

CHAMINDIKA L. SIRIWARDANA
Texas A&M University – Central Texas
1001 Leadership Place,
Killeen, TX 76549.

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., University of Oklahoma**, Norman, OK (2014)
Major: Plant Molecular Biology
Advisor: Ben F. Holt III, PhD
- M.S., Texas State University**, San Marcos, TX (2009)
Major: Biology
- B.S., University of Peradeniya**, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka (2006)
Major: Botany

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- Lecturer**, University of North Carolina Wilmington, Wilmington, NC (08/2018 – Present)
Full-time faculty position. Duties include teaching, undergraduate research mentoring and service.
- Adjunct Lecturer** – Texas A&M University-Central Texas, Killeen, TX (01/2018 – 05/2018)
- Postdoctoral Research Associate** - University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK (03/2016 – 12/2017)
- Adjunct Lecturer** - University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK (08/2016 – 12/2016)
- Graduate Teaching Assistant** - University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK (08/2009 – 05/2014)
- Graduate Instructional Assistant**, Texas State University, San Marcos, TX (08/2007 – 06/2009)
- Assistant Lecturer** – University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka (05/2006 – 04/2007)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Lecturer, University of North Carolina Wilmington**, Wilmington, NC
Genetics (BIO 335), Spring 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020
An upper-level course required for majors. Responsible for developing and teaching lecture sections (120 students per section).
Principles of Biology: Cells (BIO 201), Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Fall 2020
An introductory biology course required for majors. Responsible for developing and teaching lecture sections (200 students per section).
Genetics in Human Affairs (BIO160), Spring 2020
An introductory genetics course for non-majors. Responsible for developing and teaching the course (60 students per section).
- Adjunct Lecturer, Texas A&M University-Central Texas**, Killeen, TX
Bioinformatics (BIOL 4451), Spring 2018
Developed the course (first time offered) to meet the requirements of the Department, including the syllabus, lectures, laboratory exercises, and exams. The course consisted of two lectures and one lab per week.

Adjunct Lecturer, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Cell Biology Laboratory (MBIO 4263/PBIO 4263), Fall 2016

Developed the course to give students hands-on experience in the techniques used in a modern molecular biology laboratory. The course consisted of one lecture and two labs per week.

Guest Lecturer, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Introductory Bioinformatics (MBIO 4810/PBIO 4810), Spring 2013, 2014, 2017

Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Introductory Bioinformatics (MBIO 4810/PBIO 4810), Spring 2013, 2014

Principles of Plant Physiology (PBIO 4114), Fall 2009-2013

Ecology and Environment Quality (BOT 2404), Spring 2010

General Botany (PBIO 1114), Fall 2011

Graduate Instructional Assistant, Texas State University, San Marcos, TX

Economic Botany (BIO 3406), Fall 2007-2008

Plant Physiology (BIO 3465), Fall 2007

General Science (GS 3310), Spring 2008-2009

Assistant Lecturer, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, 2006-2007

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Postdoctoral Research Associate, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK (March 2016 – December 2017)

Adviser: Ben F. Holt III, PhD

Project: Molecular genetic analysis of the Arabidopsis *NF-YA* gene family to understand its role during photoperiod-dependent flowering. The work conducted during this project was published in Siriwardana *et al.*, PLoS Genetics (2016) and Gnesutta *et al.*, Plant Cell (2017).

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH MENTORING

University of North Carolina Wilmington, Wilmington, NC

Mentoring undergraduate students enrolled in Directed Individual Study (DIS) and research volunteers.

Hannah Gantz, Lauren Mansfield, Allison Phelan, Jenny Schuster and Grace Suter (Fall 2019)

Casey Barker, Bryce Gough, Makayla Hagins, Briana Landino, Kristian Perez, Allison Phelan,

Jenny Schuster and Nash Philbeck (Spring 2020)

Southwestern University, Georgetown, TX

Leah Horick (Summer 2018)

Holt Lab – University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK

Ashley Robbins (2010)

Conner F. Boatright (2012-2013) – Conner was awarded a UROP award from the Honors College and presented his research at the Undergraduate Research Day at the University of Oklahoma.

Zack Myers (2013) – Zack was a co-author, and his research project was published as part of the manuscript Siriwardana *et al.*, PLoS Genetics (2016).

PUBLICATIONS

1. Donovan S., Cook R., Kleinschmit A., Kerby J., Murdoch B, Ryder E., Siriwardana C., Tapprich W., Morgan W., Rosenwald A., Triplett E., Pauley M. Integration of Bioinformatics into Life Science Curricula: Community Development, Dissemination, and Assessment of a NIBLSE Learning Resource. The manuscript is in preparation for submission to **CBE—Life Sciences Education**.
2. Risinger J.R., Siriwardana C.L.¹, Carpenter E., Jones D.S., Kumimoto R.W., Holt B.F. III. Analysis of gene duplication within the Arabidopsis *NF-YB* gene family reveals domains under both purifying and diversifying selection. The manuscript is in preparation for submission to **Molecular Biology and Evolution**. ¹co-first author.
3. Gnesutta N., Kumimoto R.W., Swain S., Chiara M., Horner D., Siriwardana C.L., Holt III B.F., Mantovani R. (2017) CONSTANS imparts DNA sequence-specificity to the histone-fold NF-YB/NF-YC subunits. **Plant Cell**.
4. Siriwardana C.L., Gnesutta N., Kumimoto R.W., Jones D.S., Myers Z.A*., Mantovani R., Holt III B.F. (2016). NUCLEAR FACTOR Y, subunit A (NF-YA) proteins positively regulate flowering and act through FLOWERING LOCUS T. **PLoS Genetics**.
5. Myers Z.A., Kumimoto R.W., Siriwardana C.L., Gayler K.K, Risinger J.R., Pezzetta D., Holt B.F. III. (2016) NUCLEAR FACTOR Y (NF-Y) transcription factors are broadly required for light perception in Arabidopsis thaliana. **PLoS Genetics**.
6. Swain S., Myers Z.A., Siriwardana C.L., Holt B.F. III. (2016). The multifaceted roles of NUCLEAR FACTOR-Y in *Arabidopsis thaliana* development and stress responses. **Biochimica et Biophysica (BBA) – Gene Regulatory Mechanisms**.
7. Jayaweera T., Siriwardana C.L., Dharmasiri S., Quint M., Gray W.M., Dharmasiri N. Alternative splicing of Arabidopsis IBR5 pre-mRNA generates two IBR5 isoforms with distinct and overlapping function. **PLoS One**.
8. Siriwardana C.L., Kumimoto R.W., Jones D.S., Holt B.F. III. (2014) Overexpression of the Arabidopsis NF-YA transcription factor family leads to opposing abscisic acid responses during seed germination. **Plant Molecular Biology Reporter**.
9. Kumimoto R.W., Siriwardana C.L., Gayler K.K., Risinger J.R., Siefers N., Holt B.F. III. (2013). NUCLEAR FACTOR Y Transcription Factors Have Both Opposing and Additive Roles in ABA-Mediated Seed Germination. **PLoS One**.
10. Cao S., Kumimoto R.W., Siriwardana C.L., Risinger J.R., Holt B.F. III. (2011). Identification and Characterization of NF-Y Transcription Factor Families in the Monocot Model Plant *Brachypodium distachyon*. **PLoS One**.
11. Cao S., Siriwardana C.L., Kumimoto R.W., Holt B.F. III. (2011). Construction of High Quality Gateway Entry Libraries and Their Application to Yeast Two-hybrid for the Monocot Model Plant *Brachypodium distachyon*. **BMC Biotechnology**.
12. Abayasekara C.L., Siriwardana C.L., Razaak M.G.M., (2007). Water Quality of Maha Oya Stream in Peradeniya. **Ceylon Journal of Science**.

*indicates mentored undergraduate researcher.

Google Scholar Link: <https://tinyurl.com/ScholarCLS>

INVITED TALKS

1. Siriwardana C.L. (2018). Why Plants Flower in the Spring? The story of the NF-YA Transcription Factors. **Department of Biology, Southwestern University**, Georgetown, TX.

TALKS, CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & ABSTRACTS

1. Siriwardana C.L. (2018) Why Plants Flower in the Spring? The story of the NF-YA Transcription Factors. Science Club. **Department of Biology. Texas A & M University-Central Texas**, Killeen, TX.
2. Siriwardana C.L. (2017) Genetically Modified Crops: Developing Drought Tolerant Corn. **School of Plant Biology, University of Arizona**, Tucson, AZ.
3. Siriwardana C.L., Gnesutta N., Mantovai R., Holt III. B. (2017) NUCLEAR FACTOR Y, subunit A (NF-YA) proteins positively regulate flowering and act through FLOWERING LOCUS T. **28th International Conference on Arabidopsis Research (ICAR)**, St. Louis, MO.
4. Myers Z., Kumimoto R., Siriwardana C.L., Holt B.F. III (2017) Roles of the NUCLEAR FACTOR-Y as regulators of light-mediated development. **28th International Conference on Arabidopsis Research (ICAR)**, St. Louis, MO.
5. Gnesutta N., Kumimoto R. W., Swain S., Chiara M., Siriwardana C., Horner D., Holt B.F. III., Mantovani R. (2017) CONSTANS imparts DNA sequence-specificity to the histone-fold NF-YB/NF-YC dimer. **28th International Conference on Arabidopsis Research (ICAR)**, St. Louis, MO.
6. Jayaweera T., Siriwardana C., Dharmasiri S., Quint M., Gray W., Dharmasiri N. (2012) Characterization of new mutant alleles of IBR5 indicates the relevance of its catalytic domain in plant auxin response, **2012 Annual Meeting of the American Society of Plant Biologist**, Austin, TX.
7. Siriwardana C.L., Kumimoto R.W., Holt III B. F. (2011) The Role of Arabidopsis NF-YA Transcription Factors in Regulating Abscisic Acid Mediated Drought Responses, **22nd International Conference on Arabidopsis Research (ICAR)**, Madison, WI.
8. Kumimoto R.W., Siriwardana C.L., Gayler K., Risinger J., Holt III B.F. (2011) The role of NF-Y transcription factors in ABA responses, **22nd International Conference on Arabidopsis Research (ICAR)**, Madison, WI.
9. Jayaweera T., Dharmasiri S., Siriwardana C., Dharmasiri N. (2010) Plant auxin response is modulated through ABA signaling in response to environmental stress, **International Research Conference for Graduate Students**, Texas State University, San Marcos TX.
10. Siriwardana C., Karunarathna N., Dharmasiri S., Albers S., Koke J., Dharmasiri N (2009) Characterization of pic59, a novel Arabidopsis mutant associated with auxin response. **9th International Plant Molecular Biology Congress**, St. Louis, MO.
11. Siriwardana C., Karunarathna N., Dharmasiri S., Gunathilake A., Dharmasiri N (2009) PIC59, a novel gene associated with auxin signaling, **2009 Annual Meeting of the South Section of American Society of Plant Biologist**, Austin, TX.
12. Karunarathna N., Dharmasiri S., Siriwardana C.L., Gunathilake A., Dharmasiri N (2009) Auxin resistant mutant *pic11* encodes IAA28 that regulates growth and development of *Arabidopsis thaliana*, **2009 Annual Meeting of the South Section of American Society of Plant Biologist**, Austin, TX.

13. Dharmasiri N., Dharmasiri S., Gunathilake A. Karunarathna N., Siriwardana C., Collier C. (2008) Characterization of new auxin response mutants in Arabidopsis. **SAAS (Society of American Agricultural Scientists) Convention, Dallas, TX.**
14. Abayasekara C.L., Siriwardana C.L., Razaak M.G.M., (2007). Water Quality of Maha Oya Stream in Peradeniya. **PURSE, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.**

AWARDS

Pfiester Women in Science Award, University of Oklahoma-Norman (2014)
George L. and Cleo Cross Graduate Student Award, University of Oklahoma-Norman (2011)
Colene Drace Cell Biology Award, Texas State University-San Marcos (2009)
Prof. M.D. Dassanayaka Gold Medal for Botany, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka (2006)
University Award for Academic Excellence, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka (2006)

GRANTS and SCHOLARSHIPS

CAS Online-Course Development Award , University of North Carolina Wilmington (2020)	\$1000.00
Summer Faculty Development Award , University of North Carolina Wilmington (2020)	\$1000.00
Travel Grant , 28 th International Conference on Arabidopsis Research (ICAR) (2017)	\$500.00
Sooner Heritage Scholarship , University of Oklahoma, Norman (2011-2014)	\$2000.00
Robert E. and Mary B. Sturgis Scholarship , University of Oklahoma, Norman (2012)	\$1500.00
Graduate Student Senate Conference Grant , University of Oklahoma, Norman (2011)	\$750.00

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Society of Plant Biologists (ASPB)
 National Science Teachers Association (NSTA)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Committees

Member – Faculty Position Search Committee (2020/2021), Department of Biology and Marine Biology, University of North Carolina, Wilmington.

Member - Pre-health Advising Committee (2020/2021), Peer Teaching Evaluation Committee (2020/2021), Scholarship Committee (2019/2020) Introductory biology course review committee (2019/2020), Assessment Review Committee (2018/2019), Department of Biology and Marine Biology, University of North Carolina, Wilmington.

Graduate Student Representative - Faculty Position Search Committee (2012/2013), Department of Microbiology and Plant Biology, University of Oklahoma, Norman.