

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

EMORY UNIVERSITY

IBS 703R: Current topics in social behavioral neuroscience

Course Syllabus

Time, Location and Credit Hours

SPRING 2014, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:10 am-12:10 pm
Yerkes Research Center, Bourne Seminar Room
4 Credit Hours

Course Directors

Jamie LaPrairie, PhD
Jennifer Felger, PhD

Course Description

The course will be offered through the Center for Translational Social Neuroscience (CTSN). The CTSN is comprised of researchers and clinicians investigating the neurobiology of prosocial behavior and disorders of the social brain, with a focus on translating discoveries made in the laboratory into strategies for improving social function in psychiatric disorders.

The goal of the course is to present and discuss current topics in behavioral neuroscience with a focus on prosocial behavior and social deficits involved in psychiatric disorders. Topics will include historical perspectives of social neuroscience, empathy, social cognition, Autism and Schizophrenia, with basic neuroscience through clinical research perspectives. Participating faculty will be asked to provide relevant reading materials that will be presented and discussed by the students on Tuesdays, prior to faculty discussions that will occur every Thursday.

Requirements

Students will be required to present relevant course material on at least one Tuesday throughout the course of the semester, and to submit questions related to each topic to be discussed with participating faculty on or before each Thursday lecture. Students will also be asked to submit a brief, 1-2 page research proposal on a topic of their choice related to one of the areas of interest discussed in the course at the end of the semester as a final project. Course directors will provide students with instructions for preparation of presentations, discussion questions, and proposals, and will be available to meet with students on an individual or group basis throughout the semester during office hours per student request.

Major goals:

- To address and discuss current topics in social and behavioral neuroscience;
- To understand the clinical and translational interface in the field of social behavioral neuroscience;
- To appreciate normal social function and development;
- To identify social deficits in neuropsychiatric disorders;
- To engender interest in social and behavioral neuroscience research projects;
- To develop skills in data presentation and proposal development;

Format

- Discussion of topics with participating faculty (Thursdays);
- Student presentation of relevant literature provided by faculty (Tuesdays);
- Weekly reading and preparation of at least 3 questions to discuss with participating faculty;
- Development of brief research proposal on topic of choice to be due in the last week of class as a final project;

Content and Schedule

Date	Topic	Presenter	Materials/Assignment
January 14/16	Animal models of prosocial behavior	Larry Young	• TBD by participating faculty
January 21/23	Genetics of autism	Joseph Cubells	• TBD by participating faculty
January 28/30	Impact of maternal depression on offspring	Sherryl Goodman	• TBD by participating faculty
February 4/6	Primate social behavior as a model for Schizophrenia	Jocelyn Bachevalier	• TBD by participating faculty
February 11/13	Cognitive and social impairments in Schizophrenia	Erica Duncan	• TBD by participating faculty
February 18/20	Interview with a schizophrenic patient	Steven Garlow	• TBD by participating faculty
February 25/27*	Personality disorders	Jared DeFife	• TBD by participating faculty
March 4/6	Science of Relationships Workshop	Various speakers from UGA and Emory	• TBD by participating faculty
March 11/13	SPRING BREAK		• N/A

March 18/20	Impact of early life stress	Mar Sanchez	• TBD by participating faculty
March 25/27*	Behavioral and pharmacological treatments for ASD	Larry Scahill	• TBD by participating faculty
April 1/3	Science of empathy	John Decety	• TBD by participating faculty
April 8/10	Interview with Autistic patient	Elissar Andari	• TBD by participating faculty
April 15/17	Individual variation in cooperative behavior	James Rilling	• TBD by participating faculty
April 22/24	Social cognition in primates	Lisa Parr	• TBD by participating faculty

*Thursday session meeting in Neuroscience Building 3rd floor conference room, 3216

Grading

Students will be evaluated equally on four aspects: class attendance and participation 25%, Tuesday presentations 25%, questions for discussion 25%, and research proposal 25%.

Additional Resources

Useful sites with information about social neuroscience

Emory Center for Social Translational Neuroscience: <http://ctsn.emory.edu/>

Society for Social Neuroscience: <http://s4sn.org/>

Emory Autism Center: <http://www.psychiatry.emory.edu/PROGRAMS/autism/>