

University of California, Los Angeles
Interdepartmental Undergraduate Program for Neuroscience

HONORS RESEARCH 198AB INFORMATION
FOR SPONSORING FACULTY

Dear Professor:

_____, a Neuroscience major, has identified you as a prospective advisor and sponsor for his/her research project Neuroscience 198, Honors Thesis in Neuroscience. The honors thesis research and accompanying thesis report are part of the qualification to graduate with Honors in Neuroscience. To qualify to graduate with honors, the student must complete the honors thesis over the course of two quarters (198A and 198B) and have it approved with a rating of Highest Honors or Honors by you and a second faculty reader (designated by the student with mentor approval). The Academic Senate requires a minimum of 12 hours per week in laboratory, however we anticipate honors research may require the student to exceed the minimum. The student is required to have completed at least one quarter of SRP in your laboratory and Neuroscience M101A prior to beginning an honors thesis project.

In this letter we wish to outline some of the characteristics necessary for an honors undergraduate thesis. The student who undertakes an honors thesis must be fully incorporated into the research process, including conception of the research, execution of experiments, and intelligent interpretation of the results. This means the student will have read numerous primary literature papers that form the basis for the research to be conducted, so the student appreciates the theoretical rationale for the study and for the methods to be used. The honors student will not necessarily have designed the experimental approach, but the student should have been involved in the process of designing the experiments, and in understanding why this approach has been chosen from several options.

Students must enroll in a Neuroscience 191H honors research seminar in addition to completing a thesis. We believe it is very important for the sponsors to engage the prospective honors student in discussions of the background for the research, and to help them find the literature relevant to the question at hand, ideally well before the student enrolls in the seminar (offered each Winter Quarter). In general, sponsoring faculty should meet the honors student often and regularly to ensure that students are developing a sense of how to make good decisions in research.

Many thanks for agreeing to work with an honors Neuroscience undergraduate. We hope you find the experience a rewarding one. Please contact us if you have any questions about the honors program.

Sincerely,

Stephanie White, Chair, Interdepartmental Undergraduate Program for Neuroscience, x41888

Christopher Colwell, Vice Chair, Interdepartmental Undergraduate Program for Neuroscience, x63973

Jaclyn Robbin, Undergraduate Counselor and Program Coordinator, Interdepartmental Undergraduate Program for Neuroscience, x62349

Affin Whitten, Undergraduate Academic Advisor & Assistant Graduate Program Coordinator, Interdepartmental Undergraduate Program for Neuroscience, x64407

I, _____, am a faculty member at UCLA, and agree to sponsor _____ for a Neuroscience 198A 198B (indicate which in the check box) for the _____ quarter/year.

In so agreeing, I commit to actively supervise this student's project to assure that the student's efforts are of good quality, and that the student receives the necessary assistance required to understand each stage of the research.

I am aware that the student has contracted to spend, on average, a minimum of 12 hours per week in the lab. While there is flexibility in how the student accumulates the requisite hours, some oversight will be provided to be sure the student takes this commitment seriously.

By Friday of Finals Week, the student is required to submit a research paper, and a copy, signed by the faculty sponsor, must be turned in to the Neuroscience Undergraduate Counselor. Students have been advised to turn in their papers to their sponsoring faculty first, and with plenty of time for review in the case revisions are required.

Guidelines for the paper are as follows:

- 1) 1st quarter 198A: a brief status report including a statement of hypothesis and significance, which should also include a literature review (3-5 pages).
- 2) 2nd quarter 198B: a complete research paper in standard scientific format, in consultation with faculty sponsor (text must be a minimum of 10 pages).

Students who are participating in 198A/B must have their thesis rated by the sponsoring faculty member, as well as a second faculty reader. The thesis can be given a rating of Highest Honors, Honors, or No Honors based on his or her performance in lab and the thesis.

The second faculty reader is as follows (Student: Please print name, department, and email address of second faculty member who has agreed to read and rate your thesis upon completion of 198B):

Name of Second Faculty Reader _____

Department _____

Email Address _____

While it may be the case that more than one student is working in my lab on the same or related projects, the student's paper will be an independently drafted document.

Faculty Sponsor Signature _____

Email Address _____

Student Signature _____

A copy of this form can be provided for your records upon request