Department of Neurosciences

Room E-653, School of Medicine, Robbins Building
http://case.edu/medicine/neurosciences/
Phone: 216.368.6252; Fax: 216.368.4650
Lin Mei, MD, PhD, Chair
lin.mei@case.edu

Katie Wervey (kathleen.wervey@case.edu), Department Assistant

Understanding how the nervous system develops and functions to process information and mediate behavior and how it is altered by disease, injury and the environment is one of the most exciting frontiers remaining in biological science. Neuroscience is inherently multidisciplinary and integrative and solving the major outstanding problems will require knowledge of molecular, cellular, systems, and behavioral levels of organization. It also requires a multidisciplinary approach combining the tools of electrophysiology, anatomy, biochemistry and molecular biology in studies of animals, brain slices, and tissue culture models.

The department offers a PhD program that provides interdisciplinary training in modern neuroscience through a combination of course work, seminars, and research experience. Medical students are encouraged to pursue research projects with neurosciences faculty. Neuroscientists at CWRU are using state-of-the-art techniques and instrumentation to study diverse aspects of nervous system function, including neural circuitry and plasticity, development and regeneration, and cellular and molecular neurobiology. Techniques used include electrical recording and imaging to study the behavior of neurons from ion channels to how they function in awake, behaving animals; molecular genetic approaches to discover the roles of specific genes in circuit formation, synaptic function, and in neurological disorders; and anatomical, biochemical, computational, and behavioral methods to understand the normal nervous system and how it is affected by disease and injury.

PhD in Neurosciences

The Neurosciences graduate program has a strong emphasis on cellular and molecular mechanisms that mediate the function and development of the nervous system. Admissions to the Neurosciences PhD program may be obtained through the integrated Biomedical Sciences Training Program or via the Medical Scientist Training Program. To earn a PhD in Neurosciences, a student must complete rotations in at least three laboratories, followed by selection of a research advisor, and complete Core and Elective coursework including responsible conduct of research as described in the plan of study, below. In general, students must be registered for a total of 9 credit hours each fall and spring semester until they advance to candidacy, at the end of their 2nd year. Students who previously completed relevant coursework, for example, with a Master’s of Science, may petition to complete alternative courses. Each graduate program follows the overall regulations established and described in CWRU Graduate Studies and documented to the Regents of the State of Ohio.

In addition, each student must successfully complete a preliminary exam after year one, and a qualifier examination for advancement to candidacy in the form of a short grant proposal with oral defense. The qualifier is generally completed in the summer after year two. During the dissertation period, students are expected to meet at least once a year with their thesis committee, present seminars in the department, and fulfill journal publication requirements. Throughout the doctoral training, students are expected to be enthusiastic participants in seminars, journal clubs, and research meetings in the lab and program. Completion of the PhD degree will require 36 hours of coursework (24 hours of which are graded) and 18 hours of NEUR 701 Dissertation Ph.D.

Plan of Study

Please also see Graduate Studies Academic Requirements for Doctoral Degrees (http://bulletin.case.edu/schoolofgraduatemodels/academirequirements)

### First Year

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<th>Course/rotation</th>
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<td>Cell Biology I (IBMS 453)</td>
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<td>Research in Neuroscience (NEUR 601) or Research Rotation in Biomedical Sciences Training Program (BSTP 400) or Research Rotation in Medical Scientist Training Program (MSTP 400)</td>
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<td>Fundamental Biostatistics to Enhance Research Rigor &amp; Reproducibility (IBMS 450)</td>
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<td>Elective Graduate Course</td>
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<td>Research in Neuroscience (NEUR 601)</td>
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<td>Principles of Neural Science (NEUR 402)</td>
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<td>On Being a Professional Scientist: The Responsible Conduct of Research (IBMS 500)</td>
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<td>Begin Thesis Research</td>
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IBMS 450. Fundamental Biostatistics to Enhance Research Rigor & Reproducibility. 1 Unit.
This is a required graduate level course for all first year PhD students in the School of Medicine biomedical PhD programs excluding Biomedical Engineering, Population and Quantitative Health Sciences, Molecular Medicine and Clinical Translation Science. This course focuses on providing students with a basic working knowledge and understanding of best practices in biostatistics that can be applied to common biomedical research activities in numerous fields. Weekly sessions involve a combination of basic programming activities, lectures, exercises, hands-on data manipulation and presentation. Topics include experimental design and power analysis, hypothesis testing, descriptive statistics, linear regression, and others with an emphasis on when and in which experimental design a particular test is properly used. The overall goal of the course is to empower students to use these biostatistics to enhance the rigor of their experimental design and reproducibility of their primary data. The major focus is not on theory, but on a practical acquisition of a working knowledge of basic data processing analysis, interpretation, and presentation skills.

IBMS 453. Cell Biology I. 3 Units.
Part of the first semester curriculum for first year graduate students along with IBMS 455. This course is designed to give students an intensive introduction to prokaryotic and eukaryotic cell structure and function. Topics include membrane structure and function, mechanisms of protein localization in cells, secretion and endocytosis, the cytoskeleton, cell adhesion, cell signaling and the regulation of cell growth. Important methods in cell biology are also presented. This course is suitable for graduate students entering most areas of basic biomedical research. Undergraduate courses in biochemistry, cell and molecular biology are excellent preparation for this course. Recommended preparation: Undergraduate biochemistry or molecular biology.

IBMS 455. Molecular Biology I. 3 Units.
Part of the first semester curriculum for first year graduate students along with IBMS 453. This course is designed to give students an intensive introduction to prokaryotic and eukaryotic molecular biology. Topics include protein structure and function, DNA and chromosome structure, DNA replication, RNA transcription and its regulation, RNA processing, and protein synthesis. Important methods in molecular biology are also presented. This course is suitable for graduate students entering most areas of basic biomedical research. Undergraduate courses in biochemistry, cell and molecular biology are excellent preparation for this course. Recommended preparation: Undergraduate biochemistry or molecular biology.

IBMS 456A. Since You Were Born: Nobel Prize Biomedical Research in the Last 21 Years- Section A. 1 Unit.
This course is one of four sections that will cover major advances in biomedical research by review of Nobel Prize-winning topics from the past 21 years. Each section will cover 8 Nobel prize topics (1 topic/2 hour session/week for 8 weeks). Students will read critical research papers of the Nobel prize scientist(s) in preparation for guided in-class discussion led by the faculty mentor. The IBMS 456A section will cover Nobel Prizes related to the areas of Genetics & Genome Science, Systems Biology & Bioinformatics, and RNA Biology. These include: 1) 2012 Prize, J. Gurdon and S. Yamanaka: Mechanisms of pluripotent stem cell development and reprogramming; 2) 2010 Prize, R. Edwards: Development of in vitro fertilization; 3) 2009 Prize, E. Blackburn, C. Greider, and J. Szostak: Mechanisms of chromosome protection by telomeres and telomerase; 4) 2009 Prize, Y. Nakanishi, T. Shizukada, and A. Yonath: Structure/function analysis of ribosomes; 5) 2007 Prize, M. Capecchi, M. Evans, and O. Smithies: Discovery/development of transgenic and gene-deletion methods in mice; 6) 2006 Prize, A. Fire and C. Mello: Discovery/development of RNA interference-gene silencing methods; 7) 2006 Prize, R. Kornberg: Mechanisms of eukaryotic transcription; 8) 1995 Prize, E. Lewis, C. Nusslein-Volhard, and W. Wieschaus: Mechanisms of genetic control in early embryonic development.

IBMS 456B. Since You Were Born: Nobel Prize Biomedical Research in the Last 21 Years- Section B. 1 Unit.
This course is one of four sections that will cover major advances in biomedical research by review of Nobel Prize-winning topics from the past 21 years. Each section will cover 8 Nobel prize topics (1 topic/2 hour session/week for 8 weeks). Students will read critical research papers of the Nobel prize scientist(s) in preparation for guided in-class discussion led by the faculty mentor. The IBMS 456B section will cover Nobel Prizes related to the areas of Molecular Biology & Microbiology, Molecular Virology, Pathology-Immunology, and Cell Biology. These include: 1) 2016 Prize, Y. Ohsumi: Mechanisms of Autophagy; 2) 2015 Prize, W. Campbell, S. Omura, and Y. Tu: Therapies against roundworms & malaria; 3) 2011 Prize, B. Beutler, J. Hoffman, and R. Steinman: Mechanisms underlying innate immunity and adaptive immunity; 4) 2008 Prize, H. zur Hausen, F. Barre-Sinoussi, and L. Montagnier: Discovery of human immunodeficiency virus and oncogenic papilloma viruses; 5) 2008 Prize, O. Shimomura, M. Chalfie, and R. Tsien: Discovery/development of green fluorescent protein for biological applications; 6) 2005 Prize, B. Marshall and J. Warren: Discovery of Helicobacter pyloris as pathogenic mechanism in peptic ulcers/gastritis; 7) 1999 Prize, G. Blobel: Mechanisms of protein sorting and subcellular trafficking; 8) 1996 Prize, P. Doherty and R. Zinkernagel: Mechanisms of cell-mediated immune defense.
IBMS 456C. Since You Were Born: Nobel Prize Biomedical Research in the Last 21 Years- Section C. 1 Unit.
This course is one of four sections that will cover major advances in biomedical research by review of Nobel Prize-winning topics from the past 21 years. Each section will cover 8 Nobel prize topics (1 topic/2 hour session/week for 8 weeks). Students will read critical research papers of the Nobel prize scientist(s) in preparation for guided in-class discussion led by the faculty mentor. The IBMS 456B section will cover Nobel Prizes related to the areas of Biochemistry, Nutrition, Pharmacology, and Pathology-Cancer. These include: 1) 2015 Prize, T. Lindahl, P. Modrich, and A. Sancar: Mechanisms of DNA Repair; 2) 2014 Prize, E. Betzig, S. Hell, W. Moerner: Development of super-resolution fluorescence microscopy; 3) 2012 Prize, R. Lefkowitz and B. Kobilka: Structure/function analysis of G protein-coupled receptors; 4) 2004 Prize, A. Ciechanover, A. Hershko, and I. Rose: Mechanisms of ubiquitin-mediated protein degradation; 5) 2003 Prize, P. Lauterbur and P. Mansfield: Development of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) methods; 6) 2002 Prize, S. Brenner, H.R. Horvitz, and J. Sulston: Mechanisms for genetic regulation of organ development and programmed cell death; 7) 2002 Prize, J. Fenn, K. Tanaka, and K. Wuthrich: Development of mass spec and NMR methods for biological macromolecules; 8) 2001 Prize, L. Hartwell, T. Hunt, and P. Nurse: Mechanisms of cell cycle regulation.

IBMS 456D. Since You Were Born: Nobel Prize Biomedical Research in the Last 21 Years- Section D. 1 Unit.
This course is one of four sections that will cover major advances in biomedical research by review of Nobel Prize-winning topics from the past 21 years. Each section will cover 8 Nobel prize topics (1 topic/2 hour session/week for 8 weeks). Students will read critical research papers of the Nobel prize scientist(s) in preparation for guided in-class discussion led by the faculty mentor. The IBMS 456D section will cover Nobel Prizes related to the areas of Neuroscience, Physiology & Biophysics, and Pathology-Molecular Basis of Disease. These include: 1) 2014 Prize, J. O'Keefe, M-B. Moser, and E. Moser: Mechanisms of nerve cell spatial positioning in the brain; 2) 2013 Prize, J. Rothman, R. Scheckman, and T. Sudhof: Mechanisms of intracellular vesicle trafficking and biomolecule secretion; 3) 2004 Prize, R. Axel and L. Buck: Structure/function of odorant receptors and organization of olfactory system; 4) 2003 Prize: P. Agre and R. MacKinnon: Structure/function analysis of channel proteins in cell membranes; 5) 2000 Prize, A. Carlsson, P. Greengard, and E. Kandel: Mechanisms of signal transduction in the nervous system; 6) 1998 Prize, R. Furchgott, L. Ignarro, and F. Murad: Discovery/mechanisms of nitric oxide as signaling molecule in cardiovascular system; 7) 1997 Prize, S. Prusiner: Discovery/prions as new biological principle of infection in neurological disease; 8) 1997 Prize, P. Boyer, J. Walker, and J. Skou: Mechanisms of mitochondrial ATP synthesis and Na, KATPase pump function.

IBMS 500. On Being a Professional Scientist: The Responsible Conduct of Research. 1 Unit.
The goal of this course is to provide graduate students with an opportunity to think through their professional ethical commitments before they are tested, on the basis of the scientific community’s accumulated experience with the issues. Students will be brought up to date on the current state of professional policy and federal regulation in this area, and, through case studies, will discuss practical strategies for preventing and resolving ethical problems in their own work. The course is designed to meet the requirements for “instruction about responsible conduct in research” for BSTP and MSTP students supported through NIH/ADAMHA institutional training grant programs at Case. Attendance is required.

NEUR Courses
NEUR 166. Explorations in Neuroscience. 1 Unit.
This survey course provides students with an opportunity to learn about some of the most exciting and timely concepts in neuroscience, including topics in basic and translational research, as well as perspectives on neuroscience as a profession, through a series of 14 lectures given by members of the Neurosciences Department in the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine. Topics are presented in a way that can be understood by students who have taken a high school biology class. Every effort is made to explain any new concepts that are included in the lectures. Each lecturer will provide general background reading material for the topics they discuss.

NEUR 301. Biological Mechanisms of Brain Disorders. 3 Units.
This course is designed to introduce students to a broad range of neurological and neuropsychiatric diseases and disorders in order to understand how genetic and environmental perturbations can disrupt normal brain function. The primary focus will be on understanding the biological bases of nervous system dysfunction. For each disease discussed, the subject matter will be organized to explain how normal brain function is impacted, the biological mechanisms underlying dysfunction (including still-unanswered questions) and current efforts to develop effective treatments (translational research). With this approach, students will gain an understanding of disease presentation, how animal models and human studies are being used to elucidate pathophysiological mechanisms, and opportunities and challenges in the development of new therapies. The class format will be a mix of lecture-based sessions and discussions of scientific journal articles. Offered as NEUR 301 and NEUR 401. Prereq: BIOL 216 or PSCL 352.

NEUR 401. Biological Mechanisms of Brain Disorders. 3 Units.
This course is designed to introduce students to a broad range of neurological and neuropsychiatric diseases and disorders in order to understand how genetic and environmental perturbations can disrupt normal brain function. The primary focus will be on understanding the biological bases of nervous system dysfunction. For each disease discussed, the subject matter will be organized to explain how normal brain function is impacted, the biological mechanisms underlying dysfunction (including still-unanswered questions) and current efforts to develop effective treatments (translational research). With this approach, students will gain an understanding of disease presentation, how animal models and human studies are being used to elucidate pathophysiological mechanisms, and opportunities and challenges in the development of new therapies. The class format will be a mix of lecture-based sessions and discussions of scientific journal articles. Offered as NEUR 301 and NEUR 401.

NEUR 402. Principles of Neural Science. 3 Units.
Lecture/discussion course covering concepts in cell and molecular neuroscience, principles of systems neuroscience as demonstrated in the somatosensory system, and fundamentals of the development of the nervous system. This course will prepare students for upper level Neuroscience courses and is also suitable for students in other programs who desire an understanding of neurosciences. Recommended preparation: CBIO 453. Offered as BIOL 402 and NEUR 402.

NEUR 415. Neuroscience Seminars. 1 Unit.
Current topics of interest in neurosciences. Students attend weekly seminars. From this series, students prepare critiques. No credit is given for less than 75% attendance.
NEUR 419. Critical Thinking in Neuroscience. 3 Units.
The goal of this course is to develop the student’s critical reasoning skills through reading and discussing primary research papers. Each year, the course will focus on 3-4 different topics selected by participating Neuroscience faculty members. Students will receive a letter grade based on their contributions to discussions, and at the discretion of the faculty, performance on exams and/or term paper. Prereq: NEUR 402.

NEUR 432. Current Topics in Vision Research. 3 Units.
Vision research is an exciting and multidisciplinary area that draws on the disciplines of biochemistry, genetics, molecular biology, structural biology, neuroscience, and pathology. This graduate level course will provide the student with broad exposure to the most recent and relevant research currently being conducted in the field. Topics will cover a variety of diseases and fundamental biological processes occurring in the eye. Regions of the eye that will be discussed include the cornea, lens, and retina. Vision disorders discussed include age-related macular degeneration, retinal ciliopathies, and diabetic retinopathy. Instructors in the course are experts in their field and are members of the multidisciplinary visual sciences research community here at Case Western Reserve University. Students will be exposed to the experimental approaches and instrumentation currently being used in the laboratory and in clinical settings. Topics will be covered by traditional lectures, demonstrations in the laboratory and the clinic, and journal club presentations. Students will be graded on their performance in journal club presentations (40%), research proposal (40%), and class participation (20%). Offered as NEUR 432, PATH 432, PHRM 432 and BIOC 432.

NEUR 466. Cell Signaling. 3 Units.
This is an advanced lecture/journal/discussion format course that covers cell signaling mechanisms. Included are discussions of neurotransmitter-gated ion channels, growth factor receptor kinases, cytokine receptors, G protein-coupled receptors, steroid receptors, heterotrimeric G proteins, ras family GTPases, second messenger cascades, protein kinase cascades, second messenger regulation of transcription factors, microtubule-based motility, actin/myosin-based motility, signals for regulation of cell cycle, signals for regulation of apoptosis. Offered as CLBY 466, PHOL 466 and PHRM 466.

NEUR 473. Introduction to Neurobiology. 3 Units.
How nervous systems control behavior. Biophysical, biochemical and molecular biological properties of nerve cells, their organization into circuitry, and their function within networks. Emphasis on quantitative methods for modeling neurons and networks, and on critical analysis of the contemporary technical literature in the neurosciences. Term paper required for graduate students. This course satisfies a lab requirement for the B.A. in Biology, and a Quantitative Laboratory requirements for the B.S. in Biology. Offered as BIOL 373, BIOL 473, and NEUR 473.

NEUR 474. Neurobiology of Behavior. 3 Units.
In this course, students will examine how neurobiologists interested in animal behavior study the linkage between neural circuitry and complex behavior. Various vertebrate and invertebrate systems will be considered. Several exercises will be used in this endeavor. Although some lectures will provide background and context on specific neural systems, the emphasis of the course will be on classroom discussion of specific journal articles. In addition, students will each complete a project in which they will observe some animal behavior and generate both behavioral and neurobiological hypotheses related to it. In lieu of examinations, students will complete three written assignments, including a theoretical grant proposal, a one-page Specific Aims paper related to the project, and a final project paper. These assignments are designed to give each student experience in writing biologically-relevant documents. Classroom discussions will help students understand the content and format of each type document. They will also present their projects orally to the entire class. Offered as BIOL 374, BIOL 474 and NEUR 474. Counts as SAGES Departmental Seminar.

NEUR 475. Protein Biophysics. 3 Units.
This course focuses on in-depth understanding of the molecular biophysics of proteins. Structural, thermodynamic and kinetic aspects of protein function and structure-function relationships will be considered at the advanced conceptual level. The application of these theoretical frameworks will be illustrated with examples from the literature and integration of biophysical knowledge with description at the cellular and systems level. The format consists of lectures, problem sets, and student presentations. A special emphasis will be placed on discussion of original publications. Offered as BIOC 475, CHEM 475, PHOL 475, PHRM 475, and NEUR 475.

NEUR 478. Computational Neuroscience. 3 Units.
Computer simulations and mathematical analysis of neurons and neural circuits, and the computational properties of nervous systems. Students are taught a range of models for neurons and neural circuits, and are asked to implement and explore the computational and dynamic properties of these models. The course introduces students to dynamical systems theory for the analysis of neurons and neural learning, models of brain systems, and their relationship to artificial and neural networks. Term project required. Students enrolled in MATH 478 will make arrangements with the instructor to attend additional lectures and complete additional assignments addressing mathematical topics related to the course. Recommended preparation: MATH 223 and MATH 224 or BIOL 300 and BIOL 306. Offered as BIOL 378, CGS 378, MATH 378, BIOL 478, EBME 478, EECS 478, MATH 478 and NEUR 478.

NEUR 540. Advanced Topics in Neuroscience Ethics. 0 Unit.
This course offers continuing education in responsible conduct of research for advanced graduate students. The course will cover the nine defined areas of research ethics through a combination of lectures, on-line course material and small group discussions. Six 2-hr meetings per semester. Maximum enrollment of 15 students with preference given to graduate students in the Neurosciences program. All neurosciences graduate students must complete this course during their 3rd or 4th year.

NEUR 601. Research in Neuroscience. 1 - 18 Units.

NEUR 651. Master's Thesis (M.S.). 1 - 6 Units.
(Credit as arranged.) Recommended preparation: M.S. candidates only.

NEUR 701. Dissertation Ph.D.. 1 - 9 Units.
(Credit as arranged.) Prereq: Predoctoral research consent or advanced to Ph.D. candidacy milestone.