

Requirements: Neuroscience

Natural Sciences Division

Neuroscience studies the basic functions of the brain and nervous system as well as brain-behavior relationships in order to understand the roles they play in regulating both animal and human behavior. A thorough knowledge of the functions of the nervous system is essential to understanding the vicissitudes of psychological experience, general behavior and clinical disorders. Therefore, the study of the nervous system and the brain — anatomically, physiologically and biophysically, at both the microscopic and macroscopic levels — is central to the Neuroscience Program.

In recent years, neuroscience has become the most rapidly developing interdisciplinary area in the sciences. This field integrates the knowledge, research methods and modern laboratory technology of biology, chemistry, psychology and other scientific fields toward the common goal of understanding animal and human behavior. For this reason, the program's curriculum and list of faculty reflect a diversity of subdisciplines within a variety of departments. A primary objective of this program is to prepare students for entrance into graduate training or research occupations in neuroscience, neurochemistry, neurobiology, anatomy, physiology, physiological psychology, clinical psychology, behavioral science and the health sciences (medicine and allied fields).

First Year and New Students

Students who are considering a concentration or a major in neuroscience should inquire about the program from any of the affiliated faculty members and also should consult with the department chair.

NEUR 212 is the entryway into the neuroscience curriculum. It begins by emphasizing that neuroscience is truly an interdisciplinary field. After covering brain evolution and the genetic basis of behavior, there is a review of the organization of the nervous system and the processes responsible for neural conduction and synaptic transmission. This knowledge is then applied to a comprehensive examination of the neurochemical, sensory, motor, developmental, motivational, cognitive and emotional processes and structures that influence both normal and abnormal behavior.

Students Graduating in 2018 & 2019

Use the major requirements found in the [archived course catalog](#).

Curriculum for the Major

The neuroscience major is intended primarily for students who are planning to attend graduate school in the many specialized fields of neuroscience, such as medical neuroscience, developmental neuroscience, cognitive neuroscience or behavioral neuroscience. It also is an excellent major for students who are seriously interested in pursuing research careers or becoming clinical practitioners concerned with the biochemical or the biopsychological aspects of the nervous system or behavior (e.g., psychopharmacology, psychiatry, clinical neuropsychology).

The following requirements for the neuroscience major and concentration apply to the class of 2020 and those following

Requirements for the Major (6.5-7.25 Units)

Required Core Courses (4.25–5.0 units)

(Depends on required laboratory and Chemistry course)

Neuroscience Required Courses (2.0 units)

- NEUR 212 Neuroscience
 - NEUR 250 Research Design & Analysis in Neuroscience
 - NEUR 305 Behavioral Neuroscience
- OR NEUR 307 Sensory Processes
- NEUR 471 Topics in Neuroscience

Required Laboratories (Neuroscience/Biology/Psychology) (0.25–0.5 units)

One of the following laboratory courses:

- BIOL 359 Experimental Neurobiology
- NEUR 401 Research Methods in Electrophysiology and Biopotentials
- NEUR 405 Research Methods in Behavioral Neuroscience
- NEUR 406 Research Methods in Sensory Processes
- PSYC 402 Research Methods in Cognition
- PSYC 410 Research Methods in Human Neuroscience

OR 2 semesters (0.5 unit) of NEUR 385 Research in Neuroscience

Biology Required Courses (1.50 units)

- BIOL 109Y Introduction to Experimental Biology (Lab)
- BIOL 110Y Introduction to Experimental Biology (Lab)
- BIOL 115 Energy in Living Systems
- BIOL 116 Information in Living Systems

Chemistry Required Courses (0.5–1.0 unit)

- CHEM 121 Introductory Chemistry I
- CHEM 124 Introductory Chemistry II

OR CHEM 122 Chemical Principles

Electives (2.0 units)

One (1.0) unit of the two (2.0) units of electives must come from the Neuroscience electives list. The other until can be any two additional courses from the list.

Neuroscience Electives

- NEUR 265 Behavioral Neuroscience of Adolescence
- NEUR 275 Animal Cognition (NEUR 291 Spring 2015)

- NEUR 295 Neuropsychology: Brain Disorders
- NEUR 302 Neuroethology and Comparative Psychology
- NEUR 305 Behavioral Neuroscience (*if not taken as core course*)
- NEUR 307 Sensory Processes (*if not taken as core course*)
- NEUR 347 Psychopharmacology
- NEUR 351 Molecular Neuroscience (Special Topic- Fall 2016)
- NEUR 395D Neurophilosophy of Consciousness
- NEUR 491 Special Topic (Spring 2015-Neurophilosophy Conscious)
- BIOL 358 Neurobiology

Biology Electives

- BIOL 243 Animal Physiology
- BIOL 255 Genetic Analysis
- BIOL 261 Animal Behavior
- BIOL 263 Molecular Biology
- BIOL 266 Cell Biology
- BIOL 321 Evolutionary Developmental Biology

Chemistry Electives

- CHEM 256 Biochemistry

Psychology Electives

- PSYC 301 Cognitive Psychology
- PSYC 306 Psychology of Language
- PSYC 310 Cognitive Neuroscience

Philosophy Electives

- PHIL 245 Philosophy of Natural Science
- PHIL 260 Philosophy of Mind and Brain
- PHIL 262 Philosophy of Perception

Requirements for the Concentration (4 Units)

Neuroscience Required Courses (1.5 units)

- NEUR 212 Introduction to Neuroscience
- NEUR 305 Behavioral Neuroscience OR NEUR 307 Sensory Processes
- NEUR 471 Topics in Neuroscience

Basic Science Required Courses (1.5 units)

- BIOL 115 Energy in Living Systems
- BIOL 116 Information in Living Systems

AND one of the following chemistry courses:

- CHEM 109 Neurochemistry
- CHEM 121 Introductory Chemistry

- CHEM 122 Chemical Principles

Electives

One (1) unit from the elective list above for the major.

Senior Capstone

The Senior Capstone consists of an original research proposal, written in a format of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) grant. The capstone is completed in the fall of the student's senior year and is evaluated by two members of the neuroscience department faculty.

Research

Students can gain research experience by participating in independent research (NEUR 385) under the supervision of a faculty advisor. Although independent research is not required for the major, conducting research is a valuable educational experience, particularly for students planning to pursue graduate or medical training.

Honors

Seniors participating in the Honors Program (NEUR 497Y-498Y) must complete an honors project and pass an oral exam. Assessment of the honors candidate is conducted by the thesis advisor, two additional members of the Neuroscience department and an outside examiner brought in by the department.

NEUR Courses and Diversification Requirements

The following courses may be paired to satisfy the natural sciences requirement:

- NEUR 105 and NEUR 212
- NEUR 302 through 406 with any PSYC course
- NEUR 291 (201510) with any NEUR course
- NEUR 275 (2016-17 on) with any NEUR course

Courses in Neuroscience

NEUR 105 Fundamentals of Neuroscience: Film, Space and Play

Credit: 0.5

This introductory course will explore a range of topics and issues in the study of neuroscience. Specifically, the course will focus on the relationship between neuroscience, the arts and humanities. The course will treat the humanities and sciences as partners working together on the same problems. Usually, three topics are covered per semester. Examples of topics covered include the neuroscience of emotions, play behavior, film, visual and artistic perspective, space and time. Other topics may be covered. Assignments will include weekly quizzes, class discussion and a thesis paper. No prerequisite. NEUR 105 is a non-majors introductory course geared towards first-year and sophomore students, although others may take it. Anyone who plans to major or concentrate in neuroscience will need to take NEUR 112/212. NEUR 105 can be paired with NEUR 112/212 in order to satisfy the natural science distribution requirement. This course is repeatable for credit

one time for a maximum of one unit. However, this course taken twice or with a NEUR special topic does not satisfy the natural sciences diversification.

NEUR 212 Neuroscience

Credit: 0.5

This course begins with a definition of neuroscience as an interdisciplinary field, in the context of the philosophy of science. After covering the basics of cellular neurophysiology, the course examines the development and organization of the human nervous system in terms of sensory, motor, motivational, emotional and cognitive processes. The neurological and biochemical bases of various brain and behavioral disorders also are examined. It is strongly recommended that BIOL 115 or 116 is taken as a prerequisite or corequisite or have an AP score of 5 in biology. No prerequisite.

NEUR 250 Research Design & Analysis in Neuroscience

Credit: 0.5

This course introduces students to the basic experimental design and data analysis approaches used when conducting research in neuroscience. It will provide you with an understanding of the ways in which neuroscientists design studies, analyze data and communicate the results of their investigations of the brain and its relationship to behavior. You will be exposed to the style and language of scientific writing through reading and critiquing primary sources of scientific information. We will also discuss ethical considerations in using human and non-human research subjects, the appropriate use of common parametric and non-parametric statistical tests, effective graphical representation of data, and factors that affect the analysis and interpretation of data such as small sample size, reliability, statistical rigor and chance. Prerequisite: NEUR 212 or permission of instructor.

NEUR 265 Behavioral Neuroscience of Adolescence

Credit: 0.5

Behavioral Neuroscience of Adolescence will examine the emerging scientific human and animal research findings of how the brain changes during adolescence. Coverage will include associated psychological and social functioning, including cognition, multi-tasking, emotional processing, sleep and some pathologies. With an emphasis on the vulnerability and resiliency of the adolescent brain, we will examine appetitive behaviors (e.g., drug use, gambling), risky decision making, changes in and management of daily mood and the onset of some psychiatric disorders in social and cultural contexts. We will connect these to the structural, functional and chemical changes in the brain during the second decade of life. While implications for clinical treatments will also be discussed, the primary emphasis will be normal development and some diseases that emerge in adolescence. Prerequisite: NEUR 212 or PSYC 100.

NEUR 275 Animal Cognition

Credit: 0.5

Can ants count? Can gorillas "converse" about the past or the future? Do crows use tools? Can dogs read human faces to detect our mood or follow our gaze for guidance or direction? These are the types of questions we will be considering in this seminar on animal cognition. We will examine how various cognitive abilities evolved in non-human animals and the purpose these abilities serve in their lives. Additionally, we will explore the implications of animal cognition for our own cognitive abilities. General topics we will discuss include memory, learning, conceptual abilities, spatial cognition, numerical competence, planning, social intelligence, communication and language, animal culture, and self awareness and theory of mind in non-human animals. This course can be used as an elective towards the neuroscience major or concentration. This course can be used in conjunction with another NEUR course to fulfill the natural science distribution requirement. No prerequisite.

NEUR 295 Neuropsychology: Brain Disorders

Credit: 0.5

This course is designed to facilitate our learning about the connections and interactions among neuroanatomy, brain function and psychological phenomena. We do this by studying neuropsychological disorders, as well as the basic psychological processes such as perceptions and memory. Through readings, discussions and class presentations, we will learn some of the basic principles of the brain's organization and function, as well as its ability to recover function after damage. In addition, we will learn about the nature, causes and treatment of specific neuropsychological disorders such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, closed head injuries, Tourette's syndrome and stroke-induced aphasia. Further, we will learn about neuropsychological assessment and the current level of research and discovery in the neuropsychology of specific disorders through student presentations. This course is cross-listed with psychology for diversification purposes. Prerequisite: PSYC 100 or 101 or NEUR 112/212. This course is offered at least every other year.

NEUR 302 Neuroetholgy and Comparative Psychology

Credit: 0.5

Until Darwin published his theory of evolution, it was commonly accepted that a huge gulf exists between human and nonhuman animals. In this course we will examine human and animal behavior and mental activity from an evolutionary perspective — that is, from a perspective in which humans are part of the continuum of life forms that inhabit the planet. We will consider the notion that, in contrast to the usual anthropocentric view of behavior and mental processes, many of the same evolutionary, ecological and biological principles explain both human and animal behavior. Prerequisite: NEUR 112/212 or PSYC 100 and 150. This course is offered at least every other year.

NEUR 305 Behavioral Neuroscience

Credit: 0.5

This course is designed to provide the student with an understanding of the physiological phenomena responsible for psychological experiences. The main focus of the course is a

detailed study of the anatomy and physiology of the nervous system. This is followed by a study of the sensory and self-regulatory systems, a study of higher cognitive processing. With each new topic, the relevant anatomical and physiological systems will be discussed as they relate to the behavior under scrutiny. Thus the biological underpinnings of sleep, mood, learning and memory, motivation and other topics will be studied. Prerequisite: PSYC 100, 110 or NEUR 112/212. Generally offered every year.

NEUR 307 Sensory Processes

Credit: 0.5

This course focuses on the ways in which the brain gathers, processes and interprets information from the external environment in order to construct an internal representation that the organism perceives to be "reality." The goal is to provide students with an understanding of the evolution, structure and function of various sensory systems as well as an understanding of how the brain interprets incoming sensations and turns them into perceptions that allow organisms to act on their environment. Prerequisite: NEUR 112/212 or PSYC 100 or 110 and 150. Generally offered every year.

NEUR 347 Psychopharmacology

Credit: 0.5

This course explores the biological mechanisms of the actions and effects of both legal and illegal psychoactive drugs. The course begins with a brief discussion of the history of psychopharmacology, followed by an in-depth examination of the biological basis of drug action in the brain. We will discuss the basis of drug classification and of specific drugs, including illicit drugs such as cocaine, amphetamines and heroin as well as legal psychoactive drugs such as caffeine, nicotine and alcohol. The course ends with a discussion of the action of drugs used in the treatment of mental disorders such as schizophrenia (antipsychotics) and depression (antidepressants). This course is cross-listed with psychology for diversification purposes. PSYC/NEUR 305 is recommended but not required. Prerequisite: PSYC 100 or NEUR 112/212. Offered as department schedules permit.

Instructor: McFarlane

NEUR 351 Molecular Neuroscience

Credit: 0.5

This course builds upon foundational concepts in neuroscience and biology to study key genes and signaling pathways that drive development, maintenance, communication, and plasticity of neurons and glia. Basic principles covered include differential gene expression in the nervous system, biochemical properties of ion channels and receptors, and the role of regulatory/transport proteins in neurons and glia. We will apply these and other concepts to sensory, motor and behavioral aspects of the nervous system, studying both normal and abnormal development and function in model organisms. The course emphasizes understanding historical and modern experimental design and molecular

techniques. Critical reading and discussion of primary literature is an integral part of this class. This counts toward an elective for the major. Prerequisite: NEUR 212 and BIOL 116.

NEUR 385 Research in Neuroscience

Credit: 0.25

This combined discussion and laboratory course aims to develop abilities for asking sound research questions, designing reasonable scientific approaches to answer such questions, and performing experiments to test both the design and the question. We consider how to assess difficulties and limitations in experimental strategies due to design, equipment, system selected, and so on. The course provides a detailed understanding of selected modern research equipment. Students select their own research problems in consultation with one or more neuroscience faculty members. This course is designed both for those who plan to undertake honors research in their senior year and for those who are not doing honors but who want some practical research experience. A student can begin the research in either semester. If a year of credit is earned, it may be applied toward the research methods course requirement for the major in neuroscience. This course is repeatable for up to 1.50 units of credit. Prerequisite: BIOL 109Y–110Y, NEUR 112/212, and permission of instructor.

NEUR 395D Neurophilosophy of Consciousness

Credit: 0.5

In the last 20 or so years, a formal collaboration has developed between the disciplines of neuroscience and philosophy. The interaction has led to dramatic changes in both disciplines. It turned out that philosophers have made a number of assumptions that do not withstand empirical scrutiny given the new experimental techniques of neuroscience. And it turned out that neuroscientists through this collaboration were able to identify conceptual errors in their discipline. The success of this interaction has led to a new thinking, particularly, in the study of consciousness. In this course, we will be examining this collaborative literature. We will be reading only primary sources. Students will be expected to participate in the current debate. Students must have a major background in either Philosophy or Neuroscience. This course is the same as PHIL 395D. Prerequisite: junior standing and permission of instructor.

NEUR 401 Research Methods in Electrophysiology and Biopotentials

Credit: 0.5 QR

This methods course teaches students the skills necessary for conducting research in biopsychology and neuroscience. Students will gain first-hand experience with a number of concepts and measurement techniques as well as an understanding of the ways in which biopsychologists and neuroscientists investigate the brain and its relationship to behavior. Students will learn to design experiments; collect, analyze and present data using computer software packages; and write a scientific paper. Prerequisite: NEUR 112/212 or PSYC 200 and permission of instructor. Offered as department schedules permit.

NEUR 405 Research Methods in Behavioral Neuroscience

Credit: 0.5 QR

This is a laboratory methods course that focuses on research methods used in physiological psychology and behavioral neuroscience. The emphasis of the course will be on designing, conducting and presenting research, as well as on mastering specific laboratory techniques. The primary goal is to examine the relationships between brain chemistry and behavior. To this end, students will design and implement projects that examine these relationships using animal subjects. The course also will focus on data analysis and experimental design. Prerequisite: PSYC 100 and 150 or NEUR 112/212 and one of the following: NEUR 305 or 347 or permission of instructor. Generally offered every other year.

NEUR 406 Research Methods in Sensory Processes

Credit: 0.5

This methods course teaches students the skills necessary for conducting research in sensation and perception. It will give students first-hand experience with a number of concepts and measurement techniques as well as an understanding of the ways in which sensory neuroscientists investigate how the brain gathers, processes, and interprets information from the external environment to construct an internal representation of reality. Students will learn to design experiments; collect, analyze and present data using computer software packages; and write a scientific paper. Prerequisite: NEUR 112/212 or PSYC 200 and prerequisite or corequisite in either PSYC 301, NEUR 305 or 307 and permission of instructor. Generally offered every other year.

NEUR 471 Topics in Neuroscience

Credit: 0.5

This capstone seminar is required of all students who plan to graduate with a neuroscience concentration or major. The seminar is intended to bring together the knowledge acquired from courses required for, or relevant to, the concentration and major. During the course of the semester, each student will write an integrative paper with the assistance of the instructor. Oral presentations are given in conjunction with each of these exercises. Prerequisite: NEUR 212, junior standing and completion of two of the three required basic science courses for the concentration.

NEUR 493 Individual Study

Credit: 0.25-0.5

Students conduct independent research under the supervision of one of the faculty members affiliated with the Neuroscience Program. This course is restricted to juniors or seniors who are neuroscience majors or have taken (or are concurrently enrolled in) courses required for the neuroscience concentration. Prerequisite: permission of instructor and neuroscience director, along with demonstrated special interest. Because students must enroll for individual studies by the end of the seventh class day of each semester, they should begin discussion of the proposed individual study preferably the semester before,

so that there is time to devise the proposal and seek departmental approval before the registrar's deadline.

NEUR 497Y Senior Honors

Credit: 0.5

This program for senior honors students culminates in the completion of a senior honors research project. The research is expected to be on a topic of particular relevance to the student's postgraduate plans. Students must select a research advisor from the faculty members in the Neuroscience Program. They are expected to have completed a thorough bibliographic search of the literature, written a short review paper and formulated some tentative hypotheses during the spring semester of their junior year. Prerequisite: The student must have a 3.33 overall GPA and a 3.5 GPA in the neuroscience core courses and must have completed at least 5 units toward the major. Permission of neuroscience director

NEUR 498Y Senior Honors

Credit: 0.5

See course description for NEUR 497Y.

Instructor: Staff

Additional Courses that Meet the Requirements for this Concentration:

BIOL 359: Experimental Neurobiology

PSYC 200: Statistical Analysis in Psychology
