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
  – 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 questions.
- 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.