

NROB60: Neuroanatomy Laboratory

University of Toronto Scarborough
Fall 2023

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Key Information



Course Instructor:
Marie Gadziola, PhD
(she/her)
Pronounced: gad-zee-oh-luh
marie.gadziola@utoronto.ca

Course email: nrob60.gadziola@gmail.com

Course site: Quercus

Course delivery: in-person

Lecture: SW309, Tuesdays 11am-1pm

Practical: SW330, see below

Student meeting hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 1-2pm
(drop-in, via Zoom)

Lab Sections & Course TAs:

PRA-001: Thurs, 9am-11am | Sadia Riaz
PRA-002: Thurs, 11am-1pm | Tahsin Reza
PRA-003: Thurs, 1pm-3pm | Hanista Premachandran
PRA-004: Thurs, 3pm-5pm | Sadia Riaz
PRA-005: Thurs, 5pm-7pm | Sadia Riaz
PRA-006: Thurs, 7pm-9pm | Norman (Ross) Stewart
PRA-007: Fri, 9am-11am | Junior Steininger
PRA-008: Fri, 11am-1pm | Junior Steininger

I. Course Overview

Instructor

Dr. Gadziola is a part-time Teaching Stream faculty member in the Department of Psychology. She received her PhD in Neuroscience from Kent State University, followed by postdoctoral research at Case Western Reserve University. Her research and teaching interests are in sensory systems, and the neural mechanisms that underlie the detection and evaluation of salient stimuli influencing motivated behaviours.

Course description

The human brain is amazingly complex! With an estimated 86 billion neurons, each capable of forming connections with many other neurons, our brains contain >10 trillion synapses that give rise to all of our thoughts, feelings, and actions. Neuroscience is a highly interdisciplinary field that broadly concerns the structure, function, and development of the brain and nervous system in order to understand the neural bases of our behaviors and cognitive functions. An overarching theme in biology is that structure informs function, and the brain is no different: it is essential to first understand the individual components and how they are connected, in order to appreciate their specialized functions.

Through lectures and labs, this course will introduce you to the anatomy of the central nervous system, the structure and function of primary cells, and how neurons interconnect to form circuits and systems. We will highlight both classical and modern techniques for visualizing the nervous system and examine selected brain regions in more detail to further relate form and function. Through hands-on sheep brain dissection and the use of digital brain atlases, labs will enhance your learning by allowing you to manipulate and view the brain in 3D. The course learning outcomes will provide a foundation for your upper-level neuroscience courses.

Pre-requisites

[BIOA01H3](#) and [BIOA02H3](#) and [CHMA10H3](#) and [[CHMA11H3](#) or [CHMA12H3](#)] and [PSYA01H3](#) and [PSYA02H3](#)

Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Summarize the topography and structural organization of the brain, including the identification and location of major brain structures on fixed specimens or images;
2. Effectively navigate a digital brain atlas to explore brain anatomy, gene expression, and pathway connections;
3. Demonstrate a basic understanding of the techniques used to investigate morphology and connections of the nervous system, along with their strengths and limitations;
4. Describe the anatomical features of cells, circuits, and systems, emphasizing the correlation of structure and function;
5. Apply course concepts and findings to real-world challenges (e.g., neurological dysfunction)
6. Engage in self-assessment and reflection on your learning process and performance in the course, in relation to your broader program of study.

II. Course Logistics

As the semester progresses, I may adjust our pacing or content coverage as necessary. You will be notified of any substantive changes on Quercus.

Laboratory Component

Your first lab takes place during the first week of classes. Labs are held in SW-330 on either Thursdays (PRA0001-0006) or Fridays (PRA0007-0008). Labs will provide you with an opportunity for hands-on learning, collaborative teamwork, and group discussion. Your participation each week is expected, and you may only attend the practical section you are registered in. Any changes to practical section enrollment must be made through ACORN. You will be assigned to a small group (~2-3 students) to collaborate on sheep brain dissections together.

Required Lab Text

LeBoutillier, J. 2022. *Sheep Brain Atlas: A Photographic Guide*.

You are responsible for any assigned readings or videos related to labs. The above text includes all lab dissection protocols that we will be following. You will be able to access the lab text on Quercus, but can also purchase a printed copy to work from through the bookstore.

Lab Safety

Proper safety procedures will be discussed during the first lab and must be followed at all times. Failure to adhere to these safety guidelines will result in being excluded from participation in lab. Students must wear a lab coat and closed-toe shoes at all times in the lab. Disposable gloves will be provided and must be worn during dissections and handling of specimens. Safety goggles (or glasses) are recommended during dissections. No food or drink is allowed in the lab. If you plan to use phones or other devices in lab, we suggest placing them in sealable plastic bags to protect from contamination. Medical masks are strongly recommended at all times.

Lab Schedule

WEEK	DATE	Lab Topic	Photoseries	Evaluation
1	Sept 7/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lab safety and expectations Removal of meninges Major divisions of the brain Major sulci and gyri 	1	Lab Exercise #1
2	Sept 14/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ventral surface structures Cranial nerves 	2	Lab Exercise #2
3	Sept 21/22	Midsagittal dissection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Midsagittal structures Ventricular system 	3	Lab Exercise #3
4	Sept 28/29	Hippocampal dissection	4	Lab Exercise #4
5	Oct 5/6	No lab		

WEEK	DATE	Lab Topic	Photoseries	Evaluation
	Oct 12/13	READING WEEK		
6	Oct 19/20	Allen Atlas Lab: Part 1 - Exploring Anatomy [virtual]		Allen Atlas Lab #1 due Nov 5
7	Oct 26/27	Review Session	1-4	Bell ringer test Oct 28 (Photoseries 1-4)
8	Nov 2/3	Horizontal Structures	5	Lab Exercise #5
9	Nov 9/10	Coronal Structures	6a	Lab Exercise #6
10	Nov 16/17	Coronal Cerebellum Extra Review Time	6b	
11	Nov 23/24	Allen Atlas Lab: Part 2 - Integrating gene expression and anatomy [virtual]		Allen Atlas Lab #2 due Dec 3
12	Nov 30/1	Review Session	1-6	
	TBD*			Bell Ringer Final Exam (Photoseries 1-6)

*There are two final exams in this course. The bell ringer final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar during the exam period (Dec 7-20), which may include evenings and Saturdays.

Lecture Component

You are responsible for reading all lecture notes and any assigned readings, including textbook chapters, posted videos, and articles.

Recommended Course Textbook

Augustine et al. 2023. *Neuroscience* (7th ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

A print copy of the textbook has also been placed in the Library's Course Reserves. Older editions of the textbook are acceptable, but note that chapter and figure references may not match.

You can access an eBook version directly from Quercus. Click on the "course textbooks" button from our homepage. All students are provided with a free 2-week trial access to the textbook, along with the option of purchasing through the bookstore.

Lecture Schedule

WEEK	DATE	Lecture Topic	Evaluation
1	Sept 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course Introduction History of Neuroanatomy Gross organization and anatomical references 	Pre-course Reflection due Sept 12
2	Sept 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gross anatomy of the brain Cranial nerves 	

WEEK	DATE	Lecture Topic	Evaluation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized support systems that protect and nourish the brain (Part I) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The meninges Ventricular system 	
3	Sept 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized support systems that protect and nourish the brain (Part II) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blood supply Blood brain barrier Glymphatic system Neurulation and early development of the nervous system Structure and function of neurons and glia 	
4	Sept 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neurogenesis and synaptogenesis Introduction to neurotransmission 	
5	Oct 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neurons and synapses combine to form circuits Virtual Tour: Allen Institute Classic and modern techniques for visualizing cells and studying connectivity 	
	Oct 10	READING WEEK	
6	Oct 17	<i>Reserved for in-class midterm</i>	Lecture Midterm (Weeks 1-5)
7	Oct 24	Sensory pathways	
8	Oct 31	Motor pathways	
9	Nov 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cerebellum Basal Ganglia 	
10	Nov 14	Hippocampus	
11	Nov 21	TBD	
12	Nov 28	Wrap-up	Post-course Reflection due Dec 4
	TBD*	Lecture Final Exam	

**There are two final exams in this course. The lecture final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar during the exam period (Dec 7-20), which may include evenings and Saturdays.*

III. Assessments

This course will offer you multiple opportunities for assessment and feedback. Course assessments have been broken down into 3 major categories:

Lecture (48%)	Laboratory (49%)	Self-Reflection (3%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midterm (15%) • Final Exam (33%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bell ringer test (12%) • Final Exam Bell ringer (23%) • Lab Exercises (6%) • Allen Atlas Assignment (8%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Course Reflection (2%) • Post-Course Reflection (1%)

Lecture Assessments

Exams will consist of both multiple-choice and short-answer questions. Multiple-choice questions may come in various formats, including (but not limited to) questions with diagrams and “all of the above” or “none of the above” options. Short-answer responses may require several sentences to address the question complexity and/or the creation or analysis of a visual (e.g., diagram). The points assigned will be weighted based on the relative importance, as opposed to how many things you need to say (i.e., we will not employ a system of three points requiring three “things” to say).

Success on the exams will require you to develop a clear understanding of both the lecture content and assigned readings. Rote memorization of lectures and readings will not guarantee you a high mark; rather, we expect you to not only learn key concepts, but also to explain why each is relevant and to demonstrate how you can apply your knowledge in new and creative ways.

a) Midterm Exam (15%)

The midterm exam will take place during our class time on **October 17th**. The exam will include all lecture content covered in Weeks 1-5, including any assigned readings or videos.

b) Lecture Final Exam (33%)

There are two final exams in this course that will be scheduled by the Registrar during the final exam period. The lecture-based final exam is cumulative. While the priority will be on the material covered Weeks 7-12, keep in mind that much of that material assumes an understanding of concepts that were introduced earlier in the course.

Laboratory Assessments

a) Bell Ringer Test Format

Your TA will give a demonstration of the bell ringer format during practicals, and practice bell ringers will be set up during most labs. In brief, specimen samples will be set up in dissection trays with 2 different structures pinned per tray. You will be given only **1 minute** to identify both pins at each tray. A buzzer will sound and you will then need to move on to the next station.

The use of cell phones and computers will not be permitted at any time during bell ringer tests. All you will need is a pen and your lab coat. Because of capacity constraints in laboratory rooms, students will need to wait their turn, but are free to leave as soon as their test is complete.

Due to the nature of the testing environment for bell ringer tests, students with approved testing accommodations will need to [sign up for test accommodations](#) by Oct 6th, so that appropriate arrangements can be made (if you miss this deadline, please still email Dr. Gadziola as soon as possible).

- **Bell Ringer Test (12%)** – will cover **Photoseries 1-4** and consist of 15 dissection trays with 2 pins each (i.e., 30 questions). It will be scheduled by the Registrar’s Office and has been requested to occur in Week 6.

- **Bell Ringer Final Exam (23%)** – will be cumulative and cover **Photoseries 1-6**, consisting of 25 dissection trays with 2 pins each (i.e., 50 questions). Note that there are two final exams in this course, both of which will be scheduled by the Registrar’s Office and will occur during the final exam period.

b) Lab Exercises (1% each, or 6% of final grade)

There will be 6 laboratory weeks where you will follow a provided dissection protocol and take a more hands-on approach to identifying required brain structures. To help encourage preparation for lab and keep you on pace with material, these lab exercises will have you demonstrate your understanding of the content covered within lab that week. You can collaborate with your group on the answers during lab, but all students will be responsible for submitting their final answers individually on Quercus, within 48-hrs from your lab section end time.

c) Allen Institute Atlas Assignment (4% each, or 8% of final grade)

There will be 2 laboratory weeks where you will follow a provided protocol for using the Allen Institute online brain atlases. These weeks will be held virtually (i.e., do not come to SW-330) so that you can complete your work on a computer, and your TA will be available remotely during your assigned practical time to answer any questions. This assignment will have you demonstrate that you can effectively navigate the brain atlases to answer questions related to our course content. Detailed assignment guidelines will be posted on Quercus later in the term.

- Allen Atlas Lab #1: due Nov 5th
- Allen Atlas Lab #2: due Dec 3rd

Self-Reflection Assessments

Pre- and post-course reflections (3% of final grade)

You will be asked to complete two self-reflections via Quercus – one at the beginning of the semester and one towards the end. The purpose of these reflections is to allow us to understand where your skills are at coming into this class and encourage you to actively reflect on your skill development and learning process across the course. There are no “correct answers”, but you must provide full responses for full marks.

- Pre-course Reflection (2%): due Sept 12th
- Post-course Reflection (1%): due Dec 4th

Course Grading Rubric

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-
90%+	85-89	80-84	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	63-66	60-62	57-59	53-56	50-52

IV. Communication

Quercus messaging. Please do not contact your Instructor or TAs using the Quercus messaging system. Decide if your question is most appropriate for the Piazza discussion board or course email (see below).

Quercus Discussion Boards. For general course inquiries and content-related discussions, please post questions on our course discussion board so all students can benefit from the answer.

Email policy. Email should be reserved for correspondence that requires privacy (e.g., accommodations, grading concerns), and should be sent to the course email (nrob60.gadziola@gmail.com). Emails must be sent from your university email account. In most cases, e-mails will be answered within 48 hours of receipt (excluding weekends and holidays).

Emails should have an informative subject title that includes some detail related to your question. Please keep your emails professional, concise, and clear. Your email should include your full name and student ID number so that we know who you are. A short email based around a single question, with some level of effort to explain the issue, will likely be most effective. If you are not familiar with writing professional emails, you may find this resource helpful: <https://tinyurl.com/kysxwtx>.

Student meeting hours. Also known as “office hours”, these are dedicated times in my schedule where I will be available to you each week. This is a chance for me to get to know you better and help support your success in our course and program more broadly. This is a valuable resource if you need extra help, would like to discuss our course content in any way, or have more general questions about the field of psychology/neuroscience or want to learn how to get more involved. To reach the most students I can, student hours will be hosted using Zoom and run in an open, drop-in format. More than one student may be in the virtual “room” with me at the same time, and students are welcome to ask questions and/or stay to listen to peer questions. Individual appointments can be requested by email if the questions/concerns are more appropriate to be handled privately (e.g., you want to discuss personal accommodation needs or your course progress).

V. Course Policies

Masking in the classroom. Due to the close proximity to other students when seated in the lecture hall or when working with the brains in lab, we strongly encourage all students to wear medical masks to help protect those around you. While the mask mandate has been paused as of 1 July 2022, the use of medical masks continues to be strongly encouraged at U of T Scarborough in indoor settings where physical distancing is not possible. Masks are available at all building entrances at U of T Scarborough and in all classrooms.

Course etiquette. Our learning environment is a place where all students should always feel safe and respected. It is also a place that is conducive to learning and intellectual curiosity. To help create this learning environment, we ask that you always use respectful language and strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. We should all recognize and respect diversity of opinions. It’s okay to disagree and engage in scientific discourse, but inappropriate to disrespect or be offensive to others. It is expected that you also respect the privacy of your classmates, by never copying or distributing the contents of an online discussion thread or lecture videos.

Slides and recorded lectures. For your convenience, lecture slides will be posted on Quercus, along with recorded videos, where available. Slides on their own are not considered a suitable substitute for attendance or listening to the full recorded video; slides are not exhaustive and we may cover important material that extends beyond them during recorded videos or in-person meetings.

Copyright and notice of video recording (download permissible; re-use/sharing prohibited). Lectures, including class participation, may be recorded on video and available to students in the course for viewing after each session. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation and are protected by copyright. In this course, you are permitted to download session videos and materials for your own academic use, but you should not copy, share, or use them for any other purpose without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Recording of Classroom Material by Students

Recording or photographing any aspect of a university course - lecture, tutorial, seminar, lab, studio, practice session, field trip etc. – without prior approval of all involved and with written approval from the instructor is not permitted.

Contesting a grade. All requests for a re-grade must be submitted in writing to the course email within two weeks of the day the grade is received. Only requests that include adequate written justification of an error in the original grading will be considered. Where possible, a legitimate request will result in the entire assignment being re-graded. Your overall grade may be raised, lowered, or stay the same.

Late Submissions. Assignments submitted after the deadline, without being granted missed term work accommodations, will receive a -10% penalty per day late. All deadlines are based on Toronto local time. Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class, without an approved petition to the Registrar's Office.

Changes to the syllabus. There may be minor changes to the syllabus during the term. You will be notified of these changes ASAP and no changes will be instituted that dramatically affect your ability to reasonably prepare for a class or assessment.

VI. UTSC Policies

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights, and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

The University of Toronto is a richly diverse community and as such is committed to providing an environment free of any form of harassment, misconduct, or discrimination. In this course, I seek to foster a civil, respectful, and open-minded climate in which we can all work together to develop a better understanding of key questions and debates through meaningful dialogue. As such, I expect all involved with this course to refrain from actions or behaviours that intimidate, humiliate, or demean persons or groups or that undermine their security or self-esteem based on traits related to race, religion, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability, receipt of public assistance or record of offences.

University Land Acknowledgement

I wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Accommodations

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible. In particular, the nature of laboratory tests requires additional arrangements to be considered. For students with approved testing

accommodations, we ask that you [sign up for test accommodations](#) by Oct 6th (if you miss this deadline, please still email Dr. Gadziola as soon as possible).

AccessAbility Services staff (located in AA142, Arts and Administration Building) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations 416-287-7560 or email ability.utoronto.ca. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Academic Integrity

The University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences.

Potential offences in papers and assignments include using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement, submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor, making up sources or facts, obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams, cheating includes using or possessing unauthorized aids, looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test, misrepresenting your identity, or falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University.

VII. Missed Term Work Policy for NROB60

For missed term work (assignments and term tests) due to illness, emergency, or other mitigating circumstances, please follow the procedure outlined below.

Procedure:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) ("MTW Form").
2. Email **BOTH** your MTW Form and any Supporting Documentation to nrob60.gadziola@gmail.com according to the instructions specified below.
3. If this is your first absence in the term, declare your absence on ACORN. NROB60 will not require you to show any additional supporting documentation for reasons of illness, injury, or bereavement.

Supporting Documentation Requirements and Deadlines:

Reason for Missed Work	Supporting Documentation	Deadline for submitting MTW form
Illness, Injury, or Bereavement	ACORN Absence Declaration for first absence, otherwise just the MTW form.	WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS of the missed work
University-sponsored athletic or artistic obligation	ACORN Absence Declaration for first absence, otherwise have a university staff member who can substantiate the obligation write a note to the course email.	10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE of the missed deadline

Disability-related reasons for students registered with AccessAbility Services	Send your Accommodation Letter (if the desired accommodation is within the scope of the letter), otherwise have your AccessAbility consultant write the course email detailing the accommodations needed.	<u>PREFERABLY IN ADVANCE OF THE MISSED WORK, OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE</u>
Academic Conflict (e.g. two midterms at the same time)	Screenshot from Quercus demonstrating the conflict.	<u>10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE</u> of the missed work
Religious Conflict	None required.	

Notes:

- The following reasons are not considered sufficient for missed term work: social activities, recreational travel, technological issues, avoidance of assessments or deadlines, work commitments
- [Missed Final Exams](#) are handled by the Registrar’s Office and should be declared on eService.
- For ACORN absence declarations, the date you declare the absence is required to fall within the seven-day declaration period (i.e. the absence cannot be submitted proactively or retroactively).
- Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, accommodations are only possible via the Registrar’s Office [petition process](#).
- If you are unable to submit your request within the specified number of business days, you must still email your instructor within that window to explain the nature of the delay. Exceptions to the deadlines are made only under exceptional circumstances.
- Multiple assignments due on the same day are not considered academic conflicts. Students are expected to manage their time effectively to meet assignment deadlines.
- Back-to-back tests/quizzes are not considered academic conflicts. Only overlapping activities are conflicts.
- Students are responsible for keeping their course timetables conflict-free. Students who register in two courses with overlapping lecture/tutorial/lab schedules will not be accommodated.

Next Steps:

After submitting your documentation, you will receive a response from your instructor or TA. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request. **You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily**, as accommodations may be time-critical.

For missed assignments, **do not wait for the instructor’s response to resume work on your assignment**. Extensions may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency. Complete your assignment as soon as you’re able, and email it to your instructor.

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting its requirements, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations. **Please make it clear in your subject line that you are requesting a second accommodation**. Examples: If you were granted an extension for a paper but are still unable to meet the new deadline, or if you miss a make-up term test, you must submit *another* MTW form and supply documentation according to the “subsequent absences” column in the chart above. *Note: In the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not necessarily be provided.

Specific Accommodations for NROB60 term work:

If granted accommodations, the following will apply:

Missed lecture midterm. There will be only one makeup midterm opportunity, specific date and time TBD. If you are unable to attend the make-up midterm, you must re-request accommodations for missed term work. If granted accommodations, the weight of your midterm will then be moved to a cumulative final exam (now worth 48% of your final grade).

Missed bell ringer test. There will be no makeup opportunity for a missed bell ringer test. If you are granted accommodations, the weight of this bell ringer test will be moved to a cumulative final exam bell ringer (now worth 35% of your final grade).

Missed lab exercises. Students granted accommodations for any reason will automatically be offered a 3-day extension, but are encouraged to submit as soon as possible. If you are still unable to meet this deadline, the weighting of the lab exercise will be transferred to your final bell ringer exam.

Missed Allen Atlas assignment. Students granted accommodations for any reason will automatically be offered a 7-day extension, but are encouraged to submit as soon as you are able to. If you are still unable to meet this deadline, you must re-request accommodations for missed term work and additional supporting documentation may be requested.