

July 30, 2020 | By Scott LaFee

Zafiris J. Daskalakis, MD, PhD, Named Chair of the Department of Psychiatry

Zafiris J. “Jeff” Daskalakis, MD, PhD, has been named chair of the Department of Psychiatry at University of California San Diego School of Medicine.

Daskalakis was previously Professor of Psychiatry at University of Toronto and co-director of the Temerty Centre for Therapeutic Brain Intervention and chief of the General Adult Psychiatry and Health Systems Division, both at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto.

CAMH is Canada’s largest mental health teaching hospital. The Temerty Centre is one of the world’s hubs for brain stimulation treatment, research and training.

Daskalakis’s research has focused on better understanding the neurophysiology of severe psychiatric disorders, with an emphasis on the role of inhibition, excitation and plasticity in the pathophysiology and treatment mechanisms in schizophrenia, depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder. He has also led numerous treatment studies using transcranial direct current stimulation, repetitive transcranial magnetic brain stimulation and magnetic seizure therapy for refractory symptoms in these disorders.

“We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Daskalakis as the new chair of the Department of Psychiatry,” said Steven Garfin, MD, interim dean of the UC San Diego School of Medicine. “He has been a leader in mental health research and treatment in Canada and beyond for many years, and his experience and vision will greatly benefit UC San Diego and the communities it serves.”



Zafiris J. “Jeff” Daskalakis, MD, PhD, new chair of the Department of Psychiatry at UC San Diego School of Medicine.

Daskalakis, who was born and raised in Toronto, attended the University of Toronto as an undergraduate and completed medical school at Queen's University in 1994, followed by residency training in psychiatry at the University of Toronto. While still a resident, he also began graduate studies at the Institute of Medical Science at the University of Toronto, earning his PhD in 2002.

From 2002 until coming to UC San Diego, Daskalakis was a member of the University of Toronto faculty, rising to full professor and Temerty Chair in Therapeutic Brain Intervention at CAMH.

Daskalakis has published more than 390 peer-reviewed papers in journals ranging from the *Lancet* and *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* to the *Archives of General Psychiatry* and *JAMA Psychiatry*. He is an editorial board member of *Biological Psychiatry* and associate editor for *Clinical Neuropsychiatry*.

He holds or has received funding support from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation (formerly NARSAD), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Brain Canada and the National Institute of Mental Health, part of the National Institutes of Health in the United States.

Daskalakis is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Laidlaw Prize from the Institute of Medical Research, the Young Investigator Award from the Canadian College of Neuropsychopharmacology and the Samarthji Lal Award in Mental Health Research from the Graham Boeckh Foundation.

Daskalakis succeeds Susan Tapert, PhD, professor of psychiatry, and Robert Anthenelli, MD, professor of psychiatry, who each served as interim department chairs after Igor Grant, MD, stepped down from the position in 2019 after a 5-year term.

Daskalakis will oversee a large and vibrant Department of Psychiatry, with a strong history of leading research and actively growing clinical services. The department is multidisciplinary and translational. It is ranked third in the nation in NIH funding among psychiatry programs and No. 1 on the West Coast. Its collaborators range from Veterans Affairs San Diego Healthcare System and Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego to the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, Scripps Research Institute and various agencies of San Diego County and the state of California.

MEDIA CONTACT

Scott LaFee, 858-249-0456, slafee@ucsd.edu

UC San Diego's Studio Ten 300 offers radio and television connections for media interviews with our faculty, which can be coordinated via studio@ucsd.edu. To connect with a UC San Diego faculty expert on relevant issues and trending news stories, visit <https://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/media-resources/faculty-experts>.