2000) examines the so-called favorites of King James in relation to the history of homosexuality.

He has presented papers at numerous conferences in the United States and Canada and is a sought-after reviewer of other scholars' books on English and European monarchs. Young has also published articles in the *Journal of British Studies*, *The Historical Journal*, *Albion* and *Parliamentary History*.

Young received the inaugural James D. Dougan Award for Contributions to Faculty Governance. The award seeks to recognize an individual who demonstrates extraordinary service, such as in advocating for faculty interests, for academic freedom, or in finding cooperative solutions to campus challenges. Young's service to the University includes membership on the Health Care Advocacy committee, Strategic Planning & Budgeting committee, and Faculty Handbook Review Committee in addition to service on two presidential search committees.



Michael B. Young

The longtime faculty member, who joined Illinois Wesleyan in 1970, received the University's teaching excellence award in 1987.

Young earned doctoral and master's degrees from Harvard University after earning a bachelor of arts degree from Moravian College.

The Harrington Professorship was created in 2010 by Bob Harrington, former chair of the University's Business and Economics Department who died in November 2012. Harrington retired in 1989 and was himself the inaugural recipient of the Robert S. Eckley Distinguished Professor of Economics.

Other endowed faculty chairs and professorships at Illinois Wesleyan include: Marina Balina, Isaac Funk Professor ; Robert C. Bray, R. Forrest Colwell Chair of English; R. Given Harper, George C. and Ella Beach Lewis Chair of Biology; Carole Myscofski, McFee Professor of Religion; Carolyn Nadeau, Byron S. Tucci Professor; Michael C. Seeborg, Dr. Robert S. Eckley Professor of Economics; and David Vayo, Fern Rosetta Sherff Professor of Music.

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