



**John Plenefisch, Associate Dean, College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics**

John Plenefisch earned a B.S. in Biology from the University of Connecticut in 1979, after which he spent several years as a research technician in the Department of Animal Genetics at the University of Connecticut studying the effects of environmental and pharmacologic agents as teratologic agents. He subsequently attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he worked on the genetic control of sex determination and dosage compensation in *Caenorhabditis elegans*, receiving his Ph.D. in 1990. He took a postdoctoral position at Johns Hopkins University where he initiated studies on how cell adhesions contribute to tissue formation and stability in development, and also taught as an instructor in the Biotechnology Program of the School of Continuing Studies.

Dr. Plenefisch joined The University of Toledo in 1996 and was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2002. At the University of Toledo, he has served as the Associate Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences from 2006 to 2015; as Acting Chair the spring semester of 2007, in early 2009 and again in fall of 2021. He was appointed Associate Dean in the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in 2016, and was appointed and served as Interim Dean of the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics from January 2019-July 2021. In addition, Dr. Plenefisch previously served as Chair of the faculty Councils of both the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics in 2011 and of the former Arts and Sciences in 2005-6, as Chair of the Graduate Council Curriculum Committee from 2012-15, and as a member of Faculty Senate from 2011-15. He has also served on both College and University level Tenure and Promotion Committees, including as chair of the College Committee on Academic personnel in 2013-14. At the state level he is the current the Panel Lead for the Ohio Dept. of Higher Education's Biology TAG Panel.

Since joining the University of Toledo, his research has focused on how cell adhesions contribute to tissue formation and stability and the role of intermediate filaments in development in *Caenorhabditis elegans*. This work has been supported by grants from NIH and the American Heart Association, and has contributed to the research mentoring of over 50 undergraduate students, including Honors students, as well as Ph.D. and M.S. graduate students. He has served as a grant reviewer for NSF, as well as a manuscript reviewer for multiple journals in his area of expertise. His teaching and mentoring have been recognized through awards including Honors Professor of the Year (2001-2002), and Master Teacher in the former College of Arts and Sciences from 2005-2007 and again from 2008-2010.