



# Neuroscience Undergraduate Research

- **Why should I do undergraduate research in neuroscience?**
  - Explore the latest discoveries in the field of neuroscience in a new and exciting way.
  - Use research as a way to prepare for graduate or professional school.
  - Learn skills for the workforce.
  - Get to know faculty, researchers, graduate students and other undergraduates who share similar academic and career interests. *Developing these connections can help you get strong reference letters.*
- **When should I start doing research?**
  - Sophomore year is the perfect time to start looking for a research lab. The longer you spend in the lab, the more likely you are to obtain useful career skills and strong letters of reference.
  - Pre-majors are strongly discouraged from seeking research opportunities until they successfully complete Psychology 3313 and Neuroscience 3000.
- **Is Neuroscience 4998 required for the Neuroscience major?**
  - It is not required for the Neuroscience Major but you can use up to 3 credits toward one of your Breadth Requirements if you wish.
- **What are the pre-requisites for Neuroscience 4998?**
  - You must gain permission of the instructor (professor running the lab) prior to enrolling. Talk to the professor for information on specific expectations.
- **How many credit hours is Neuroscience 4998?**
  - Typically, students take 1-3 credits per term.
  - Credit hours are variable depending on the nature of the project at the time commitment of the students. Your research advisor will make the ultimate decision though, as a general rule, each credit hour usually equals 3-4 hours in the lab per week.
  - A maximum of 3 hours of Neuroscience 4998 can be applied toward the Neuroscience Major Breadth Requirement. However, students can take additional hours of Neuroscience 4998 toward their total credit hours for graduation.

- **How do I find research opportunities?**

- Pay attention to announcements in class and talk to your professors about their research. They may have an opening in their lab!
- Browse the [People page](#) on our website to see which professors are working in areas in which you are interested. Also check the websites of the faculty in the [Medical School](#), [Dental School](#), [Optometry School](#), and neuroscience-related departments like [Biochemistry](#), [Molecular Genetics](#), [Computer Science](#), and [Psychology](#). You can then contact them to discuss research opportunities. Also consider contacting their graduate students or post-doctoral researchers. See the **Etiquette Tips** below.

- **Etiquette Tips: Is there anything specific that I need to do or say when asking about research opportunities?**

- YES. Etiquette is very important. Do your homework before you send an email and read some current publications of their lab.
- An email like this will probably be ignored:

*“Hey, I’m interested in doing research in your lab. Do you have any openings? Thanks.”*

- An email like this has a much higher chance of garnering attention:

*“Hello Dr. [name],*

*My name is [name] and I am interested in the research that you are doing in your lab. I have read some of your articles and what interests me most is [name a few things that you find interesting and why].*

*I would like to be able to contribute to your project in any way I can. I am a [rank] neuroscience major and have taken [list relevant courses in hard sciences, neuroscience, statistics, computer science, psychology, etc.]. I have attached a CV, an advising report and a list of references so that you can see that I am hard-working, dependable, responsible, and flexible. Would you be willing to meet with me to discuss your research further? I am available [provide as much time as possible] but can be flexible if needed. Thank you for your time.*

*Sincerely,*

*[your name, email, and phone number].”*

**Note:** Use the above as a format but also try to set yourself apart. Bring up your unique experiences that can help you to contribute to the lab. Keep the email relatively short but include all of the necessary details.

- **How do I register for Neuroscience 4998 after I have been accepted?**

- First, negotiate your hours and responsibilities with the professor, post-doctoral researcher or graduate student.
- Next, have your instructor sign a Course Enrollment Form. These forms are available on the [Registrar's Office website](#) under Current Students/Online Forms. Your instructor or advisor will know the unpublished enrollment number.
- If you are in a lab that is not in Neuroscience, Behavioral Neuroscience, Cognitive Neuroscience or Neurology, you may also need to complete a Research Evaluation Form in order to earn Neuroscience Major credit. This form can be found on our [Research page](#). Ask your major advisor if you need this form.
- Bring the Course Enrollment Form and Research Evaluation Form (if applicable) to your Neuroscience advisor.

- **Questions? Don't hesitate to contact us:**

Neuroscience Undergraduate Advising  
28 Lazenby Hall  
1827 Neil Ave.  
Columbus, OH 43210

614-292-8512

[neuroadvising@osu.edu](mailto:neuroadvising@osu.edu) | <http://neurosciencemajor.osu.edu>

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