

BMS 665: Neuroscience  
Journal Club (*Current Literature in Neuroscience*)

**Course Directors:**

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**Learning Objectives:**

This course will review the current literature in the field of neuroscience. Students will learn how to critically evaluate scientific data for content, validity, and significance. Additionally students will gain skills in developing scientific presentations, with emphasis on preparing and delivering oral presentations.

**Requirements:**

All graduate students must enroll in BMS 665 each semester for the duration of their matriculation. Enrollment may be 0 or 1 credit, with a maximum of 5 journal club credits to be applied toward graduation for doctoral students; 3 for masters students. Students are expected to attend weekly sessions and present at least once per semester\*. Papers must be available to the class at least one week prior to the presentation. All students are expected to read the papers before coming to class.

**\* Papers must be submitted to Dr. Carp the Monday of the week prior to the Friday class. Please email papers as .pdf files and provide a link to their source. Once your paper selection is approved the paper will be distributed electronically to the rest of the class.**

**Topics:**

Every week a student or postdoctoral scientist will present an article from the current literature in neuroscience. Journal papers should be less than a year old and should be chosen from respected, peer-reviewed journals. Students will be expected to present articles and research results in a concise, analytical manner, and will be expected to participate in discussions during presentations by other students or scientists. Where appropriate, students will relate their own research findings to current literature in their field.

**Credit:** 0/1 credit per semester

**Evaluation:**

Student evaluations will be based on the quality of presentation, participation in discussions, and attendance. Grading is Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. More than three absences will result in an Unsatisfactory grade.

**Format:**

Each presentation should include the following: (1) enough background information to allow the audience to understand the rationale for performing the study; (2) a critical evaluation of the results, such that for each experiment, the student explain why it was done, how it was done, what the controls were, and the interpretation of the results; (3) a brief summary of the discussion that relates the results presented to other work in the field, explains whether the study succeeded and why it is (or is not) important, and points out any significant inadequacies (e.g., missing controls or unsupported conclusions).