4:00pm **BI+AS-TuA7 Quantitative Characterization of Cells in Biofilms and on Surfaces**, *A.C. Areias, C. Sousa, G.P. Mendes,* University of Minho, Portugal, *P. Mack,* Thermo Fisher Scientific, UK, *S. Lanceros-Méndez,* University of Minho, Portugal, ***D.Y. Petrovykh***, International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory, Portugal

Films of cells on solid substrates are encountered in a variety of biological and biomedical environments, including cells in biofilms that spontaneously colonize medical devices and multilayers of cells filtered from suspensions for analysis. Understanding the chemical properties of cells in such films is important for providing clues about the behavior of the cells or about the effects of treatments that had been applied to the cells. Similarly to other

types of surface-based systems, the characterization of cells on solid substrates poses several analytical challenges. In particular, the small number of cells on each sample, the interference from surface interactions, and the absorbance of the substrate material prevent the characterization of cells on surfaces by the standard optical methods that are used in solution. We show that protocols similar to those used for preparing samples for electron microscopy can be adapted to prepare biofilm samples for characterization by X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS). Modern XPS instruments also provide the functionality required for characterization of these complex samples, for example, sample charging on insulating substrates can be efficiently and consistently compensated. Finally, the Ar cluster ion beam technology that recently became available on XPS instruments provides additional capabilities for a more detailed characterization of cells in biofilms, which typically have thicknesses larger than the sampling depth of XPS. We characterized several types of fixed and dried cell samples, including biofilms and cells filtered from suspensions, to compare different preparation protocols and to identify qualitative and quantitative parameters that can be reliably obtained from XPS analysis of such films of cells. We will present the results of our comparative analysis and possible applications of our methodology for characterization of cells in biological and biomedical experiments.