

## **The Scientific Excellence at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona International Workshop on Rapid Methods and Automation in Food Microbiology**

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Dr. Josep Yuste and Dr. Marta Capellas, associate professors at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, conducted an International Workshop on Rapid Methods and Automation in Food Microbiology at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona with cooperation of Professor Dr. Daniel Y. C. Fung, of Kansas State University, for ELEVEN years (2002 to 2012, inclusive) with excellent results due to the format of the workshop and the interactions between professors, company representatives, and workshop participants in the 4-day hands-on workshop. The success of the workshop series was mainly due to the scientific excellence of the program as well as the interactions between the outstanding speakers and support of the industry representatives and hands-on experiences of the participants on many of the systems and instrumentation all through the four days of intensive interactions between the participants and the presenters.

The participants of the workshop consisted of two main groups: 1) students of Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (about 60 excited young men and women); and 2) outstanding scientists (about 100) from Europe and around the world as far away as from Singapore, the Far East, and USA. An excellent team of translators were present to translate from Spanish to English and from English to Spanish depending on the language preference of the speaker of the moment. The use of ear phone for the participants greatly helped the decimation of information to the entire group. It should be mentioned that the translation team was excellent in translating from one language to another!!

Key-note speakers of the conference included Dr. Daniel Y. C. Fung, who was the key presenter of the history of rapid methods and automation in microbiology, and current developments of diagnostic microbiology, and the historical developments of rapid methods from the very beginning of the field. Dr. Cécile Lahellec, from France, high-lighted the development of rapid methods in European Union with her vast experiences and contributions to the whole field of microbiological testing procedures, and rules and regulations. Other outstanding speakers from Spain and other countries also presented timely topics relevant to the workshop. With the excellent translations, the materials were transmitted to everybody in the conference with excellent speed and clarity. Questions and answers sessions were also provided after each presentation making the experience very valuable to the entire group of participants.

The real value of the workshop is actually the hands-on experiences for the participants. Commercial company representatives made valuable presentations and demonstrations to the participants with the newest and most efficient systems all through the workshops. The participants had hands-on experiences of at least fifty different new and established microbiological procedures and systems during the entire workshop!! Commercial companies generously provided diagnostic kits, instrument demonstrations, etc. to provide the participants with real "hands-on" experiences during the entire conference. At some point of the conference, participants even had chances to visit actual sites of diagnostic companies near the University. The hands-on experiences were truly valuable and impressive to the participants. Dr. Fung even had a special session where he personally demonstrated some of his inventions to the delight of the participants!!

All in all, the workshop was truly an educational experience as well as a hands-on exercise for the participants.

At the tail end of the week long hard work, it was appropriate to have a champagne celebration with participants and presenters mingled freely with each other. Oh, of course, there was the group picture for the entire 150+ people lining up in front of the beautiful Veterinary building. Of course, Dr. Fung and Mrs. Dr. Fung and Dr. Lahellec were sitting at the center front row flanked by Dr. Yuste and Dr. Capellas. Everybody had a copy of the lovely photography to remember the wonderful intensive workshop conducted by Dr. Josep Yuste and Dr. Marta Capellas at the wonderful Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona!! The workshop will continue for another 30 years at least!!

Long Live to the Spanish Rapid Methods and Automation in Food Microbiology!!!