Neuroscience and Behavior Program

Academic Year 2021-2022

Director: Bojana Zupan (bozupan@vassar.edu)

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Neuroscience and Behavior is a multidisciplinary program that is interested in how interactions of brain, body, and environment contribute to animal (including human) behavior. Neuroscientists and Behaviorists study the structure and function of the nervous system, the development and evolution of neural and behavioral systems, and interactions among behavior, environment, physiology, and heredity. The study of brain and behavior requires students to delve deeply into nervous system mechanisms at all levels of analysis - from molecules to synapses to neurons, from circuits to computational algorithms to behavior and cognition to mathematical modeling of biological problems.

This program is ideal for students with interests in biological and psychological sciences specifically, but also students interested in incorporating chemistry, computer science, physics and astronomy, mathematics and statistics, and philosophy into the study of brain and behavior.

Major Requirements (11 credits total)
1. BIOL 107
2. BIOL 108
3. NEUR 105 (pre-req BIOL 107)
4. PSYC 200 – Statistics and experimental design
5. PSYC 241 – Principles of Physiological Psychology
6. PSYC 229 – Research Methods in Learning and Behavior
or PSYC 249 – Research Methods in Physiological Psychology
7. BIOL 2XX (Choose one of the following)
   1. BIOL 218 – Cellular Structure and Function
   2. BIOL 226 – Animal Structure and Diversity
   3. BIOL 228 – Animal Physiology
   4. BIOL 232 – Developmental Biology
   5. BIOL 238 – Molecular Genetics
   6. BIOL 244 – Genetics and Genomics
   7. BIOL 272 – Biochemistry
   8. BIOL 248 – Evolutionary Genetics
   9. BIOL 217 – Human Physiology
8. NEUR ELECTIVE (Choose one of the following or choose another course in consultation with your advisor)
   1. COGS 2XX or 3XX
   2. CMPU/MATH 144 – Fundamentals of Data Science
   3. CMPU 250 - Modeling, Simulation and Analysis
   4. MATH 242 - Applied Statistical Modeling
   5. STS 360 - Issues in Bioethics
   6. STS 367 - Mind, Culture, and Biology
   7. PHIL 222 - Philosophy of Language
   8. PHIL 224 - Philosophy of Mind
   10. ECON 333 – Behavioral Economics
11. Approved Psychology courses at the 200 level
   a. PSYC 221 – Learning and Behavior
   b. PSYC 223 – Evolutionary Psychology
   c. PSYC 243 – Topics in Physiological Psychology
   d. PSYC 262 – Principles of Clinical Psychology and Psychopathology

12. Another approved Biology course at the 300 level

13. CHEM 325 - Topics in Biochemistry

9. BIOL 3XX
   1. BIOL 316 - Seminar in Neurobiology
   2. BIOL 323 - Seminar in Cell and Molecular Biology
   3. BIOL 324 - Molecular Biology
   4. BIOL 340 - Experimental Animal Behavior
   5. BIOL 353 - Bioinformatics
   6. BIOL 355 - Ecology and Evolution of Sexual Reproduction
   7. BIOL 375 - Sensory Ecology
   8. BIOL 380 - Biomechanics
   9. BIOL 382 - Animal Communication
  10. BIOL 376 - Hormones and Behavior

10. PSYC 3XX
   1. PSYC 321 - Seminar in Animal Learning and Behavior
   2. PSYC 323 - Seminar in Evolutionary Psychology
   3. PSYC 341 - Seminar in Physiological Psychology
   4. PSYC 343 - Seminar on States of Consciousness
   5. PSYC 362 - Seminar in Clinical Psychology and Psychopathology
   6. PSYC 364 - Behavior Genetics
   7. PSYC 395 – Senior Thesis (with approval of program faculty)
   8. PSYC 398 - Senior Empirical Thesis (with approval of program faculty)

11. NEUR 301