Canada-Japan Bilateral Program
on
Reproductive Biology and Human Reproduction

Twenty Years in Review
(January 1, 2020)

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Special Message

The University of Ottawa continues to advance in its international statutes in research and education and is now placed at the 141st in World University Rankings and maintained its 9th position in the medical/doctoral category, which includes universities offering a broad range of PhD programs, research, and medical schools in Canada. This significant rise in its institutional standing is due in large part to the great progress in its Faculty of Medicine’s successful international academic and research partnership program over the past years. This includes for example, formalized collaborations with numerous institutions and programs for academic exchange, learners’ mobility, research collaboration, capacity building, and global health outreach.

Among the successful programs is the international network established between Canada and Japan in the area of human reproduction and reproductive biology during the past twenty years, one in which the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at both the University of Ottawa and University of Fukui play a leadership and coordinating role. The significance of this bilateral program is also reflected in its vision to to include educational programs well aligned with the strategic directions and research priorities of the Faculty and the University.

I would like to thank Professor Ben Tsang for his vision and leadership. The success of the Canada-Japan Bilateral Program is due in a large extent to his international prominence as well as his strong commitment and tireless efforts in promoting and supporting international partnership. In this regard, Professor Tsang also served as the Canadian Chair of a successful China-Canada Bilateral Program on Women’s Health, and played a key role in fostering research partnership and academic exchanges between the uOttawa and various institutions in South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, China including Hong Kong and Macau. He was appointed World Class University Professor of Biomodulation at Seoul National University where, together with his international colleagues, he was awarded by the Korean Government US$ 20 million for their joint research program. His invaluable support for the uOttawa’s international program is clearly reflected in his role as a “uOttawa Ambassador”

I would also like to extend my appreciation to members of the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and New Born Care, University of Ottawa and the Ottawa Hospital for their active participation, without which this program would not have been a success. As the Faculty of Medicine meets the challenges in its new Vision and Missions “Leading Innovation for a Healthier World” in the next five years, we must continue to promote and support its efforts in internationalization and global health.

Mark Walker, MD  
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Faculty of Medicine, University of Ottawa  
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Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology and New Born Care  
University of Ottawa and the Ottawa Hospital
Canada-Japan Bilateral Program on Reproductive Biology & Human Reproduction
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The University of Ottawa (uOttawa) and the Fukui Medical University (now University of Fukui; uFukui) and their affiliated hospitals and research institutions played a pivotal role in the development of academic and research partnerships as well as the creation of international research networks in the area of human reproduction and reproductive biology between Canada and Japan. This program was initiated collaboratively by the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at both institutions.

Under the leadership of Professors Ben Tsang (uOttawa) and Fumikazu Kotsuji (uFukui) and with the full support of their institutional leadership and their respective government at the municipal, provincial and national levels, the engagement of a number of universities in both countries were secured through bilateral workshops and individual consultations. These developmental activities have resulted in new collaborative research projects, new research funding, increased faculty and student mobility, joint publications and presentations at national and international scientific conferences, and facilitated an enhanced international agenda of the respective institutions. With the theme “Improving women’s reproductive health through research and education: From bench to bedside to community”, this initiative has been recognized by the government of both countries as a model for international research partnership (the Canada-Japan Science and Technology Joint Commission).

This Japan-Canada research network involve institutions in Canada [uOttawa, University of British Columbia (UBC), University of Toronto (uToronto), McMaster University (uMcMaster), McGill University (uMcGill), University of Montreal (uMontreal)] and in Japan [uFukui, University of Tokyo (uTokyo), University of Hokkaido (uHokkaido), Tohoku University (uTohoku), Kobe University (uKobe), Gunma University (uGunma), University of Nagoya (uNagoya), St. Marianna University (uSTMarianna) and Hirosaki University (uHirosaki)]. The institutional Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) signed during the past twenty years includes:

- uOttawa – uFukui
- uOttawa – uKobe
- uOttawa – uGunma
- uOttawa – uTokyo
- uOttawa – uHokkaido
- UBC – uGunma
- uToronto – uKobe
- uToronto – uTohoku

The following is a synopsis of some of the activities and achievements of the Canada-Japan Bilateral Program since its inception in 1999.
May 30, 1999  
Professors B. Tsang (uOttawa) and F. Kotsuji (uFukui) discussed uOttawa-uFukui bilateral exchange with President M. Sudo (uFukui) and were encouraged to explore a formal academic exchange and research collaboration between the two universities.

Sept 27-30, 1999  
Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) was the keynote speaker at the Annual Meeting of the Japan Society of Animal Reproduction, Sendai, Japan.

Oct 3 - 11, 1999  
With funding support from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), Dean P. Walker, Vice Dean, Research Y. Lefebvre, Dr. C. Nimrod and B. Tsang (University of Ottawa Faculty of Medicine) and President D. Levine (The Ottawa Hospital) met with senior administration of uFukui, uKobe School of Medicine, uGunma School of Medicine and uTokyo School of Agriculture to discuss institutional research collaboration.

Summary of Activities (1999 – Present)

May 30, 1999  
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Jan 27, 2000  
Vice Rector, Research H. Alper (uOttawa) met with Canadian Ambassador to Japan and senior Japanese officials from Monbusho, Science and Technology Agency, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science as well as senior administration of partnering Japanese universities at Canadian Embassy in Tokyo to discuss means of promoting and supporting the bilateral exchanges (supported by DFAIT).

March 16 - 22, 2000  
First Canada-Japan Bilateral Workshop in Human Reproduction and Reproductive Biology held in Ottawa, co-chaired by Professors B. Tsang (uOttawa) and Fumikazu Kotsuji (uFukui) and under the theme “Improving Women’s Reproductive Health Through Research and Education: From Bench to Bedside to Community.”
- Participated by 29 Japanese physicians and scientists from uTokyo, uFukui, uKobe, uGunma) and joined by 31 Canadian counterparts from uOttawa
- 17 collaborative projects were developed
- uOttawa-uFukui and uOttawa-uKobe MOU signed.
- Supported by DFAIT, MRC, Monbusho, Embassy of Japan, uOttawa, The Ottawa Hospital, The Loeb Health Research Institute and various industrial partners.

**MOU Signing Ceremony:**

(A) Welcoming remarks from uOttawa Chancellor Huguette Labelle; Special messages from Deputy Minister of Foreign Affair Donald W Campbell (B) and His Excellency Ambassador Katsuhisa Uchida (C); (D) Rector Marcel Hamelin (uOttawa) and President Masakatsu Sudo (uFukui) signed uOttawa-uFukui MOU for research partnership and student exchange, while Dean Peter Walker (uOttawa) and Dean Hirohei Yamamura (uKobe) signed the MOU between uOttawa Faculty of Medicine and uKobe School of Medicine prior to the first Canada-Japan Bilateral Workshop on Reproductive Biology and Human Reproduction. (E & F) A lunch reception was hosted by the uOttawa following the MOU Signing Ceremony. (G) Professors Ben Tsang (uOttawa) and Fumikazu Kotsuji (uFukui), Co-Chairs of the Canada-Japan Bilateral Program on Reproductive Biology and Human Reproduction.
Canada-Japan Bilateral Workshops on Human Reproduction and Reproductive Biology

Networking, Developing Relationship and Joint Projects

Workshop Participants: (A) Professor Fumikazu Kotsuji (Workshop Co-Chair, uFukui); (B) Professors Carl Nimrod (uOttawa) & Kunio Shioya (uTokyo); (C) Dr. Henry Friesen (President, CIHR); (D) Professors Geoff Hammond (UBC) and Alan Bocking (uToronto); (E) Professor Ben Tsang (Workshop Co-Chair, uOttawa); (F) Professor Arthur Leader (uOttawa) and colleagues from uGunma; (G) Professor Nongnuj Tanphaichitr (uOttawa); (H) Professor Takashi Minegishi (uGunma); (I) Drs. Marie-Claude Leveille and Greg FitzHarris (uOttawa); (J) Professors Shingo Fujii (President, Japan Society of Obstetrics & Gynecology, JSOG) and Ben Tsang (uOttawa); (K) Professor Kuni Okamura (uTohoku); (L) Professors Bunpei Ishizuka (uStMarianna), Bruce Murphy (uMontreal), Kunio Shioya (uTokyo), Shingo Fujii (JSOG), Kuni Okamura (uTohoku), and Jay Baltz (uOttawa); (M) Professors Peter Leung (UBC), Barbara Vanderhyden (uOttawa), Anne-Marie Mes-Masson (uMontreal), Ted Brown (uToronto); (N) Professor Takeshi Maruo (uKobe); (O) Professors Carl Nimrod and Michael Fung Kee Fung (uOttawa) and colleagues (uFukui & uGunma); (P) Professor Ben Tsang, Hiroshi Yamamura (Dean of Medicine, uKobe), Masakatsu Sudo (President, uFukui), Takeshi Maruo (uKobe), Fumakazu Kotsuji (uFukui); (Q) Professor Mark Walker (uOttawa) enjoying Karaoke with Japanese colleagues; Dean Walker and President David Levine (uOttawa) presenting institutional gifts to Professors Michio Takahashi and Masugi Nishihara (uTokyo, R) and Hideki Mizunuma (uGunma, S); (T) Dr. Mark Walker; (U) Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson with Professor Ron Benzie; (V) His Excellency Ambassador and Madame Katsuhisa Uchida hosted a luncheon at their official residence; present included Ottawa mayor Jim Watson, Vice Chancellor Marcel Hamlin, Dean Peter Walker, Professor Ben Tsang (uOttawa), President David Levine (The Ottawa Hospital), Dr. Ron Worton (Director, Ottawa General Hospital Research Institute) and Michel Chretien (Director, Loeb Medical Research Institute) and President Masakatsu Sudo and Professor Fumakazu Kotsuji (uFukui) and Dean Hiroshi Yamamura (uKobe). (W) Professor Carl Nimrod led Japanese Delegates on a tour of the Ottawa General Hospital.
2000 – 2002 Bilateral Exchange resulted in continual active research collaboration on ovarian cancer biology and chemoresistance between Professors B. Tsang (uOttawa) and F. Kotsuji (uFukui). This collaboration involved the visit of Dr. H. Sasaki to Professor Tsang’s laboratory for two years funded by the uFukui and resulted in three publications and two review-chapters.

2000 - 2001 Bilateral Exchange resulted in active research collaboration on oocyte maturation between Professors J. Liu (uOttawa) and K. Naito (uTokyo). The efforts resulted in a publication in 2001.

Feb 26 - Mar 24, 2001 Three undergraduate medical students from uKobe School of Medicine visited Ottawa for one-month training in uOttawa Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology.

May 2 – 5, 2001 The Dean of School of Medicine, uGunma visited uOttawa and discussed bilateral exchanges and signing MOU with uOttawa.

2001 Professor B. Tsang’s ovarian cancer research program (uOttawa) with Japan (uFukui) was identified as a ‘Success Story’ on the DFAIT Website (http://www.infoexport.gc.ca/science/gglobalsuccess-en.htm) and described as an excellent template for international S & T partnership development.

Sept 19, 2001 Librarians of uKobe School of Medicine visited the uOttawa Libraries and exchanged information on library support programs at both institutions.

Nov 26 – 29, 2001 Satellite Symposium “Significance of International Collaborative Research” and MOU Signing Ceremony for uOttawa and uGunma, was held at Canadian Embassy in Tokyo and The Second Canada–Japan Bilateral Workshop on Human Reproduction & Reproductive Biology held in Fukui.
- Attended by Physicians and scientists from uOttawa (16), uMontreal (1), uToronto (1) and UBC (1) and 20 Japanese counterparts from uKobe, uTokyo, uGunma, uFukui, uTohoku, uNagoya and uHirasaki.
- 13 collaborative projects identified.
- Supported by CIHR, Monbusho, Canadian Embassy, Fukui Prefecture and uFukui.

2002 - 2003 Bilateral Exchange resulted in active research collaboration on glycolipids and sperm-egg interaction between Professors N. Tanphaichitr (uOttawa) and K. Kitajima (uNagoya). The efforts have resulted in a one-month visit of Dr. K. Chakrabandhu (Postdoctoral fellow of Professor Tanphaichitr) to Professor Kitajima’s laboratory for research training. In addition, Mr. Hiroshi Fujita, a MSc student under the supervision of Professor Kitajima (uNagoya) visited Professor Tanphaichitr’s laboratory for six months, supported by the Japan-Canada Joint Health Research Initiative. He completed his M.Sc. study in Japan in 2008 and is presently working in a scientific company. These joint research activities resulted in a joint publication.

2002 - 2004 Bilateral Exchange resulted in active research collaboration on ovarian angiogenesis between Professors B. Tsang (uOttawa) and E. Sato (uTohoku). Dr. J. Jiang, a postdoctoral fellow with Professor Sato received 2-year research training in Professor Tsang’s laboratory. The efforts resulted in two joint publications and one invited review chapter with Professor T. Maruo (uKobe).

April 11 - May 20, 2002 Two undergraduate medical students from uKobe School of Medicine visited uOttawa for one-month training in Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology.

April 29 – 30, 2003 Gunma University Hospital senior administrative staff visited the Ottawa Hospital for information exchanges in hospital administration and finances.

May 17 – 22, 2002 Professor Y. Yonekura (uFukui) was a Visiting Professor in Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, uOttawa; he presented a lecture on "Molecular Imaging of Malignant Tumors".

Sept 1 - Dec 31, 2002 An undergraduate medical student from uKobe School of Medicine visited uOttawa for four-month clinical and research training in Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology.

February 2003 Julie Ireton, CBC Radio Canada broadcasted a story on Canada-Japan Academic Exchanges and Research Collaboration on Women’s Health (focusing on uOttawa, uFukui and uKobe)

July 10 - Sept 5, 2003 Two undergraduate medical students from uFukui visited Ottawa for one-month clinical training in Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology.

July 1 - Sept 30, 2003 Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) spent a three-month sabbatical as a JSPS Visiting Professor of the International Centre for Medical Research, uKobe School of Medicine; established research collaboration on trophoblast apoptosis with Professors T. Maruo and H. Matsuo, and on ovarian cancer with Dr. Y. Motoyama.

Sept 2003 Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) visited the Biomedical Imaging Research Centre, uFukui to establish collaborative research on PET Imaging in ovarian cancer with Professors Y. Fujibayashi and Y. Yonekura

August 4 – 12, 2003 Professor B. Tsang (Ottawa) met with Professor K. Shiota (uTokyo) to discuss research collaboration on epigenetic changes in ovarian development and cancer.

Sept 1 - 3, 2003 Professors N. Tanphaichitr, M. Mbikay and B. Tsang (uOttawa) participated in a Mini-workshop at uGunma with the aim of establishing collaboration with uGunma Scientists. This has led to a joint grant application with scientists from uOttawa (N. Tanphaichitr, M. Mbikay, M. Chretien), uGunma (T. Shirao, T. Minegishi) and uKobe (H. Kamiya) for research funding from CIHR-JSPS for project on proprotein convertase in neuronal development.

Professor T. Takeuchi (uGunma) and Dr. M. Mbikay (uOttawa) discussed possible research collaboration on role and function of proprotein convertases.

Sept 4 – 6, 2003 Professors N. Tanphaichitr, M. Mbikay and B. Tsang, (uOttawa) visited the uFukui to develop research collaboration with Drs. K. Tajima (Assistant Professor, Obstetrics & Gynecology), M. Orisaka (Assistant Professor, Obstetrics & Gynecology), Y. Yoshida (Associate Professor, Obstetrics & Gynecology), T. Higuchi (Professor & Chair, Physiology), K. Miyamoto (Professor & Chair, Biochemistry) and F. Kotsuji (Professor & Chair, Obstetrics & Gynecology).
A mini-workshop, organized for this purpose, led to the ongoing research collaboration on (1) regulation of follicular development (Professor Orisaka, Kotsuji & Tsang), (2) use of coculture of ovarian support cells and eggs to investigate the role and regulation of sulphatase in cumulus expansion and fertilization (Professors N. Tanphaichitr & K. Tajima) and (3) neuronal control of eating behaviour (Professors M. Mbikay & T. Higuchi). In addition, B. Tsang also discussed with K. Miyamoto future collaboration on the regulation of genes involved in the control of ovulation, using a follicle culture model established in Tsang’s laboratory.

Oct 2003 - Sept 2005  
**uOttawa International Creative Research Initiatives** awarded a grant to Professor B. Tsang for his collaborative project with Professor F. Kotsuji (uFukui), entitled "Molecular and Cellular Regulation of Ovarian Follicular Growth and Atresia".

Oct 2003 - Sept 2005  
Dr. M. Orisaka (uFukui) and Professor B. Tsang established collaboration on intra-ovarian regulation of follicular growth. The Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (uFukui) funded Dr. Orisaka’s salary during his two-year visit to Professor Tsang’s laboratory (uOttawa) with research expenses covered by Professor Tsang’s MRC grant.

October 2003  
A **Memorandum-of-Understanding** for Academic Exchanges and Research Collaboration between the uOttawa Faculty of Medicine and uTokyo Faculty of Agricultural Sciences was signed.

March – May, 2004  
**Professor K. Shiota (Tokyo)** presented an invited research seminar at the Ottawa Health Research Institute (OHRI) and an invited lecture at the Canadian Workshop on Human Reproduction and Reproductive Biology held in Ottawa.

April 2004  
**Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa)** presented an invited lecture at the International Symposium on Epigenetics and Regenerative Medicine (Vedbaek, Denmark) organized by Professor K. Shiota (uTokyo) and attended by primarily Japanese scientists.

April 2004  
**Three graduate students** from University of Tokyo visited uOttawa and participated in a trainee mini-workshop to facilitate academic exchange between Professors K. Shiota (uTokyo) and B. Tsang (uOttawa).

July 2004  
A **graduate student** of Professor K. Shiota (Tokyo) spent one month in Professor B. Tsang’s laboratory (Ottawa) for the transfer of specialized technique used in epigenetic research (Shiota-Tsang collaboration).

September 2004  
**Professors N. Tanphaichitr (uOttawa)** and K. Kitajima (uNagoya) submitted joint CIHR-JSPS grant application, entitled, "Roles of acidic glycoconjugates in mammalian fertilization".

Oct 1 - Dec 31, 2004  
**Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa)** spent a three-month Administrative leave as a JSPS Visiting Professor of the International Centre for Medical Research, uKobe School of Medicine; continued research collaboration on trophoblast apoptosis with Professors T. Maruo and H. Matsuo, and on ovarian cancer with Dr. Y. Motoyama. This has resulted in two joint publications on the regulation of trophoblast apoptosis by thyroid hormone and ovarian cancer and the results were presented at the Annual Meeting of the Japan Society of Obstetrics & Gynecology in April 2005.
October 2004  Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) presented a special lecture at the 13th Annual Japan Obstetrics and Gynaecology Molecular and Cellular Biology Meeting, Awaji Island. This conference was organized by Professor T. Maruo (uKobe) and attended by Japanese scientists.

October 2004  Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) discussed research collaboration with Professors K. Okamura and Yaegashi (uTohoku) regarding research collaboration and bilateral exchanges, and presented lecture at a meeting of the Sandai Medical Association. He was presented a Testimonial for his important contributions in reproductive health research.

November 2004  Professor T. Maruo (uKobe) was the Royal College Speaker at the 50th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society, Jasper, Alberta, a meeting organized by Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa).

November 2004  The Third Canada-Japan Bilateral Workshop in Human Reproduction and Reproductive Biology was held in Ottawa. Participants at the Workshop include 25 scientists from nine Japanese universities (uFukui, uKobe, uTokyo, uGunma, uHirosaki, uTohoku, uHokkaido, uNagoya, uStMarianna) and 35 researchers from four Canadian universities (uOttawa, UBC, uToronto and uMontreal).

Eighteen collaborative projects were identified and four MOUs were signed (uOttawa-uTohoku, uOttawa-uHokkaido, uTohoku-uToronto and Society of Obstetricians & Gynecologists of Canada-Japan Society of Obstetrics & Gynecology). In addition, excellent progress has been made in the collaborative research by Challis-Okamura (uToronto-uTohoku), Orisaka-Kotsuji-Tsang (uFukui-uOttawa), Maruo-Tsang (uKobe-uOttawa), Tanphaichitr-Kitajima (uOttawa-uNagoya), as reported during the Workshop.

The Workshop was supported by IHDCYH of CIHR, the Society of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists of Canada and the four participating Canadian Institutions.

March 11, 2005  Members of hospital administration at the University of Fukui [Dr. K. Takanashi (Inspector General - Auditor) and S. Kubota] and University of Yamanashi [K. Fukazawa (Inspector General - Auditor) to discuss with the Ottawa Hospital administration issues related to finance and operations in their respective institutions, and how they impact on patient care.

March 2005  The Director of Gunma University’s Institute of Molecular & Cellular Regulation (Professor T. Takeuchi) and a research scientist with interest in diabetes (Professor H. Shibata) visited Ottawa in March 2005 to establish research collaboration in the area of diabetes and protein processing/trafficking.

May - October, 2005  A MD/PhD student of Professor H. Mizunuma (uHirosaki) spent 6 months in Professor B. Vanderhyden’s laboratory (uOttawa) to develop animal model for ovarian cancer
2005 - 2008 As a part of the uOttawa-uHokkaido partnership, Dr. N. Kobayashi (uHokkaido) joined Professor B. Tsang’s (uOttawa) laboratory for a 3-year postdoctoral training funded by a Japan Menopause Society Fellowship and CIHR-STIRRHS Postdoctoral Fellowship Awards.

November 2005, Professor B. Vanderhyden (uOttawa) was an invited speaker at a conference in Hirosaki organized by Professor H. Mizunuma (uHirosaki). She spoke on “Mouse models for human ovarian cancer research”. They discussed research collaborations on ovarian cancer.

August, 2006 Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) was an invited speaker at the 6th Sapporo International Symposium on Ovarian Function organized by Professor N. Sakuragi (uHokkaido) in Otaru, Japan.

September 2006 In facilitating the development of uOttawa (Tsang) – uFukui (Kotsuji) – uHokkaido (Sakuragi) joint collaboration, Dr. M. Orisaka (uFukui) spent 3 months in the laboratory of Professor B. Tsang (Ottawa) to work on the development of follicle culture systems with Dr. N. Kobayashi (uHokkaido) which resulted in a joint publication.

2006 - 2008 Professor B. Vanderhyden (uOttawa) received a uOttawa International Creative Research Award to establish research collaboration on animal model for ovarian cancer with Professor H. Mizunuma (uHirosaki). This supported two shipments of mice to uHirosaki as a part of the collaboration.

2005 - 2007 Professor N. Tanphaichitr (uOttawa) and Professor K. Kitajima (uNagoya) were awarded a grant from the JSPS-CIHR Joint Health Research Program for their joint project on “Roles of acidic glycoconjugates in mammalian fertilization” ($60,000)

July 28, 2007 Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) visited Professor N. Sakuragi (uHokkaido) to discuss expansion of research collaboration and academic exchanges to include the area of gynecologic cancer.

July – August, 2007 Professor B. Vanderhyden (uOttawa) and her graduate student David Pepin visited uHirosaki as a part of the uOttawa-uHirosaki partnership. Mr. Pepin spent 2 months in Professor H. Mizunuma’s Lab. Dr. Vanderhyden presented three lectures at uHirosaki: “Testing of novel treatment strategies in models of ovarian cancer”, “Paracrine factors regulating mouse oocyte growth: Focus on Kit Ligand”, “Prolonged exposure to exogenous 17β estradiol alters survival time and disease pathophysiology in a transgenic mouse model of ovarian cancer”.

July 31 - Aug 2, 2007 The Fourth Canada-Japan Bilateral Workshop in Human Reproduction and Reproductive Biology was held in Hirosaki, Japan.
- Participants at the Workshop include 31 scientists from eight Japanese universities (uFukui, uHirosaki, uGunma, uTokyo, uTohoku, uHokkaido, uNagoya, uStMarianna) and 13 researchers from three Canadian universities (uOttawa, UBC, uMontreal).
- Thirteen collaborative projects were identified: Gibb (uOttawa)-Higuchi (uFukui), Gibb (Ottawa)-Nishijima (Fukui), Gibb (Ottawa)-Abe (uGunma), Vanderhyden (uOttawa)-Yokoyama (uHirosaki), Tsang (Ottawa)-Sato (uTohoku), Tsang (uOttawa)-Kotsuji (uFukui), Tsang (uOttawa)-Sakaragi (uHokkaido), Carmona (uMontreal)-Watari (uHokkaido), Carmona (uMontreal)-Yazawa (uFukui), Murphy (uMontreal)-Nishihara (uTokyo), Murphy...
- Professors B. Tsang (uOttawa) and H Mizunuma (uHirosaki) Co-Chaired the Workshop.
- Supported by grants from DFAIT and JSPS

2007

In a Government of Canada publication "Science and Technology Partnerships – The Canadian Way", Professor B. Tsang’s (uOttawa) ovarian cancer research collaboration with uFukui was highlighted as a successful international S & T program.

Sept 2009

Professor B. Tsang (Ottawa) was an invited speaker at the Lake Shirakaba Conference organized by Professor K. Shiota (Tokyo) in Copenhagen. The participants of this Conference were predominantly Japanese scientists.

April 2010

uOttawa Faculty of Medicine and uFukui School of medicine renewed MOU for research partnership and academic exchanges for another five-year period.

September 2012

Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) visited the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (uFukui) and presented the lecture “Life, Death and Immortality: New Insights on the Role of p53 in the Mechanism of Chemoresistance in Ovarian Cancer”.

With Professor Fumikazu Kotsuji’s retirement, Professors Yoshio Yoshida (Chair of Obstetrics and Gynecology, uFukui) has taken on the lead in the involvement of uFukui in the uOttawa-uFukui partnership. He and Professor K. Miyamoto (Vice Dean, Research) and B. Tsang discussed plans to expand for research collaboration and academic exchanges between two universities. Dr. Makoto Orisaka was presented a Certificate of Merits for his outstanding contributions in the scientific collaboration.

March 3 – 5, 2013

Professors L. Garcia, T. Le, CJ MacDonald and B. Tsang (uOttawa) were invited to uHokkaido to discuss with counterparts in the Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Health Sciences research collaboration and academic exchanges in the area of women’s health, a visit facilitated by Professor N. Sakuragi (uHokkaido) The uOttawa delegation: (1) Presented an institutional overview to a multidisciplinary audience from different departments and faculties within uHokkaido, (2) Visited Dr. N. Tamaki, Dean of the Graduate School of Medicine for a one-on-one discussion, (3) Visited the uHokkaido museum (March 5, 2013) and (4) Presented a research overview and participated in detailed conversations on future planning. Outcomes of Visit: Explored possible collaboration between uHokkaido and uOttawa with the result being the design of future research and student exchange agreements. The consensus was to start small with doable projects that could possibly develop into future education programs, research and funding opportunities and formal inter-university agreements.

May 2013

Professor B. Tsang was invited by Professor N. Sakuragi (uHokkaido) to Chair the “Meet the Expert - Reproductive Endocrinology - Recent Advances in Reproductive Endocrinology
and Infertility” Session at the 65th Annual Congress of the Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology.

July 2013

Drs. M. Orisaka, S. Orisaka, H. Tsuyoshi and K. Hattori (uFukui) visited Professor B Tsang (uOttawa) and discussed the possibility of Dr. Tsuyoshi spending two years in Ottawa for postdoctoral training. Dr. Tsuyoshi’s stipend was paid by uFukui.

Aug 31 - Sept 2, 2013

Dr. Y. Morimoto (uOsaka) invited Professor B. Tsang to present a lecture on “Polycystic ovarian syndrome: Dysregulation at the Reproductive-Metabolic Interphase” at the 4th Congress of the Asia Pacific Initiative on Reproduction in Osaka and to discuss research collaboration in female infertility.

February 2015

Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) met with Professor Y. Yoshida and Drs. M. Orisaka and M. Yamamoto (uFukui) in Yokohama, Japan to discuss expansion of research collaboration in gynecologic oncology and the possibility of Dr. Yamamoto receiving research training at uOttawa.

Professor B. Tsang also updated Professor Yoshida on Dr. H. Tsuyoshi’s research progress and the expansion of the collaboration to include Dr. V. Wong of the Macau University of Science and Technology, as the joint project involving the application of traditional Chinese herbal medicine in treatment of chemoresistant ovarian cancer.

2014 - 2016

Dr. H. Tsuyoshi (uFukui) received postdoctoral research training in uOttawa under the mentorship of Professor Tsang, with stipend funded by the uFukui and the Kizawa Memorial Hospital Doctor Scholarship Studying Abroad. His research project was focused on the role and regulation of mitochondrial dynamics and autophagy in chemoresistance in ovarian cancer. Three joint publications (plus two additional ones in preparation) resulted from this partnership.

April 2015

At the invitation of Professor T. Minegishi (uGunma), Professor B. Tsang delivered a keynote lecture on “Understanding Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome: From Bench to Bedside” at the Annual Meeting of the Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology held in Yokohama, Japan.

May 2015

A request to renew the uOttawa-uFukui MOU was submitted to the uOttawa Faculty of Medicine through Dr. J. (Yuwei) Wang, Assistant Dean, Internationalization.

August, 2015

Professor Y. Yoshida and Dr. M. Orisaka (uFukui) visited uOttawa to discuss expansion of research partnership and academic exchanges between the two institutions. Professor Yoshida presented a lecture on “An orthotopic uterine sarcoma model with potential lung metastases” during his visit.

October, 2016

Professor Y. Osuga (Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, uTokyo) established collaborative research with Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) on the topic “Neuropeptide Y and ovarian follicular development”.

May 15-17, 2017

Professor Y. Osuga (uTokyo) was a Visiting Professor of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology (uOttawa) and Seminar Speaker at the Ottawa Hospital Research Institute. In addition to research discussion with various members of the uOttawa and OHRI communities, he presented Obstetrics & Gynecology Grant Rounds
entitled ‘Emerging issues in endometriosis during pregnancy’ and OHRI lecture “Th2 cells and Th17 cells in the development of endometriosis: possible roles of IL-4 and IL-17A”

2016 – 2018

Dr. Yoko Urata (Department in Obstetrics & Gynecology, uTokyo) spent two years in Professor B. Tsang’s laboratory (uOttawa) to work on the collaborative project “Role and regulation of neuropeptide Y on ovarian follicular development and polycystic ovarian syndrome”. Dr. Urata’s salary was paid by the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, uTokyo. One manuscript has been submitted for publication and a second one is in preparation.

March 30, 2018

Professor Ben Tsang (uOttawa) visited the uFukui and presented a lecture on “Gelsolin and Chemoresistant Ovarian Cancer: Cell-Cell Communication in the tumor microenvironment”. He discussed student mobility with Professor Yoshio Yoshida and the possibility of his senior PhD student spending 3 months in uFukui on a collaborative research project “Macrophages and the tumor microenvironment and ovarian cancer chemoresistance”.

During the visit, Professor Y. Yoshida recommended Dr. T. Onuma (Assistant Professor) to visit Professor Tsang’s laboratory for two years to pursue collaborative research on the role and regulation of gelsolin in ovarian cancer, beginning April 1, 2020.

September 2018

As an extension of the uOttawa-uTokyo partnership, Dr. Y. Urata (uTokyo) established a collaborative retrospective research with Dr. I. Chen (uOttawa) on outcome assessment after gynecological surgeries, using the American College of Surgeons National Surgical Quality Improvement Program (NSQIP) Participant User Files. Their results have been presented in both Canada and Japan and a manuscript is in preparation.

2019 – 2021

Professor H. Masuyama Chairman of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Okayama University (uOkayama) and Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) initiated a collaborative research on anovulatory infertility. Dr. T. Hasegawa (uOkayama) joined Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) to receive research training on “The role and regulation of microRNA in follicular development and PCOS”. His stipend is covered by the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, uOkayama.

March - May, 2019

Professor B. Tsang’s senior PhD student M. Asare-Werehene (uOttawa) spent three months at uFukui to participate on a joint research on the role of gelsolin in macrophage polarization in ovarian cancer, funded by the Mitacs Globalink Research Award. Two manuscripts resulting from this visit are being prepared.

September 2019

At the invitation of Professor Y. Yoshida (uFukui), Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) delivered a keynote lecture on “Ovarian Cancer in an Era of Precision Medicine: From Mechanisms to Early Diagnosis to Strategy for New Therapy” at the Annual Meeting of the North Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology held in Fukui, Japan.
While in Fukui, Professor K. Sada, Vice Dean, Research and members of the International Office (uFukui) met with Professor B Tsang to discuss continuation and expanding current uOttawa-uFukui research partnership and academic exchanges and how best to prepare for the renewal of the institutional MOU.

September 2019  
Professor B Tsang (uOttawa) was invited to the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology, uGunma to present a seminar on his ovarian cancer research. During his visit, he met with Professor Takashi Minegishi, VP Academics, uGunma to discuss expanding current collaboration on reproductive health to include other research areas such as population health, health service research, metabolic disorders, radiation chemistry and heavy ion therapy, artificial intelligence, neuroscience and mental health. A senior uGunma delegation hopes to visit uOttawa Faculty of Medicine in 2020 to explore these possibilities.

December 2019  
Professors H. Naiki, (Dean) and K. Sada (Vice Dean, Research and the chair of the International Exchange Committee) of the Faculty of Medical Sciences, uFukui met via skype with Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) to discuss common institutional research priorities, particularly in the context of interdisciplinary and complementarity. They indicated an interest to visit the uOttawa Faculty of Medicine in 2020 and would like to consult with Professors B. Jasmin (Dean of Medicine) and M. Walker (Interim Director, Internationalization and Global Health), uOttawa on this matter. uFukui is interested in formalizing its partnership with a new uOttawa-uFukui MOU.

January 2020  
Professor B. Tsang met with Professor Mark Walker and the administrative staff of the Faculty of Medicine Office of Internationalization and Global Health (Ms. Diane Cyr and Ms. Zaina-Sophie Salibi) to discuss how best to facilitate uOttawa’s partnership with uFukui, uGunma and uTokyo and reactivation of the institutional MOUs for research collaboration and academic exchanges.

uFukui will be hosting a Canada-Japan Bilateral Workshop in Fukui in 2021. The purpose of the Workshop will be to assist in the development of new joint research projects between uOttawa and uFukui in research areas of common interest. The date of the Workshop is being determined.

Professor B. Tsang (uOttawa) has been invited to the uFukui Convocation Ceremony on March 23, 2020 when he will be presented an Honorary Doctorate Degree for research excellence in reproductive health and ovarian cancer as well as his leadership in international research and educational partnership. Professor Tsang will be the second individual bestowed such honor by the uFukui.

2020 - 2022  
Dr. T. Onuma (uFukui) will visit Professor Tsang’s laboratory (uOttawa) for two years to pursue collaborative research on the immunologic role of gelsolin in ovarian cancer chemoresistance. Dr. Onuma’s stipend will be covered by the uFukui and the Kizawa Memorial Hospital, and his research expenses by Professor Tsang’s research grant.
The Canada-Japan Bilateral Program on Reproductive Biology and Human Reproduction at uOttawa Canada

OUR ETHOS:

Celebrating cultural diversity;
Partnerships on a foundation of mutual respect, strong relationship and trust;
Promoting mutual support and shared benefits;
Training the future physicians and scientists through creative thinking and team building;
Advancing knowledge through complementary and multidisciplinary efforts;
Supporting cutting-edge translational research: “From bench to bedside to community and back”; Having a fun and memorable experience doing it
Publications from Canada-Japan Bilateral Exchanges


Urata Y, Osuga Y, and Tsang BK. Follicular fluid Neuropeptide Y level is decreased in women with polycystic ovarian syndrome and directly induced granulosa cell apoptosis under hyperandrogenism. Fertility and Sterility (2019, in preparation). [uOttawa-uTokyo Partnership]

Joint Presentations at National and International Meetings


Urata Y, Kaori K, Osuga Y and Chen I. Hysterectomy complication rates by type of menstrual disorder. The 5th congress of Society of Endometriosis and Uterine Disorders (SEUD), Montreal (Canada), May 16-18 2019. [uOttawa-uTokyo Partnership]

Urata Y and Chen I. Laparoscopic hysterectomy complication rates by type of menstrual disorder. The 59th congress of Japan Society of Gynecologic and Obstetric Endoscopy and Minimally Invasive Therapy, Kyoto (Japan), Sep 12-14 2019. [uOttawa-uTokyo Partnership]