

# The Long-term Prospects of Science

Professor Martin Gruebele

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

**6:00-7:00pm April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (Thursday)**

*Free and open to the public*

Refreshment will be served

Science and Engineering Classroom (SEC) Building, Room 100

University of Houston, 4800 Calhoun Road, Houston, Texas

**Abstract:** When Einstein's paper on general relativity came out in 1907, who would have thought the equation would be programmed into our cell phones 100 years later so they can accurately guide us to our dinner restaurant? When Berzelius discovered the new element silicon in 1823, who would have thought it was critical to the chips in the same cell phones? When Ivanovsky in 1892 discovered the first virus that infected tobacco plants, who would have thought in 2006 the FDA would approve a vaccine against a human cancer. And when Picasso painted *Nude, Green Leaves and Bust*, who would have thought it would sell for \$100+ million 85 years later? Scientific discovery, like art, often takes time to show its full value. The strange things we find out about nature, whether it is the 14+ billion year age of the universe, the odd little ways in which fish go about swimming around, or the fact that fat, protein and genes absorb infrared light from a toaster oven in slightly different ways, could all lead to the next cure or billion dollar industry, but not likely in just a couple of years. Patience has great rewards.

**Bio:** Professor Gruebele is a James R. Eiszner Endowed Chair in Chemistry and the Head of the Department of Chemistry at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. His current research interests focus on complex chemical systems, biophysics, and condensed matter science. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences (USA) and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He also competes in triathlon in his spare time.

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Department of Physics*

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