

BIONB 4110

Neuroscience Journal Club For
Undergraduates

Course Goals

- Become familiar with the scientific literature in modern neurobiology
- Learn to present summaries of original research papers
- Explore diverse fields: neuroscience, developmental neurobiology, sensory systems, behavioral genetics, cell and molecular neurobiology, behavioral ecology and ethology

Organization

- Meet once per week
- Each of you will present a summary of a single article
 - You will have the full class period to make your presentation
 - You may find it helpful to make a PowerPoint presentation with key information and figures
 - Be prepared to field questions
- Each presenters will prepare a short list of question about their paper a week in advance of there time slot. These will be turned into online quizzes that everyone must complete before the presentation.
 - Answers will not be graded for accuracy, but will be noted as participation
- You will each fill out a peer evaluation form for each presentation you attend
 - These are for the benefit of the presenter, and will not be used in determining grades

Grading (*How to Pass this Class!*)

- Attendance: You may miss no more than 2 meetings
- Quizzes: You may miss no more than 2 of the weekly quizzes
- Peer Evaluation: You must fill out an evaluation for each presentation you attend
- Present: You must make at least one presentation this semester

Finding An Article

- Legitimate Journals
 - Ex. Neuron, Science, Journal of Neuroscience, Brain, Cell, Developmental Neurobiology
 - Look to impact factor as a guideline
 - Articles from nature may have funny formatting. They can be a hassle.
- 3-5 pages is an ideal length
- Published in the last 5 years
- Avoid review articles

*Come to the TAs if you would like to present something that defies one of these guidelines. We will look at your case individually

Preparing Your Presentation

- Know the material
 - You will be expected to be able to provide detailed verbal summaries of the experiments
- Include the figures on your slides
- Avoid clutter in your slides
 - No paragraphs; slides are for your audience, so you should not be reading off them
 - I am a bad example here ☺
 - Don't go overboard with fancy formatting

Preparing For Discussion (*How to be in the Audience*)

- Know the material
 - You will be expected to engage the speaker by asking meaningful question
- Be present
 - Actively evaluate the speaker using the peer review sheet
 - Participate actively in discussion
- Be prepared
 - Bring a copy of the article being discussed

Helpful Material

- Course Website: <https://sites.google.com/a/cornell.edu/bionb4110-jcfu-fall2012/>
 - You'll find the URL on the syllabus
 - This URL may change for administrative reasons. We will notify you if that happens
 - Quizzes will be posted here
- Look to the old course websites
 - You can find archives of presentations from previous years
 - The new site has links to the old ones