

MONTHLY ALUMNI RESEARCH SEMINARS

As part of our ongoing effort to maintain and strengthen connections with the alumni of the School of Medicine of the University of Crete (UoC), we are pleased to announce the launch of the UoC Alumni Research Seminar Series for 2026. This initiative aims to bring cutting-edge knowledge in basic, translational and clinical research, reflecting the scientific work and career trajectories of our alumni, while fostering stronger links between the Medical School and distinguished alumni physicians and scientists working abroad. The seminar series is open to consultants, residents, medical students in their clinical clerkships and biomedical scientists.



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UoC Medical School Alumni Research Seminars



OBJECTIVES

The UoC Alumni Research Seminars is a monthly seminar series aiming to:

- Highlight the research excellence and global impact of the UoC alumni.
- Strengthen scientific ties between UoC and its alumni community.
- Expose students and early-career researchers to diverse research paths and career trajectories.
- Promote interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration.

Inspire the next generation of researchers through alumni scientific journeys.

- Build a sustainable platform for networking, mentorship, and collaboration.

HOW TO ATTEND

The UoC Alumni Research Seminars are held monthly as virtual Zoom webinars on Wednesdays at 15:00 (Athens' time).

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://uoc-gr.zoom.us/j/82362105844?pwd=aqZgYlWq8a7SVILnVoaT8WFwgKNIJ9.1>

Meeting ID: 823 6210 5844

Passcode: 550404

18 February 2026
(15.00 – 16:00 a.m. Athens' time)

Dimitra Skondra MD, PhD, FASRS

Vice Chair of Research

Terry and Mel Karmazin Endowed Professor of Ophthalmology

Vitreoretinal Service

NYU Langone Health

NYU Grossman Medical School



Title: *Microbiome-retina axis in macular degeneration: I have a "gut" feeling about this...*

Moderator: Miltiadis Tsilimbaris, MD, Professor of Ophthalmology School of Medicine, UoC

Short CV of the speaker

Dr. Dimitra Skondra, an internationally renowned vitreoretinal surgeon and physician-scientist, is the incoming Vice Chair of Research and Innovation and Terry and Mel Karmazin Endowed Professor of Ophthalmology at NYU Langone Health, following her tenure at the University of Chicago, where she served as Professor of Ophthalmology and Visual Science and Director of the J. Terry Ernest Ocular Imaging Center through February 2026.

She is widely regarded as a visionary and thought leader in retinal disease research, whose work has reshaped understanding of how systemic biology, diet, and the gut microbiome influence retinal health and degeneration. She founded and led the UChicago Retinal Microbiome Program and the UChicago Retina Big Data and Bioinformatics Team, establishing the gut–retina axis as a causal biological framework for retinal disease by integrating diet, gut microbiome function, and systemic metabolism with advanced retinal imaging, human data, specialized gnotobiotic models, and multi-omics profiling to elucidate mechanisms underlying age-related macular degeneration and retinopathy of prematurity.

Dr. Skondra completed her medical degree at the University of Crete Medical School, where she served as valedictorian and achieved one of the highest grade point averages in the history of the school. She completed her ophthalmology residency at Weill Cornell Medical College–New York Presbyterian Hospital, followed by her PhD, postdoctoral training, and vitreoretinal surgery fellowship at Harvard Medical School at the internationally renowned Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. Her Big Data–driven research has transformed approaches to drug repurposing in retinal disease.

Dr. Skondra is a highly sought-after vitreoretinal surgeon with deep expertise in complex retinal detachment and macular disorders. She has also pioneered a noninvasive therapeutic approach for selected macular holes using targeted pharmacologic eye-drop therapy.

Dr. Skondra is an elected member of the Macula Society, Retina Society, and Club Jules Gonin. Her honors include a number of awards such as the Macula Society Research, the ARVO Early Career Clinician-Scientist, the ARVO Foundation–Genentech AMD Translational, the Thome AMD, the Retina Society Margherio, the Club Jules Gonin Retina Research Foundation, the ISPB AMD twice, and the University of Chicago Innovation three times. She has delivered numerous invited keynote and named lectures nationally and internationally. She serves in key leadership and advisory roles across the field.