

MICHIGAN  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY

NEU 101  
FRONTIERS IN NEUROSCIENCE



<https://cal.msu.edu/news/students-awarded-alumni-endowed-scholarships/>

COURSE SYLLABUS  
FALL 2023 SEMESTER

# A NOTE TO STUDENTS

The syllabus for this course has been developed by the course instructor to provide consistency in learning outcomes for students in this course. The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any time to better meet the needs of the class better and/or to better utilize the instructor's expertise.



<https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2021/lang-ahr-appointment>

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## INSTRUCTOR: DR. BYRON GIPSON

Email: [gipsonby@msu.edu](mailto:gipsonby@msu.edu)

Office Hours: Thursday 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm & By Appt.

Meeting Space: <https://msu.zoom.us/j/97459185670> Passcode: NEU311L

## ASSISTANT INSTRUCTOR

Assistant instructors are your primary contact for questions about assignments and grades. Students find the one-on-one interactions with their assistant instructors valuable, so you are encouraged to take advantage of their office hours.

You may also schedule an appointment with them at a different time. Please schedule appointments outside of standing Zoom hours at least 24 hours in advance.

## D2L TECHNICAL SUPPORT / HELPDESK: 24/7 LIVE

Web: <https://help.d2l.msu.edu/>

Phone: 1-517-432-6200 / 1-844-678-6200

Chat: [Click](#) [Here](#)

Email: [ithelp@msu.edu](mailto:ithelp@msu.edu)

## TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- The instructor will respond to all emails and questions posted in D2L within 24 hours if received Monday-Friday and by the following Monday on the weekends.
- Feedback and grades will be available within 7 days after the work is submitted.
- You are responsible for ensuring the instructor receives your assignments on time. **Assignments will not be accepted after the due date and will be given an automatic zero.**
- Use rubrics as a self-review to ensure you have met expectations.
- If you have difficulty meeting the expectations of an assignment (not including the due date), please contact the instructor via email at least 4 days in advance of the due date for assistance.

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## COMMUNICATION

Please reserve email communication for personal matters and urgent technical issues only. These include discussions about grades, VISAs, circumstances that hinder your performance in class, and missing or broken links in D2L.

Emails may be sent by the instructor directly to your MSU account or via D2L. You are required to utilize email communication for correspondence to and from the course instructors outside of class. Make it a habit to check for emails from this class at least once every weekday. You should set up D2L and MSU emails to forward to the email address you use most often. Check your junk mail to ensure you don't miss anything. You should enable mobile notifications if you find it difficult to remember to check your email. Please do not allow your MSU email inbox to become full and reject incoming mail.

Please allow 24 hours for a response from the course instructors to an email sent Monday-Thursday and 48 hours for a response to an email sent Friday-Sunday. You are advised to complete your assignments soon after they are assigned so that you have time to contact your course instructors with any questions you may have, receive their responses, and make any necessary adjustments. Avoid waiting until the night before the assignment is due to contact them with questions since they may not see your email in time.

Many students have claimed that they wrote an email and believed it was sent, only to see later that it was still in their outbox. Thus, make it a habit to confirm that any email you intend to send is actually sent (ie, is transferred from your outbox to your sent mail folder). You may want to use read receipts. Excuses related to unsent emails or emails sent to the wrong address are unacceptable.

Email communication must follow professional etiquette standards. They should not be pleading, demanding, or aggressive in tone. Those that do not meet these standards will receive a response requesting modification prior to receiving a response. Email responses from students are expected to be received within 48 hours.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The goals of this course are: 1. Introduce students to neuroscience and its connections to fundamental concepts from biology, chemistry, and physics courses, 2. Help students

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better understand career opportunities in Neuroscience and related fields, and 3. Offer constructive suggestions to students about goal-setting, effective time management, study skills, and curricular decisions.

## GETTING STARTED

- Start the course by completely reading the syllabus.
- Login to D2L and select this course.
- At the top of the content page, locate a folder called “Start Here – Welcome Message.”

## PREREQUISITES

None

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Please see the [NEU 101 Course Schedule](#) document for a detailed list of tasks and specific dates. This checklist takes priority over other sources of dates in the event of conflicting information.

## TEXTBOOK

No textbook is required.

## DESIRE2LEARN (D2L)

Course content, homework submissions, grading, and course announcements are handled by the D2L course site. Please set up your D2L profile and your notifications (email, mobile) so that you receive announcements in a timely manner. You are responsible for checking to make sure that your grades for assignments have been entered correctly and that your quiz responses have been logged.

All assignments must be uploaded to the proper folder on D2L otherwise you may be subject to the penalties described later in the syllabus. You are responsible for confirming that everything you submit to D2L is successfully posted to the site AND that all files are

the correct versions and are not corrupted BY THE SPECIFIED DUE DATE AND TIME ON THE SCHEDULE. Otherwise, you will not receive credit for the assignment.

Students are not to send files to one another to review. If you upload a file that is identical or nearly identical to that of another student (even if it is by accident), both students will receive a 0 grade for that assignment and will be issued an academic dishonesty report.

You are advised to complete assignments and upload documents at least one hour prior to the time they are due to allow time for D2L to process the submissions. You are also advised to read your instructor's feedback on each assignment soon after it is posted so that you may improve on future assignments. Assignments must be submitted in the format specified. No credit will be given for files submitted in other formats, corrupted files, or incorrect file versions (such as an earlier version of the incorrect assignment).

## GRADING

Final grades will be determined by submitting satisfactory, on-time lecture assignments, homework assignments, and the final. Submissions will be tracked in D2L. You should check the D2L grade book at least once per week and/or whenever a new entry has been posted. Each assignment is graded similarly.

This is a Pass/ No Grade Course. The grading scheme is described thoroughly below. If an assignment is submitted on time and is satisfactory, you will receive the full 100 points.

Individuals who follow instructions carefully, fully engage with the material, and turn in complete assignments on time should do well in this course. If you struggle due to circumstances outside your control, please communicate with your instructors early and often.

## ASSIGNMENT VALUES

Rubrics for discussion and projects are available on D2L with each assignment. See the [NEU 101 Course Schedule](#) for a breakdown of values by assignment.

### Assignment Values by Category

Assessment Point Values Activity	Points Possible
Lecture (14)	100 each / 1,400 total

Homework (12)	100 each / 1,200 total
Final (1)	100 each / 100 total
Total Possible	2,700

## GRADING SCALE

The table below shows the points needed to earn a grade of P (pass) for the course.

Pass	2400 - 2700
N (no grade)	0 - 2399

## LECTURE ASSIGNMENTS (EACH IS WORTH 100 POINTS)

The lecture assignments will help you engage with and better understand the lecture content. There is one lecture assignment per week. Most weeks, the lecture assignment will be due on Monday at 5 PM unless Monday is a holiday or break.

Lecture assignments are not graded on accuracy. You will receive full credit if you follow directions and complete the entire assignment.

If you submit a lecture assignment late, you will lose 25 points. Having an incorrect answer is OK because you learn by recognizing your mistakes.

## HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS (EACH IS WORTH 100 POINTS)

It is important to carefully read the instructions for each assignment posted on D2L. Homework assignments will greatly help with your reflection on your life experiences as well as the curriculum. Reflective writing is used in many career paths. You will have plenty of practice doing it in this course. Reflective writing is one of the most important parts of admission to graduate or health professional schools. You should plan to spend an hour or more each week working on the homework.

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Some homework assignments may prepare you for the next week's lecture while most allow you to apply what you learned that week. Homework submissions are due to D2L by 5:00 PM one week after the class related to that homework was due. Attendance and paying careful attention in class will be best for completing homework assignments. Please see the grading table regarding the requirements for each final grade in this course.

Late submission of homework assignments will result in a 25-point loss on that assignment.

## **FINAL EXAM (100 POINTS)**

The Final Exam is another writing assignment during final exams week. You do not need to study for the final exam. The final exam is not optional. You must complete the final exam in order to pass the course. MSU Final Exam Policy

## **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Assignments must be turned in on time to receive credit for the assignment. Make it a habit to double-check that you submitted the correct document to D2L prior to the deadline. Typically, assignments are graded several days after a due date

Note: You may not show an instructor the time it was last modified on your computer to receive credit for any assignment.

## **INCORRECT LOCATION UPLOAD POLICY FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS**

If you repeatedly upload an assignment to the incorrect D2L Dropbox, the assignment grade will be reduced by - 25 (for example, it will drop you from a 100 to a 75). Thus, always double-check that it was placed in the Dropbox for the correct topic (pay close attention to the assignment week # specified in your schedule). If you discover that you accidentally uploaded it to the incorrect Dropbox before the deadline, you may simply upload it to the correct one. If you discover it after the deadline, you must upload it to the correct Dropbox and email your assistant instructor telling them where you accidentally uploaded it the first time.

## **MAKEUP ASSIGNMENTS (EACH MAKEUP ASSIGNMENT IS WORTH 25 POINTS)**



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If you lose points because you submitted a lecture assignment or a homework assignment late, you may submit a makeup assignment. These are graded when time is available. A list of makeup assignments and the instructions will be posted on D2L. The deadline for submitting makeup assignments is Friday, April 28th (the last day of classes) at 5 PM.

## CONTESTING GRADES

Students are expected to review their feedback for homework assignments on D2L before bringing their concerns to the instructional team. Honestly self-assess whether you misunderstood or overlooked something, and if that mistake led to the deduction. You are encouraged to contact teaching team members to help clarify the material.

If a genuine grading error has been made (such as a missed score for part of the rubric), it would be appropriate to email or attend Zoom office hours with your Assistant Instructor to discuss your concern. However, we will not re-grade individual elements of the assignment.

If you believe that the grade you received did not reflect the overall quality of the assignment, you are required to communicate with your assistant instructor in order to allow them to clarify why any area was determined to be unsatisfactory. After that, you may formally request a re-grade of the entire assignment by Dr. Gipson within 7 days that the grade being posted to D2L. Please email Dr. Gipson (CC your Assistant Instructor) stating that you understand the new grade will stand. It may be better, worse, or the same as your initial grade. Please do not attempt to bargain or negotiate for a higher grade. If you have a genuine concern that you are consistently receiving unfair grades on writing assignments, please send an email that describes your evidence in detail to Dr. Gipson, and he will attempt to rectify the situation.

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

The course instructor will consider providing letters of recommendation for professional and graduate schools, internships, and jobs to those students who receive a **Pass** in the class, exhibit respect for instructors, demonstrate enthusiasm and integrity, regularly exceed expectations on assignments, and have a 3.0 or greater overall GPA. An email request for a letter of recommendation should be made at least 2-3 weeks in advance of the deadline. Your resume, your transcript, your personal statement, an explanation about how your performance in NEU101 demonstrated leadership and potential to succeed in the career path of your choosing, and a list of schools, their due dates, methods of submission along with the emails from schools detailing any online submission procedures, must be provided at least two weeks prior to the due date of

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the first submission. Please also state the semester you took the class and the section you were enrolled in.

## INCLUSIVITY

This course will be conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and affirms people of all gender expressions and identities. The instructors were provided with a class roster with your name as you provided it to MSU. However, if you prefer to be called by a different name than what is on the roster, please let Dr. Gipson know. You are also invited to share your pronouns.

## PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND APPROPRIATE NETIQUETTE

Be professional in your communications. Interact with your fellow classmates and instructor as you would in your professional life. Use appropriate language and grammar. Be clear and concise. Have opinions but be respectful of disagreement. Be cautious with humor or sarcasm. It's not that we want to create a dull environment devoid of fun, but it is easy for these tones to be lost in the text. If you want to make jokes or be sarcastic, indicate your intent with emoticons or a sarcasm tag "/s." Please be kind and respectful.

If necessary, the instructors will complete a professional conduct assessment form for students who do not follow these guidelines and provide feedback about conduct in these areas. If a student receives a professional conduct assessment, they will be assessed again at the end of the semester.

If they are not rated as satisfactory in all categories in the final assessment, their final grade in the class will be reduced by one grade level.

## PARTICIPATION

- Students are required to complete all lecture assignments in their entirety.
- Excused extensions on lecture assignments or homework may be arranged for the following excuses, and then only if the student follows the procedures outlined for communicating and documenting that particular excuse as outlined below.

- For excused extensions, an instructor will email you the revised due dates for any associated assignments.
- Students with unexcused extensions will receive a 0 for the associated assignment.
- Modules are open at least 6 days before due dates so students can be given more than enough time to work on the components at times convenient for them.
- Students are encouraged to complete assignments well ahead of their due dates so that there is sufficient time to post questions to instructors and to allow for unanticipated events.
- This policy is in effect from the first day of the semester.
- The instructors reserve the right to provide exceptions to the policies on an individual basis.
- In most circumstances, make-up assignments will be offered for excused absences.
- Once you have contacted Dr. Gipson and sent the appropriate documentation, an instructor will email you to schedule revised due dates. You must respond to this email within 24 hours to verify that you received the email and have noted your revised due dates.

## ABSENCE

### ILLNESS OR INJURY

1. DO NOT ATTEND CLASS IF YOU HAVE COVID-LIKE SYMPTOMS OR HAVE HAD CLOSE CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS COVID-LIKE SYMPTOMS. If you are ill or must care for someone ill, you must email Dr. Gipson before class to tell him that you will be unable to make it to class. Check your sent mailbox to verify that the email was actually sent and indicate that you would like a delivery receipt.

### BEREAVEMENT

1. You must email Dr. Gipson before class to tell him that you cannot attend class. Check your sent mailbox to verify that the email was actually sent and indicate that

you would like a delivery receipt.

2. Within 14 days of the requested excuse, Dr. Gipson ALSO needs to receive an email notice from the Dean's office indicating that you have been approved for a grief absence. In order to request a grief absence, you must fill out the [Grief Absence Request Form](#) within 7 days of the event and provide the requested documentation. The following information regarding the Grief Absence Policy was taken directly from the [University](#).

“The faculty and staff should be sensitive to and accommodate the bereavement process of a student who has lost a family member or who is experiencing emotional distress from a similar tragedy so that the student is not Page 7 Michigan State University - NEU 101 – B. Gipson academically disadvantaged in their classes or other academic work (e.g., research). For undergraduate and master's (Plan B) students without research responsibilities, it is the responsibility of the student to a) notify the Associate Dean or designee of their college of the need for a grief absence in a timely manner, but no later than one week from the student's initial knowledge of the situation, b) provide appropriate verification of the grief absence as specified by the Associate Dean, and c) complete all missed work as determined in consultation with the instructor. It is the responsibility of the Associate Dean or designee to a) determine with the student the expected period of absence – it is expected that some bereavement processes may be more extensive than others depending on individual circumstances, b) notify the faculty that the student will be absent, and c) receive verification of the authenticity of a grief absence request upon the student's return. It is the responsibility of the instructor to work with the student to make reasonable accommodations and to include appropriate language describing such accommodations in their course syllabus so that the student is not penalized due to a verified grief absence.”

## INTERVIEW

1. You must email Dr. Gipson to tell him that you cannot attend class 7 days before the missed class. Check your sent mailbox to verify that the email was actually sent and indicate that you would like a delivery receipt.
2. At the same time, you must also forward Dr. Gipson the invitation letter for the interview that states your name, the name and location of the program or job, the contact person, and the date and time of the interview. Open houses or interviews for jobs that will be held while pursuing your undergraduate degree will not be excused.

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## PRESENTING AT A CONFERENCE

1. You must email Dr. Gipson to tell him that you cannot attend class at least 7 days before the missed class. Check your sent mailbox to verify that the email was actually sent and indicate that you would like a delivery receipt.
2. You must also forward Dr. Gipson the verification form that you received from the society running the conference for submitting your abstract for presentation, the abstract itself with your name listed as the first author, the name and location of the conference, and the date and time of the conference.

## COURT DATE OR JURY DUTY

1. You must email Dr. Gipson to tell him that you cannot attend class at least 7 days before the missed class. Check your sent mailbox to verify that the email was actually sent and indicate that you would like a delivery receipt.
2. You must ALSO email Dr. Gipson a copy of the notice from the court that states the date and time that you are expected to be present in court.

## OBSERVATIONS OF RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

1. You must email Dr. Gipson to tell him that you cannot attend class at least 7 days before the missed class. The holiday must be listed on the Interfaith Calendar. Check your sent mailbox to verify that the email was actually sent and indicate that you would like a delivery receipt.

## CHRONIC ISSUES (PHYSICAL DISABILITIES AND LEARNING DISABILITIES)

If you experience severe and chronic health issues, physical disabilities, or learning challenges that prevent you from completing assignments by the deadlines, we can attempt to devise a plan to help support you.

1. Within 7 days of the first day of class (if you were diagnosed prior to the start of the semester) or within 7 days of diagnosis (if you were diagnosed during the

semester), you must provide Dr. Gipson with a [VISA](#) issued by the RCPD. The instructors are TREMENDOUSLY willing and able to provide accommodations for students with such conditions, BUT a VISA is required in order to do so. Information regarding a VISA is kept confidential to the instructors and the teaching assistant, and you will not be asked to provide personal health information related to the diagnosis. Students eligible for a VISA are HIGHLY encouraged to obtain one and provide it to Dr. Gipson as soon as possible. If you have applied for a VISA, but it has not yet been issued, please inform Dr. Gipson and provide him with the name of your RCPD advisor.

A new VISA must be provided every semester. Even if you have provided **Dr. Gipson** with a VISA for a previous course, you must provide a copy to **Dr. Gipson** for NEU101.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The “Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University” document (found at <http://splife.studentlife.msu.edu> ) is a legal document that you, as a member of the MSU community, should be familiar with. The welcome letter at the beginning reads, in part:

“As an academic community, it is necessary to set standards to promote an environment conducive to learning. The first part of Spartan Life presents the policies, regulations, and guidelines developed to provide an atmosphere that furthers opportunities for intellectual and personal development while protecting individual freedoms. As a student, you are encouraged to exercise your rights, and you are expected to meet your responsibility to adhere to the standards set. The second part of this guide informs you of the rules, regulations, rights, and responsibilities established in the interest of all members of the University community.”

Academic misconduct, including but not limited to plagiarizing, cheating, and submitting falsified data will not be tolerated in this course. Individual student assignments that contain portions that Dr. Gipson deems to be highly similar to an assignment submitted by another student in current or previous semesters or to an internet or published source may be considered a violation of academic integrity. See [Section 1.00 PROTECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP AND GRADES](#) and [Student Academic Integrity FAQs](#) for detailed information about definitions of academic integrity, examples of misconduct, and advice about how to avoid it.

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Suspected violations of the MSU policies will result in a meeting with Dr. Gipson and your Assistant Instructor. Depending on the severity of the violation, penalties for academic dishonesty may range from 0 points for an item on the assignment, to an unsatisfactory grade for the entire assignment, to a failing grade for the class. If a penalty grade is administered, Dr. Gipson is required to submit an [academic dishonesty report](#) to the university, which will be added to the student's record. The student will be required to complete a course on academic integrity, and the Dean may choose to impose other sanctions.

Providing your completed assignments to other students currently enrolled in NEU101 or those who may take NEU101 in the future is considered a violation of academic integrity and may subject you to sanctions by the university even if you are no longer enrolled in the class.

As future professional scientists, students are also expected to abide by the Society for Neuroscience Ethics Policy.

## TURNITIN

TurnItIn drop boxes are used for all assignments in this course. "Consistent with MSU's efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, instructors may use a tool called Turnitin to compare a student's work with multiple sources. The tool compares each student's work with an extensive database of prior publications and papers, providing links to possible matches and a 'similarity score'. The tool does not determine whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Instead, the instructor must make a complete assessment and judge the originality of the student's work. All submissions to this course may be checked using this tool. Students should submit papers to Turnitin Dropboxes without identifying information included in the paper (e.g., name or student number), the system will automatically show this info to faculty in your course when viewing the submission, but Turnitin will not retain the information. Student submissions will be retained only in the MSU repository hosted by Turnitin."

Students may also consult the similarity report generated by TurnItIn and resubmit assignments before their due date. The TurnItIn report may be confusing for students since a high similarity score may simply reflect that other students are submitting documents containing the same instructions. Thus, you are welcome to attend office hours if you wish to have assistance in interpreting any TurnItIn report.

## MANDATORY REPORTING

"Michigan State University is committed to fostering a culture of caring and respect that is free of relationship violence and sexual misconduct and to ensuring that all affected individuals have access to services. For information on reporting options, confidential advocacy, and support resources, university policies and procedures, or how to make a difference on campus, visit the Title IX website at [www.titleix.msu.edu](http://www.titleix.msu.edu)."

## LIMITS TO CONFIDENTIALITY

"Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues based on external legal obligations or that relate to the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor,

I must report the following information to other University offices if you share it with me:

- Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child.
- Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and
- Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center."