

UTSA Academy of Distinguished Researchers Welcomes Four New Members

Over the past two years, four esteemed UTSA researchers have been selected for induction into the UTSA Academy of Distinguished Researchers (ADR).

The UTSA Academy of Distinguished Researchers was established in 2015 to select and honor outstanding faculty who exemplify excellence in research; to foster the highest quality of research and scholarly activity by UTSA faculty; and to promote the university's vision as a premier public research university. The Academy is comprised of researchers across all disciplines who represent the best of research on campus.

Each year, the group decides upon the induction of new members. Candidates are nominated by peers across campus, and their body of research work is evaluated. The Academy members review each candidate, looking at all the criteria, and discusses each candidate within the group.

"The committee considers a number of factors, including: the impact and the overall quality of the research; the number of citations and publications; publication in highly recognized and leading peer-review journals; recognized works, performances and exhibitions; competitive grants, both federal and international, and funded research; patents; major scientific inventions; editorships; and research recognitions in their field," explained **Hamid Beladi**, chair of the UTSA Academy of Distinguished Researchers.

Catherine Clinton, Ph.D., Department of History | **INDUCTED IN 2018**



Clinton, the Denman Endowed Professor in American History, has been at UTSA since 2014. She is a pioneering historian of the American South and the Civil War. Clinton is the author or editor of 25 books, including *The Plantation Mistress: Woman's World in the Old South*; *The Other Civil War: American Women in the Nineteenth Century*; *Southern Families at War: Loyalty and Conflict in the Civil War South*; and *Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom*. Her books *Divided Houses: Gender and the Civil War* and *Mrs. Lincoln: A Life* are among several that have been History Book Club selections.

Clinton also has written history books for children, presented at numerous academic conferences, and served as a consultant to Steven Spielberg's film *Lincoln*. In 2015-16, she served as the president of the Southern Historical Association. In 2016, Clinton received the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship, which funded her research on how mental illness was diagnosed and treated for Union soldiers during the Civil War. Her research brings fresh perspectives on American history, making it accessible to newer and wider audiences.

Gelu Popescu, Ph.D., Department of Mathematics | **INDUCTED IN 2018**



Popescu, professor and mathematician, is the first inductee from the Department of Mathematics. His research interests include functional analysis, operator theory and operator algebras; noncommutative multivariable operator theory; and noncommutative harmonic analysis and interpolation. He is extremely productive in terms of his research, highly recognized in his field and produces scholarly works of considerable scope and depth.

Since arriving at UTSA 24 years ago, Popescu has published on average about three research papers a year in the area of pure mathematics, which tend to run in the hundreds of pages. The majority of these papers appears in the top ranked journals in the field – *Advances in Mathematics*, *Memoirs of the American Mathematical Society (AMS)*, *Journal of Functional Analysis*, *Proceedings of the London Mathematical Society*, *Mathematische Annalen*, *Journal für die Reine und Angewandte Mathematik*, and *Comptes Rendus de L'Académie de Science*. He has published three monographs through the *Memoirs of the AMS*, the most prestigious U.S. society of mathematics that have cemented his reputation as one of the world's top experts in operator theory and the foremost scholar in non-commutative multivariable operator theory. Popescu's mathematical research has broken new ground and opened entire new avenues for scholarship. Popescu's work is frequently cited by world-renowned mathematics including Fields medalists.



Joo L. Ong, Ph.D.,
Department of
Biomedical Engineering
INDUCTED IN 2017

Joo Ong is the USAA Foundation Distinguished Professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering. He also serves as the Associate Dean of Administration and Graduate Studies, College of Engineering and the Interim Department Chair of the Department of Biomedical Engineering.

His primary research focus on modifications and characterization of implant biomaterial surfaces for dental and orthopedic applications, tissue engineered bioceramic scaffolds for bone regeneration, protein-biomaterials interactions, and bone-biomaterials interactions.

Dr. Ong is a Fellow of the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering. He is also the Associate Editor for the Journal of Biomedical Materials Research, Part B. His publication portfolio includes two books (one edited), 16 book chapters, and 146 peer-reviewed journal publications. He has four issued patents from his research work and one pending patent filed with the US Patent Office.



The Academy now has 17 members, representing the Colleges of Business, Education and Human Development, Engineering, Liberal and Fine Arts, Public Policy, and Sciences.



“High-quality faculty is a key component for eligibility into the National Research University Fund (NRUF). This academy serves as a way to recognize such faculty, and the high caliber of research being done at UTSA,”

—Bernard Arulanandam, interim vice president for Research, Economic Development, and Knowledge Enterprise at UTSA.



Jose L. Lopez-Ribot,
Pharm.D., Ph.D.,
Department of Biology
INDUCTED IN 2017

Jose L. Lopez-Ribot, Professor of Microbiology and the Margaret Batts Tobin Distinguished Chair in Biotechnology, is also the Associate Director of The South Texas Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases (STCEID).

His laboratory studies fungal infections, with an emphasis on the opportunistic pathogenic fungus *Candida albicans*, the main causative agent of candidiasis affecting an increasing number of immune- and medically-compromised patients. Work in his laboratory encompasses from the basic biology of the cell wall, biofilm formation, adhesion and morphogenetic conversions, to the use of animal models to better understand virulence and host responses, to the more translational and clinical aspects such as antifungal drug development, drug resistance and vaccines; with the ultimate goal of devising new strategies for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of candidiasis.

In 2016, he was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology. He is an author of more than 175 publications and several patents, and has received funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Defense, American Heart Association (AHA), different foundations and pharmaceutical companies. He has also provided extensive service to his discipline as a grant reviewer for NIH, AHA, National Science Foundation, Veteran’s Administration and many other different national and international funding agencies, as well as an associate editor, editorial board member and ad-hoc reviewer for multiple Microbiology and Mycology journals.