

Neuroscience

Overview

Website: Neuroscience (<https://new.sewanee.edu/programs-of-study/neuroscience/>)

Neuroscience is a highly interdisciplinary field that spans the study of everything from single molecules to brain-wide circuits. The Sewanee neuroscience curriculum is designed to provide a fundamental understanding of cellular /molecular, behavioral, and cognitive approaches to exploring the brain. Flexible electives allow our students to expand their training into many related fields, including biomedical and health sciences, computational modeling, chemistry, and philosophy. Our professors provide a welcoming and collaborative environment where our students develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and a rigorous approach to understanding neuroscientific research.

Faculty

Professors: Falikman, Kikis, Yu

Associate Professor: Shelley (Chair)

Assistant Professor: Reppert

Major

Neuroscience is a highly interdisciplinary field that spans the study of everything from single molecules to brain-wide circuits. The Sewanee neuroscience curriculum is designed to provide a fundamental understanding of cellular /molecular, behavioral, and cognitive approaches to exploring the brain. Flexible electives allow our students to expand their training into many related fields, including biomedical and health sciences, computational modeling, chemistry, and philosophy. Our professors provide a welcoming and collaborative environment where our students develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and a rigorous approach to understanding neuroscientific research.

Requirements for the Major in Neuroscience

The major requires successful completion of the following:

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Course Requirements ¹		
Three introductory courses:		
NEUR 101	Introduction to Neuroscience	4
BIOL 133	Introductory Molecular Biology and Genetics	4
CHEM 121 or CHEM 151	General Chemistry I - Matter to Molecules (Lab) ² Advanced General Chemistry I (Lab)	4
Two intermediate courses:		
NEUR 208	Neurobiology	4
NEUR 220	Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience	4
Select one of the following statistics / methods courses:		4
BIOL 217	Experimental Design and Data Analysis in Biology (Lab)	
BIOL 243	Molecular Methods (Lab)	
PSYC 251	Research Methods and Data Analysis (Lab)	
Select three of the following, including one laboratory course:		12
NEUR 351	Experimental Neurobiology (Lab)	
NEUR 355	Advanced Cognitive Neuroscience (Lab)	
NEUR 359	Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience (Lab)	
PSYC 350	Drugs and Behavior (Lab)	
NEUR 415	Ion Channels and Disease	
NEUR 416	Neuroscience of Preference and Choice	
PSYC 349	Drugs and Behavior	
PSYC 419	Addiction	
PSYC 385	Cognitive Science	

PSYC 420	Consciousness and Unconsciousness: Explorations in Neurophilosophy	
Select a course from two of the following groups: ³		8
Select a course from two of the following groups: ⁴		8
BIOL 223	Genetics (Lab)	
BIOL 224	Genetics	
BIOL 233	Molecular Cell Biology	
BIOL 236	Biochemistry	
BIOL 243	Molecular Methods (Lab)	
BIOL 270	Human Anatomy (Lab)	
BIOL 312	General and Human Physiology	
BIOL 314	General and Human Physiology (Lab)	
BIOL 322	Genes and Behavior	
BIOL 325	Biology of Aging	
CHEM 201	Organic Chemistry I (Lab)	
Group B (attribute NGPB)		
CSCI 157	Introduction to Modeling and Programming	
PHYS 101	General Physics I (Lab)	
PHYS 103	Modern Mechanics (Lab)	
STAT 100	Data Science and Citizenship	
STAT 204	Elementary Statistics	
Group C (attribute NGPC)		
PSYC 202	Clinical Psychology	
PSYC 208	Cognitive Psychology	
PSYC 221	Adolescence	
PSYC 231	Lifespan Development	
Group D (attribute NGPD)		
NOND 130	Being Human in STEM	
PHIL 190	Informal Logic and Critical Thinking	
PHIL 220	The Self	
PHIL 235	Bioethics	
PHIL 312	Modern Logic	
RHET 110	Argumentation and Debate	
Total Semester Hours		52

Code	Title	Semester Hours
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Additional Requirements

A comprehensive examination ⁵

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Majors must complete at least three laboratory courses, labeled “(Lab)” above. Majors will complete two of these lab courses in the process of fulfilling specific major requirements (i.e., the Statistics/Methods course and a neuroscience lab course). The third lab course may be completed if the student takes CHEM 120, CHEM 121, CHEM 150, or CHEM 151; if the student chooses to take CHEM 119, they may take any other (Lab) course listed in the major requirements as their third laboratory course. CHEM 119, CHEM 120, and CHEM 150 will not be offered in future semesters.

2

This requirement can also be satisfied by CHEM 119, CHEM 120, or CHEM 150, courses taught in past academic years that will not be offered in future semesters.

3

In developing the major, the Neuroscience Steering Committee has created cross-disciplinary and field-expanding opportunities and has included courses expected to offer a fruitful integration with Neuroscience. The elective lists include courses with subject matter that is implicitly related to the study of behavior or cognition, or tangential to Neuroscience as a discipline but with theoretical relevance. Such courses must be completed by students wishing to pursue graduate work in neuroscience (or biology or psychology) or students interested in the health professions, as they are typically required before admission to those programs.

4

Students participating in the Sewanee-at-Yale semester program should contact the neuroscience chair to discuss relevant course offerings.

5

The comprehensive examination allows the Neuroscience Steering Committee to assess students' understanding of basic neuroscience knowledge, and their ability to: identify important questions related to their field of interest, exhibit knowledge of experimental design, think critically about experimental methodology and analysis, and integrate and synthesize information from other courses and sub-disciplines.

Student Learning Outcomes

A student majoring in Neuroscience will:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of basic concepts in neuroscience
2. Demonstrate the ability to think critically and integratively
3. Develop and apply scientific inquiry & research skills
4. Develop and apply effective communication skills

Minor

A minor in neuroscience allows students to consider how brain-function relates to behavior, and to explore one of the most compelling scientific frontiers in understanding ourselves and our actions. The minor examines the nervous system and its contribution to our experiences through a truly interdisciplinary approach. Students are required to take courses in both psychology and biology, and are highly encouraged to explore related courses within chemistry, computer science, and philosophy.

The goal of the neuroscience minor is to encourage students to critically evaluate how the brain functions from the molecular and cellular level, and how these processes affect behavior. The neuroscience minor is ideal for students with an interest in any neuroscience-related field. The minor prepares students for graduate study in neuroscience or related fields, and is also a good preparation for those planning to pursue a career in medicine and related disciplines.

Requirements for the Minor in Neuroscience

The minor requires successful completion of the following:

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Course Requirements		
NEUR 101	Introduction to Neuroscience	4
Select four of the following:		16
BIOL 325	Biology of Aging	
NEUR 208	Neurobiology	
NEUR 220	Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience	
NEUR 225	Cognitive Neuroscience	
NEUR 254	Behavioral Neuroscience	
NEUR 351	Experimental Neurobiology (Lab)	
NEUR 355	Advanced Cognitive Neuroscience (Lab)	
NEUR 359	Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience (Lab)	
NEUR 415	Ion Channels and Disease	
PSYC 349	Drugs and Behavior	
or PSYC 350	Drugs and Behavior (Lab)	
PSYC 385	Cognitive Science	
PSYC 419	Addiction	
PSYC 420	Consciousness and Unconsciousness: Explorations in Neurophilosophy	
Select one course from any of the following five groups: ¹		4
BIOL 223	Genetics (Lab)	
BIOL 224	Genetics	
BIOL 233	Molecular Cell Biology	
BIOL 236	Biochemistry	

BIOL 243	Molecular Methods (Lab)
BIOL 270	Human Anatomy (Lab)
BIOL 312	General and Human Physiology
BIOL 314	General and Human Physiology (Lab)
BIOL 322	Genes and Behavior
BIOL 325	Biology of Aging
CHEM 201	Organic Chemistry I (Lab)
Group B (attribute NGPB)	
CSCI 157	Introduction to Modeling and Programming
PHYS 101	General Physics I (Lab)
PHYS 103	Modern Mechanics (Lab)
STAT 100	Data Science and Citizenship
STAT 204	Elementary Statistics
Group C (attribute NGPC)	
PSYC 202	Clinical Psychology
PSYC 208	Cognitive Psychology
PSYC 221	Adolescence
PSYC 231	Lifespan Development
Group D (attribute NGPD)	
NOND 130	Being Human in STEM
PHIL 190	Informal Logic and Critical Thinking
PHIL 220	The Self
PHIL 235	Bioethics
PHIL 312	Modern Logic
RHET 110	Argumentation and Debate
Group E (attribute NGPE)	
NEUR 351	Experimental Neurobiology (Lab)
NEUR 355	Advanced Cognitive Neuroscience (Lab)
NEUR 359	Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience (Lab)
NEUR 415	Ion Channels and Disease
PSYC 349	Drugs and Behavior
PSYC 350	Drugs and Behavior (Lab)
PSYC 419	Addiction
Total Semester Hours	

24

1

Students participating in the Sewanee-at-Yale semester program should contact the Neuroscience Chair to discuss relevant course offerings.

Courses

NEUR 101 Introduction to Neuroscience (4)

This course provides an introduction to the structure and function of the central and peripheral nervous systems. Fundamental concepts and topics in neuroscience will be discussed using molecular/cellular, behavioral and/or cognitive frameworks; clinically relevant conditions (e.g., neurodegenerative diseases, psychiatric disorders) will also be explored. Methods and techniques used by neuroscientists in research laboratories and clinical settings will be used to understand how neuroscience knowledge is constructed.

NEUR 195 Introduction to Research (2 or 4)

An introduction to research methods and hypothesis-driven laboratory research in the context of a faculty member's research program. Activities may include literature reviews, training in laboratory techniques, and/or analyzing data. This course may be repeated for credit at the discretion of the instructor. *Prerequisite: Instructor prerequisite override required.*

NEUR 208 Neurobiology (4)

A comprehensive study of the biology of the nervous system covering its overall organization and development, electrical and chemical signaling, synaptic plasticity, and mechanisms of sensory perception and motor function. Non-laboratory course. *Prerequisite: (CHEM 119 or CHEM 120 or CHEM 121 or CHEM 122 or CHEM 150 or CHEM 151) and (NEUR 101 or BIOL 133).*

NEUR 220 Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience (4)

This course explores the neural mechanisms underlying behavior and cognition. Topics may include motivation, learning and memory, emotion, stress, sleep and circadian rhythms, attention, and decision-making. Neuroscience methodology and preclinical models of psychiatric and neurodegenerative disorders will be discussed. *Prerequisite: NEUR 101.*

NEUR 225 Cognitive Neuroscience (4)

This course provides a systems-level approach to the study of the mammalian nervous system. Content focuses on various aspects of cognitive processing, such as perception, attention, memory, learning, emotion, executive control and decision making. *Prerequisite: NEUR 101.*

NEUR 254 Behavioral Neuroscience (4)

This course introduces major topics and techniques used by behavioral neuroscientists to study the relationship between the brain and behavior. Content may explore motivated behaviors, stress, learning and memory, control of movement, sleep and circadian rhythms, and preclinical models of psychiatric and neurodegenerative disorders. *Prerequisite: NEUR 101.*

NEUR 295 Mentored Research (2 or 4)

Intermediate-level laboratory research in the context of a faculty member's research program. Activities may include designing and/or conducting experiments, analyzing data, and written/oral presentation of findings. This course may be repeated for credit at the discretion of the instructor. *Prerequisite: NEUR 195 and instructor prerequisite override required.*

NEUR 351 Experimental Neurobiology (Lab) (4)

This lecture and laboratory course utilizes electrical recordings from a variety of invertebrates to build upon topics discussed in NEUR 208, illustrating the principles of nervous system communication in sensory and motor systems. The course will also include the roles of hypothesis testing, models, data analysis, and the scientific method in understanding how experimental data can lead to knowledge of nervous system function. *Prerequisite: NEUR 208.*

NEUR 355 Advanced Cognitive Neuroscience (Lab) (4)

This laboratory course provides an experimental approach to the study of cognitive processing, building on topics introduced in NEUR 225. Laboratory exercises may cover processes such as perception, attention, memory, learning and decision making. The course includes a focus on scientific methodology, including hypothesis testing, study design, data collection and analysis, and communication of results. *Prerequisite: NEUR 225.*

NEUR 359 Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience (Lab) (4)

This inquiry-based laboratory course explores the relationship between the brain and behavior. Class research projects will focus on select topics in behavioral neuroscience. Students will engage with the scientific process by designing and conducting experiments to test hypotheses, collecting and analyzing data, and communicating results. *Prerequisite: PSYC 254.*

NEUR 395 Advanced Research (2 or 4)

Advanced laboratory research for students who have a strong background in neuroscience research. Students will work with a faculty research mentor to design and conduct experiments aimed to address a novel scientific question. This course may be repeated for credit at the discretion of the instructor. *Prerequisite: NEUR 295 and instructor prerequisite override required.*

NEUR 415 Ion Channels and Disease (4)

This upper level course examines the structure and function of ion channels at the molecular level, including the biophysics of ion permeability, voltage-sensing, and activation by neurotransmitters. Approximately half of the course is student-led discussions on research papers that detail ion channel dysfunction that lead to disease. *Prerequisite: (NEUR 208 or NEUR 225 or NEUR 254) and (BIOL 243 or BIOL 233 or PSYC 251).*

NEUR 416 Neuroscience of Preference and Choice (4)

This seminar course examines topics related to the neuroeconomics of choice. Topics may include cognitive effort, temporal discounting, overconfidence, risk sensitivity, anchoring, and prospect theory. A significant portion of the course consists of student-led discussion of readings examining these topics. Readings focus on scholarly works featuring psychological and neurobiological perspectives. *Prerequisite: NEUR 225 or PSYC 208.*

NEUR 444 Independent Study (2 or 4)

Students will complete directed readings and writing on a topic in neuroscience. Must be approved by the program chair. This course may be repeated for credit when the topic differs. *Prerequisite: Instructor prerequisite override required.*

NEUR 495 Topics in Neuroscience (2 or 4)

Selected topics in neuroscience. Content will vary from semester to semester. This course may be repeated for credit when the topic differs. This course is only available through the Sewanee-at-Yale Directed Research Program. *Prerequisite: Only open to students admitted to the Sewanee-at-Yale program.*

NEUR 499 Directed Research (4 or 8)

Students conduct research under the direction of a faculty member on a topic of mutual interest. Typically culminates in a written research report. This course is only available through the Yale Directed Research Program. *Prerequisite: Only open to students admitted to the Sewanee-at-Yale program.*