

BIOGRAPHY: Professor Nasri Nesnas, PhD

Florida Institute of Technology, Melbourne, Florida, USA

Nasri Nesnas was born in Jerusalem and moved to the United States of America to receive his Bachelor of Science degree as a dual major in chemistry and biochemistry at Manhattan College, New York, in 1994. He then pursued his graduate education earning two Masters degrees: M.A. in 1995, M.Phil. in 1998, and a Ph.D. degree in 1999, working with bioorganic chemist and University Professor Ronald Breslow, at Columbia University. Nasri was a postdoctoral research fellow for 2 years and 8 months working with Natural Products Chemist, Centennial Professor Koji Nakanishi, at Columbia University.



Nasri started his first academic career at Florida Institute of Technology (FIT), Melbourne, Florida, as an Assistant Professor in August 2002, and was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor in 2008, and recently earned the rank of Professor. Nasri took his sabbatical in 2014-15 to work in the labs of Professor Brian M. Stoltz of Caltech, working in collaboration with Nobel Laureate Robert H. Grubbs also at Caltech. Their work was recently published in the *Journal of the American Chemical Society* in May of 2017.

Nasri holds a license agreement with a UK Biotech company for the development of the fastest route to accessing photo responsive molecular tools critical for understanding the brain's network. He was recently recognized for his expertise with a National Institutes of Health Award (NIH). He hosted in his research laboratory 2 international professors, and mentored 11 PhD, 16 MS, 40 undergraduate, and 9 high school students over the past 15 years at FIT. Many pursued stellar positions including further advanced degrees, and two of his alums secured academic careers.

Nasri is currently developing light sensitive molecules that can act as brain switches to help understand the complex network of the brain. He is also designing molecules that respond to light and help explain how vision works in an attempt to combat Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD), the leading cause of blindness.

He received funds from NIH, NSF, NASA, Intel Corp., FSEC, and several local corporations. He authored and coauthored 20 refereed research articles with over 990 citations, and also published 9 conference abstracts, 2 book chapters, and presented 40 invited lectures, including a recent plenary lecture at the University of Pisa, Italy, July 2017.

His hobbies, which include magic, resulted in an invitation from former FIT President Catanese to perform a magical ribbon cutting ceremony of the FW Olin Physical Sciences Building, and subsequently an invitation from former Physics and Space Sciences' department head to perform the Ortega Telescope dedication ceremony in April of 2008.