Tracing its roots to the founding of what is Tulane University today, the Department of Structural and Cellular Biology is committed to providing a quality educational experience for both Medical and Graduate students, while pursuing funded research which will keep the Department in the forefront in cell biology, cancer biology, and neuroscience. The Department is further committed to providing service to the School of Medicine and the University by participation of the faculty on many key committees.

### Highlights for the 2013-2014 academic year

- **Education**
  Educational responsibilities include teaching major components of the first-year medical school curriculum, including Gross and Developmental Anatomy, Medical Histology and Medical Neuroscience, as well as teaching various related graduate level courses including our Anatomy Certification Program and master’s degree programs.

  David Jerrett, DMD, PhD, Director of Anatomical Teaching, was the 2013 recipient of the prestigious Gloria P. Walsh Award for Teaching Excellence, presented by the School of Medicine Graduating Class of 2013.

  Our master’s degree program has expanded to include, in addition to the one year program, two two-year tracks, as well as an MD/MS combined degree program.

  The Anatomy Certification Program, a post-baccalaureate program to enhance medical school admission credentials, is in its third decade. Students in this program generally serve as TA’s in Gross Anatomy and often become leaders among their School of Medicine peers.

  The student-run Owl Club has recognized the Gross Anatomy course as the “Course of the Year” for the last three years, Dr. Rajunor Ettarh, director of the Medical Histology course, was awarded the “Best T1 Professor” for the past two years, and Dr. David Blask, Medical Neuroscience course director, received the “Top Brass” award for the last two years.

  The departmentally sponsored Mannina-Richard Honorarium, providing the opportunity for two exceptional students to continue their anatomical and dissection studies was awarded in 2014 to T1 students Felicity Fisk and Cassandra Lentz.

  The Morris and Goldie Mintz Fund supports the annual presentation of the Morris and Goldie Mintz Memorial Award in Structural and Cellular Biology. This award is a plaque and cash award in the amount of $500 presented annually to the first year medical student with the highest academic performance in Gross Anatomy, Medical Histology, and Medical Neuroscience. The 2013 recipient was Cheri Cunningham.

- **Research**
  Under the mentorship of Drs. Murali Anbalagan, Roy Weiner, and Brian Rowan, T1 medical students, Brian Yu and Richard Tang, formed 1 of 10 teams that won the inaugural Breast Cancer Startup Challenge, sponsored by the National Cancer Institute and the Avon Foundation, for their plan to commercialize a diagnostic kit to predict chemotherapy benefit in breast cancer patients. They received a $5000 award and will compete for over $1 million in startup funding.
Dr. David E. Blask was this year’s recipient of the prestigious Aaron B. Lerner Pioneer Award in recognition of his contributions to the field of melatonin research. Aaron B. Lerner, MD, PhD (1920–2007), a Professor at Yale University School of Medicine, discovered the pineal hormone melatonin in 1958. Dr. Blask’s life-long work has been devoted to elucidating the role of the nocturnal circadian melatonin signal, and its suppression by light at night, in the regulation of cancer growth and metabolism. The award was presented at the FASEB Research Conference in Niagara Falls, New York in July 2013.

Dr. Zongbing You was recently awarded an R01 grant by NIH/NCI (1R01CA174714-01, 07/01/13 – 06/30/18) with a total amount of $1,561,440. His project entitled “The role of IL-17 in prostate cancer” will investigate how the pro-inflammatory cytokine interleukin-17 promotes prostate cancer formation and progression.

**Tulane Center for Circadian Biology**

Beginning July 1, 2014, we will establish the Tulane Center for Circadian Biology (TCCB) with Dr. Steven M. Hill as Director and Dr. David E. Blask as Associate Director. The Tulane Center for Circadian Biology will be a multidisciplinary Center that will integrate basic, clinical, and translational research on circadian biology, circadian rhythms, circadian disruption, and sleep into a unified program at Tulane University.

The Center has as its goals:
To foster research to elucidate the fundamental mechanisms that underlie the generation, expression and timing of circadian rhythms.

To foster research to determine the consequences of circadian disruption and circadian rhythm dysfunction, weather it be from sleep disturbances, light exposure at night, or feeding behaviors for human health, safety, performance and productivity.

To facilitate the development of treatments to alleviate the adverse effects associated with circadian dysfunctions

To help educate students and the general public about circadian rhythms and the consequences of circadian disruption

The Center will create an environment that fosters collaborations between researchers in different disciplines who have mutual research interests in the study of circadian rhythms, circadian disruption, and sleep.