



**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WOU BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES MEETING NO. 63 – AUGUST 9, 2024  
1:00PM-2:00PM**

To observe this Meeting: [Zoom](#)  
Audio only, Call: 1-253-215-8782  
Meeting ID: 841 7785 5910 | Passcode: 807428

**AGENDA**

**I. CALL-TO-MEETING / ROLL CALL**

**II. CHAIR'S WELCOME**

**III. ACTION ITEM**

1) [Minor: Neuroscience](#) (pg.2)

2) [Election of Board Chair](#) (pg.7)

**IV. FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

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**Board of Trustees**

## **Western Oregon University Board of Trustees, Proposal for a new Neuroscience Minor. August 9, - 2024 Special Meeting of the Western Oregon University Board of Trustees**

The proposed Neuroscience Minor is a 25 to 28-credit program. The study of neuroscience provides students the opportunity to apply interdisciplinary knowledge in order to have a better understanding of the behavior of both human and non-human animals. Students will gain knowledge about the anatomy and physiology of nervous systems at the molecular, cellular, organ system, and organismal levels. An understanding of neuroscience issues prepares students to address major societal issues, such as neurodegenerative disorders, drug use, and mental health challenges.

The WOU Psychology program's 2023 Program Review identified mental health as one of the top growing workforce needs in the state of Oregon. Providing WOU students with more formal training in the biological bases of behavior and mental processes can help prepare them to fill those needs, likely making them more competitive for and effective in those jobs. The proposers primarily see the Neuroscience minor being attractive to Psychology and Biology majors. Psychology (382 majors in Fall 2023) and Biology (143 majors) are two of the larger majors at WOU. However, the minor may be attractive to other students on campus, such as Exercise Science and Gerontology majors.

According to the proposers, the Neuroscience Minor does not require additional faculty FTE. Advising for the minor will be part of the advising responsibilities of current Biology and Psychology faculty. The minor does not have a specific budget.

The proposed Neuroscience Minor received Faculty Senate Approval on March 12, 2024 and the proposal is supported by the dean and provost.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Western Oregon University Board of Trustees approve the introduction of a new Neuroscience Minor as included in the docket material.



**P18186**  
**Neuroscience Minor**

New

**Requestor:** Michael Baltzley  
**Submitted:** 2024-02-12 11:16:53  
**Submitting as:** Faculty Member or APA

**The queue for this request is:**

- Department Head/Program Coordinator
- Division Chair
- Division Curriculum/Graduate Chair
- Curriculum Committee
- Faculty Senate
- SAS Dean
- Provost
- President
- Registrar

**Division** Natural Sciences & Mathematics

**Department/Program** Biology

**Request for a:** Program

**Is this a program or requirement that will have catalog copy?** Yes

**Level** Undergraduate

**Type of Request:** New (course, program, focus/concentration, or temporary course)

**Will this be offered within an existing division or department?** Yes

**Type of program** Minor

**Is this curricular change driven by assessment data you have collected?** No

**Summary/Rationale for proposal**

In collaboration with the Psychology Department, we are proposing a new Neuroscience minor that is comprised of existing WOU coursework. A Neuroscience minor that is built on our existing class offerings is a low-resource opportunity to determine interest in Neuroscience at WOU. The curriculum that we are proposing is similar in size and content to the minors at Portland State University (1) and Linfield University (2).

As an academic major, Neuroscience is growing in popularity in the US. In 2008-09, there were 111 neuroscience majors in the US; as of 2017-18, there were 221 (3). Within Oregon, there are not many opportunities for students to earn a Neuroscience credential. As mentioned above, Portland State and Linfield each have a Neuroscience minor. The University of Oregon and Reed College each have a Neuroscience major, and Oregon State University has a neuroscience option in its Biochemistry and Biophysics major.

We primarily see the Neuroscience minor being attractive to Psychology and Biology majors. Psychology (382 majors in Fall 2023) and Biology (143 majors) are two of the larger majors at WOU. However, we can envision this minor being attractive to other students on campus, such as Exercise Science and Gerontology majors. Additionally, a Neuroscience minor could attract new students to WOU that are considering a liberal arts college education in Oregon.

(1) <https://pdx.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2023-2024/bulletin/college-of-liberal-arts-and-sciences/biology/undergraduate-programs/interdisciplinary-neuroscience-minor/>

(2) <https://catalog.linfield.edu/programs-az/arts-sciences/neuroscience/neuroscience-minor/index.html>

(3) Rochon, et al. 2019. Quantitative Indicators of Continued Growth in Undergraduate Neuroscience Education in the US. *J Undergrad Neurosci Educ.* 18(1): A51.

**Anticipated start date** 09/15/2024

**Where will the program be delivered?** WOU Campus (in-person or online)

**How will the courses be offered?** Face-to-face, Hybrid, Online asynchronous, Online synchronous

**Proposed Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) number.** 26.1501

**Title of new program, requirement, focus, or concentration** Neuroscience

**Faculty Listing**

**Professors:** Michael Baltzley, Sarah Boomer, Jaime Cloud, Bryan Dutton, David Foster, Ava Howard, Kristin Latham-Scott, Michael LeMaster, Ethan McMahan, Lauren Roscoe, Stephen Scheck, Chehalis Strapp, Tamina Toray, Rob Winningham

**Associate professor:** Gareth Hopkins, Alicia Ibaraki

**Assistant professors:** Jessica Dugan, Brooke Nott, Kathy Espino-Perez, Jay Schwartz

## **Mission, Learning Outcomes, Etc.**

### **Mission**

The study of neuroscience provides students the opportunity to apply interdisciplinary knowledge in order to have a better understanding of the behavior of both human and non-human animals. Students will gain knowledge about the anatomy and physiology of nervous systems at the molecular, cellular, organ system, and organismal levels. An understanding of neuroscience issues prepares students to address major societal issues, such as neurodegenerative disorders, drug use, and mental health challenges.

### **Learning Outcomes**

- (1) Understand the fundamental disciplinary content and concepts in neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, and neuropsychology.
- (2) Connect the structure and function of the nervous system to topics such as human behavior, non-human animal behavior, neuropharmacology, sensory and perception processes, and neurological disorders.
- (3) Apply the appropriate experimental and analytical methods to current issues in neuroscience.

### **Description**

*If this section does not consist of catalog-ready content, you will be asked to revise your proposal. If you are uncertain of how to prepare catalog-ready content, please contact the staff in the Office of the Registrar.*

### **Foundational courses (8 credits)**

- PSY 201 General Psychology **Credits: 4**
- PSY 360 Cognitive Psychology **Credits: 4**

OR

- BI 211 Principles of Biology: Cells and Genetics **Credits: 4**
- BI 213 Principles of Biology: Structure and Function **Credits: 4**

### **Core Electives (8 credits)**

#### **Choose 2**

- BI 437 Neurobiology **Credits: 4**
- PSY 451 Behavioral Neuroscience **Credits: 4**
- PSY 461 Psychopharmacology **Credits: 4**
- PSY 473 Sensation and Perception **Credits: 4**

### **Additional Electives (9-12 credits)**

#### **Choose 3**

- BI 334 Advanced Human Anatomy and Physiology **Credits: 4**
- BI 360 Animal Behavior **Credits: 4**
- BI 434 Comparative Animal Physiology **Credits: 4**
- BI 437 Neurobiology **Credits: 4**
- PSY 451 Behavioral Neuroscience **Credits: 4**
- PSY 460 Cognitive Neuroscience Seminar **Credits: 1-4**
- PSY 461 Psychopharmacology **Credits: 4**
- PSY 465 Motivation **Credits: 4**
- PSY 473 Sensation and Perception **Credits: 4**

Total Credits: 25-28

**Note: Students who are not Biology or Psychology majors may need to take both Foundational Course sequences in order to meet the prerequisite requirements of the elective courses.**

**Catalog ID:**

**Will you allow "S" graded courses to meet program requirements?** Yes

**Will you restrict which course requirements can be met with an "S" grade?** No

**List closely related programs at WOU or other Oregon colleges and universities and the way in which this program complements other similar programs in other Oregon institutions and other related programs at WOU.**

#### **Closely Related Programs at WOU**

- **Biology:** Approximately half of the Biology majors at WOU are interested in health care related fields, such as becoming a medical doctor, a physician assistant, or a physical therapist. Many of those students already take introductory Psychology courses because they are interested in the subject and/or their desired post-baccalaureate program requires an introductory Psychology course as a prerequisite. A Neuroscience minor would provide these students the opportunity to combine their elective courses into a coherent curricular structure that will further their understanding of human health and behavioral issues and could make them more competitive when applying to post-baccalaureate programs.
- **Psychology:** In terms of credits, Psychology is one of the smaller majors at WOU. A Neuroscience minor would give students the opportunity to package their elective courses into a coherent curricular structure that will help further their understanding of the biological basis of their primary field of study.

#### **Closely Related Programs at other Oregon institutions**

For a student interested in Neuroscience, there are not many opportunities in the state of Oregon to explore the discipline at a four-year college or University. In Oregon, only Reed College and the University of Oregon have a Neuroscience major. Additionally, Oregon State has a neuroscience option in its Biochemistry and Biophysics major, and Portland State and Linfield each have a Neuroscience minor. However, none of the Oregon Technical and Regional Universities (TRUs)--WOU, Southern Oregon, Eastern Oregon, and Oregon Institute of Technology--offer a neuroscience curriculum. Creating a Neuroscience minor at WOU will give students seeking an affordable public education at a small to mid-size university the opportunity to earn a formal credential in a growing field of study.

While a Neuroscience major will add a discipline that is currently missing from the TRUs, it might also help WOU be competitive for more students. From 2019-2022, when a student was accepted at WOU but chose to attend another 4-year institution, their most common destinations were Oregon State University, Portland State University, the University of Oregon, Pacific University, Southern Oregon University, and Linfield University. While a Neuroscience minor is unlikely to make WOU competitive for a student that is interested in majoring in Neurobiology, a Neuroscience minor could help WOU be competitive for students who are choosing between WOU, Portland State and/or Linfield. Additionally, a Neuroscience minor could help attract students who are choosing between majoring in Psychology or Biology at Pacific University or Southern Oregon.

#### **Programs affected/consulted**

This proposal was developed in collaboration with Jay Schwartz in the Psychology Department. Jay obtained approval from the Psychology Department in Nov. 2023 to move forward with the proposal.

#### **Briefly describe how the proposed program aligns with WOU's strategic priorities**

A recent survey of WOU Psychology alumni indicated that students desired more formal neuroscience training and felt this would improve both their academic experience and job success after graduation. The proposed minor would provide a more formal structure for students to gain that instruction. Graduating with an official minor would also provide alumni with evidence of their neuroscience training that would be readily apparent to potential employers as they apply for jobs and other experiences.

#### **Briefly describe how the proposed program meets regional or statewide needs and enhances the state's capacity to improve educational attainment in the region and state**

The WOU Psychology program's 2023 Program Review identified mental health as one of the top growing workforce needs in the state of Oregon. Providing WOU students with more formal training in the biological bases of behavior and mental processes can help prepare them to fill those needs, likely making them more competitive for and effective in those jobs.

**What is the plan to recruit students to this proposed new program? Have you established a marketing plan to promote this new program and informed MarCom? Please briefly describe the plan.**

A website will be created to advertise the minor. Academic advisors and instructors in Psychology, Biology, and related fields will be made aware of the Neuroscience minor and will direct interested students to the minor.

**What is the budget source for the plan to attract new students to this proposed new program?**

The proposed minor does not require additional faculty FTE. Advising for the minor will be part of the advising responsibilities of current Biology and Psychology faculty. The minor does have a specific budget.

**Faculty and Facilities Needed (for Dean review only)**

None.

### Supporting Documents

Thumbnail	Name	Size	Actions
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#### Related Courses:

No related courses found

#### Department Head/Program Coordinator decision:

✓  
Yes by Stephen Scheck (2024-02-12 20:02:18)  
*Comments:* This program was discussed at a biology department meeting and is supported by the biology faculty.

#### Division Chair decision:

✓  
Yes by Steve Taylor (2024-02-13 11:36:04)  
*Comments:*

#### Division Curriculum/Graduate Chair decision:

✓  
Yes by Patricia Flatt (2024-02-13 15:04:55)  
*Comments:*

#### Curriculum Committee decision:

✓  
Yes by Thaddeus Shannon (2024-02-20 21:53:35)  
*Comments:* Fixed typo, added total credits.

#### Faculty Senate decision:

✓  
Yes by Stephen Scheck (2024-03-12 19:29:22)  
*Comments:*

#### LAS Dean decision:

✓  
Yes by Kristin Latham-Scott (2024-03-21 14:56:27)  
*Comments:*

#### Provost decision:

✓  
Yes by Jose Coll (2024-04-26 11:51:27)  
*Comments:*

#### President decision:

✓  
Yes by Jesse Peters (2024-04-29 13:56:44)  
*Comments:*

#### Registrar decision:

✓  
Yes by Breeze Potter (2024-05-31 16:31:21)  
*Comments:* Entered in Catalog & Degree Tracks effective Summer 2024



## **Board Chair Election: August 9, 2024 - Special Meeting of the Western Oregon University Board of Trustees**

Article III, Section 5 of the Board's Bylaws governs the election of Board officers. Currently, the Western Oregon University Board of Trustees has a Board Chair and Board Vice Chair, elected in alternate years for two-year terms. There is no automatic succession or term limits for Board officers.

In June 2022, Chair Betty Komp was re-elected to serve an additional two-year term as Chair of the Western Oregon University Board of Trustees. At the June 12, 2024 meeting no decision was made for a successor to Chair Betty Komp. Trustee Fasana has since expressed interest to Board Leadership and would like to serve in the roll of Chair.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board move forward with the nomination of Angela Fasana to serve as its Chair, for a two-year term, effective August 10, 2024 through June 30, 2026.