

In memoriam

**Professor Irina Simonović, PhD
(1934-2015)**



Dr Irina Simonović, a retired professor at the University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Sciences, passed away on April 18, 2015.

Professor Irina Simonović was born in Futog on the 14th of August 1934. She completed her secondary education and Senior Course Exam in Novi Sad. She studied biology at the Faculty of Sciences in Belgrade and obtained her bachelor's degree in the field of animal physiology in 1961. In 1972 she defended her PhD thesis, entitled "The Effect of Hypothalamic Deafferentation on Gonadotropic Function" at the Faculty of Sciences, University of Novi Sad.

Her professional career began in 1961, when she became a research assistant in the Microbiological Department of the Institute of Medical Research in Novi Sad. In September 1966 she was appointed teaching assistant at the Faculty of Philosophy, later established as the Faculty of Sciences. She taught laboratory courses in Biochemistry, General Physiology and Comparative Animal Physiology. In 1973 she became an assistant professor, four years later an associate professor, and finally, in 1984, a full professor. In the following 25 years, until her retirement in 1998, she taught Comparative Animal Physiology. As a holder of a prestigious Ford Foundation Grant, Prof. Simonović spent over two years at the Institute of Endocrinology, University of Milan, where she worked with Prof. Luciano Martini, a highly respected scholar and researcher. Together with Prof. Martini and his associates, Prof. Irina Simonović published outstanding research in eminent journals. She also completed most of the laboratory work for her PhD thesis at the Institute of Endocrinology in Milan. Although published more than 40 years ago, the results of this research, particularly those on the importance of cholinergic mechanisms in the control of hypothalamic gonadotropin secretion, are still relevant and have been cited widely.

Prof. Irina Simonović was an extremely conscientious educator. Throughout her entire teaching career, she scrupulously prepared every lecture she gave, always focusing on new pieces of research and knowledge, because she wanted to inform her students about the latest developments in her field, while arousing their interest in the subject she loved.

Although she was a strict professor, students respected her since they were aware of her good intentions and knew she was preparing them for their future career and work.

The scope of Prof. Simonović's research work includes more than 40 papers. Her main research interests were neuroendocrinology and reproductive physiology. The results of her studies, based on the complex surgical method of hypothalamic deafferentation (which was invented at that time), are of enormous value as they have contributed to a better understanding of the regulatory mechanisms in hypothalamic control of adenohipophysis and gonad function and localization of certain hypothalamus regions responsible for neuro-hormone biosynthesis.

Her research on cholinergic mechanisms in the control of hypothalamic factor secretion provided the first - and still highly relevant - results in this field. The value of these results is reflected in the fact that they are part of special book chapters and have been cited for more than 40 years.

Irina was a generous and reliable friend, always ready to listen and to help: she never betrayed any of her friends, and was an extremely honest and righteous person. She was committed to her work, and in everything she did she always gave her best: always willing to sacrifice for her friends, students and colleagues.

Prof. dr Desanka Marić

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