

NBIO 733 Neurocircuits and Behavior Journal Club

Instructor: Garret Stuber, Ph.D.

1 credit, Spring Semester

3:30-5:00pm, Friday

This journal club course will meet once per week for 90 minutes to discuss new research papers focused on delineating how neurocircuits function to orchestrate various behavioral states. Papers for discussion will be chosen by the instructor and students, and students will rotate in leading discussions. We will cover 1-2 papers each week in detail, and students who are leading discussion are required to provide a short critique of their paper, which will be posted online on post-publication peer review forums.

Limit on enrollment and priority of registration:

In order to create a climate for active discussion and exploration of ideas, enrollment will be limited to 10 students. All students are required to obtain permission from the Course Director to enroll. Prerequisites for this course are NBIO722/723.

Time, place, and course administration:

All sessions will take place in the Neuroscience Research Building room 3117 from 3:30pm to 5:00pm, on Fridays.

Course Instructor:

Garret D. Stuber, Ph.D. – 4109E Neuroscience Research Building
843-7140: gstuber@med.unc.edu

Course Administrative Assistant:

Denise Kenney – 3122 Neuroscience Research Building
966-1260: denise_kenney@med.unc.edu

Absence from class:

Please email the course instructor if you will be absent from class. It is particularly important to do this if you will unavoidably miss your scheduled presentation.

Assigned original research papers:

For most sessions, original research papers will be assigned. A group of students will be assigned to present this paper and lead the discussion of it in the second hour of the class session. The papers will either be "short" (a 5-10 page paper from a journal such as Science, PNAS, or Neuron), or, if longer, the faculty member will assign particular sections or figures within the paper to present. Clearly the reading must be done **before** the class session if a lively and informative discussion is to ensue. **All students are expected to read the papers, whether or not they are presenting.**

A set of questions will be provided for each original paper to guide your reading. These questions will form a basis for class discussion. Typical questions that should be asked while reading any paper are:

- What is the hypothesis being tested?
- Is the hypothesis good, and how does it fit with the existing literature?
- How strong is the evidence in support of the hypothesis?
- What is the point of each of the figures?
- Is there a central, most important figure?

- Are the experiments direct or indirect?
- Did the authors do the proper controls?
- Does the text of the paper deal completely with the data presented in the figures or are points overlooked?

Grading:

Grades for the course will be calculated based on (1) attendance, (2) class participation, (3) presentations, and (4) written critiques of the presented papers. Students are expected to attend all classes, to read all the papers prior to class, and to actively participate in all discussion.