**Introduction to Neuroscience**

**NROSCI 1000**

**(10160)**

**Fall Term, 2019 (2201)**

**Instructor**:

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Department of Neuroscience

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Office hours: Tuesday 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM; Wednesday 1:30PM– 3:30 PM, or by appointment. If you are unavailable during regular office hours, please feel free to make an appointment. The best way to make an appointment is to e-mail me several times that you are free to meet. I will get back to you with a specific date and time.

**\*\* Please note:** Office hours will be different during the week of October 14th and will be posted on courseweb**\*\***

**Undergraduate TAs**

We are fortunate to have a large cohort of undergraduate TAs who were all highly successful in the course and are enthusiastic about helping you all be successful! You can find their names and e-mail addresses on courseweb.

**Lecture**

Tuesday & Thursday 4PM – 5:15 PM; L9 Clapp Hall

**Exam Review Sessions (optional, but highly encouraged!)**:

The week prior to each exam, there will be a review session led by Dr. Artim held on Friday from 3 – 5 PM in A221 Langley Hall. This is in addition to TA-led reviews that will be held the week of exams.

**Exam 1 review: September 13th**

**Exam 2 review: October 11th**

**Exam 3 review: November 1st**

**Exam 4: review: November 22nd**

**Course Textbook (recommended for students who like / need an additional source but not required):**

Neuroscience 6th Edition, 2012, Editors: Purves et al.

**Required**: Scientific calculator capable of *ln* and log functions.

**Course website:** [courseweb.pitt.edu](https://courseweb.pitt.edu/) Check here for announcements, handouts, grades, and useful links. Lecture handouts will generally be posted on the class CourseWeb site a day or 2 before lecture. \*Please check courseweb frequently for links to videos, announcements regarding class, links to supplemental readings / info, and other opportunites (such as any fellowships, research positions I may have to pass on.)

Only critical and time-sensitive announcements (such as weather-related class cancellation) will be e-mailed directly to your pitt address as well as be posted on courseweb

**Course Description:**

This course provides an introduction to the structure and function of the nervous system. The course is comprised of four sections: 1) Nervous system anatomy and molecular and cellular physiology of neurons, 2) Sensory systems, 3) Somatic and Visceral motor systems, 4) Complex Brain Functions (Emotions, Memory, Language).

**Academic Integrity:**

Please refer to the School of Arts and Sciences web page for details on academic integrity: <http://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/policy/integrity.html>

Please note that I will follow the School of Arts and Sciences policy of academic integrity. Any violations will be documented and reported to the dean’s office.

**Disabilities and Special Needs:**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course. Please go to the Student Affairs website at <http://www.drs.pitt.edu/> for more information.

**Statement on Classroom Recording:** To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student’s own private use.

**Assignments and Grading:**

**Exams:**

There are 4 “unit” exams that each contribute 20% to your final grade in the course. These exams are non-cumulative, covering only the information from the previous unit of material. There is also a final examination that is optional! If you take the final exam and do better than on one of your unit exams, you can replace the unit exam score with your final exam score. The exam one extra credit phrase is “Here Comes the Sun”

\*Please note the following:

1) The final exam is \*comprehensive\* - yes, it covers material over the entire semester. Each unit represents ~25% of the final exam material. Therefore, you cannot “get out” of learning a section you don’t particularly like!

2) The final exam is on Monday 12/9 ☹ Sorry, I have no choice or control over this. What this means for you is that since exam 4 is on the previous Thursday, I can not guarantee when you will have your exam 4 results. It is likely that they will be ready on Friday, but at the end of the semester, the exam center gets busy and they cannot guarantee that.

My advice to you is to plan time each week to go over previous material, especially if you do receive an exam grade with which you are not satisfied. You will NOT have time to calculate your final score, determine you need a few more points for the next highest grade and then cram for the final (although, cramming is never ideal in any situation!)

Bottom line: approach the semester as if there is no final exam! Don’t give yourself that “out” thinking, I’m so busy this week, but it’s ok if I don’t study for Intro to Neuroscience because I can just take the final. Study consistently throughout the semester so that you will be satisfied with your grade and save yourself the angst of last-minute cramming!

Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false and short answer. Exams will cover material covered in class lectures, most of the material will also be covered in the assigned readings, but some will not be covered in the textbook. Students are responsible for ALL material covered in class regardless of the source. All powerpoint slides will be available on CourseWeb prior to class. Links to videos watched in class will also be provided.

Students are NOT responsible for textbook information that is not covered in lecture, even if it included in the assigned readings.

Exams will be available for students to review for ONE week after the exams are graded. The times / days for exam review will be posted on courseweb. The TAs and I work hard to have a number of exam review sessions every day for a week. Please try to make it a priority to attend on of these sessions. It is exceptionally valuable to go over you exam to see what you got right and wrong! **Once these times have passed, students will not be able to access previous exams.** Students often don’t believe this, but it is true!

**Make-up exams:**

Make-up exams will NOT be given without a valid and documented excuse. Any unexcused missed exam will earn a grade of “0” which can be dropped as your lowest grade (see above) but you will be \*required\* to take the final. Any student with acceptable exam conflicts (e.g. University-related competitions, research conference, scheduled surgery, momentous family event) must discuss with Dr. Artim AT LEAST ONE WEEK BEFORE the exam and proper documentation must be provided. An earlier exam can then be arranged, depending on the circumstances. If you miss an exam because you are sick, missed the bus, overslept, you wanted to go to your little brother’s football game, or your best friend needs your help moving etc, that will be the exam grade of 0 that you drop. Please remember, that in this case, you **will** need to take the cumulative final exam.

**Quizzes:**

Quizzes will be available on CourseWeb 1-3 days prior to the due date, which are indicated on the course schedule. Students must post their answers **before** class on the indicated due dates to get points for correct answers. The purpose of the quizzes is to encourage you to study and become familiar with the material as well as the types of questions that will be on the exams. Quizzes are a good way to help students gauge their basic understanding of course material. There will be a total of 12 quizzes over the semester and your lowest quiz score will be dropped. Therefore, the average performance on your best 11 quizzes will determine 15% of your final grade.

**Class participation:**

**Class participation will determine 5% of your overall class grade.**

**Top Hat**

We will be using the Top Hat ([www.tophat.com](http://t.tophat.com/c/9a7bd392-e2f9-4869-9dfd-cd9257d4b70f/aHR0cDovL3d3dy50b3BoYXQuY29tLw==/www-tophat-com)) classroom response system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message.  You can visit the Top Hat Overview ([https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide](http://t.tophat.com/c/9a7bd392-e2f9-4869-9dfd-cd9257d4b70f/aHR0cHM6Ly9zdWNjZXNzLnRvcGhhdC5jb20vcy9hcnRpY2xlL1N0dWRlbnQtVG9wLUhhdC1PdmVydmlldy1hbmQtR2V0dGluZy1TdGFydGVkLUd1aWRl/success-tophat-com-s-article-student-top-hat-overview-and-getting-started-g)) within the Top Hat Success Center which outlines how you will register for a Top Hat account, as well as providing a brief overview to get you up and running on the system.

An email invitation has been sent to you by email, but if don’t receive this email, you can register by simply visiting our course website: https://app.tophat.com/e/171738  
Note: our Course Join Code is 171738

Top Hat will not require any payment as our university has a Partnership with Top Hat.

Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, due to the fact that they require specific user information to troubleshoot these issues, please contact their Support Team directly by way of email ([support@tophat.com](mailto:support@tophat.com)), the in app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491.

**\*\*In class response questions will begin on Tuesday, September 3rd. Each question will be worth ½ point; you will get credit for participation and your answer will not be \*graded\*. (in other words, no point deductions for incorrect answers as the purpose is to assess your understanding of the material and to sometimes challenge you to apply the information. It is not expected that you will have immediately master everything you just heard!) This is part of your grade in the course for one simple reason: students who come to class do better in the course!**

**Final grade**

Top 4 exam scores: 20% each (for 80% of total grade)

Top 11 quiz scores: 15% of total grade

Class participation: 5% of total grade

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| **Grading Scale** | | | | |
| Letter Grade | Percentage Range |  | Letter Grade | Percentage Range |
| A+ | 98.0-100 |  | C+ | 78.0-79.9 |
| A | 92.0-97.9 |  | C | 72.0-77.9 |
| A- | 90.0-91.9 |  | C- | 70.0-71.9 |
| B+ | 88.0-89.9 |  | D | 60.0-69.9 |
| B | 82.0-87.9 |  | F | Below 60 |
| B- | 80.0-81.9 |  |  |  |

**OMET evaluations:** Towards the end of the semester, you will receive an e-mail asking you to complete an evaluation of the course and of the instructor. I take these seriously as they are instrumental in organizing and improving the course and in learning how best to present the material. **\*If\*** on the last day of class (Friday, Dec. 6th) at least 90% of students in the course have completed the OMET evaluation, I will add 0.5% to each student’s overall grade.

**NOTE:** This is the grading scale for the class.In order to be fair to every student, I must be strictly objective and consistent with the application of this grading scale. I will not add points to your overall score, even if your final average is only 0.01 percentage points away

from that next higher letter grade, even if I like you a lot, even if you worked really hard and you

might lose your scholarship if you don’t get that next higher grade. Please do not e-mail at the end of the semester, asking to be “bumped” to the next higher grade. I will not \*give\* you points you haven’t earned simply for asking for them.

Remember, a point on quiz #2 is the same as a point on quiz #12 – start earning those points now!!