Updated December 11, 2020

Neuroscience Graduate Training at New York University and NYU Grossman School of Medicine

Neuroscience education at NYU has a decades-long history of excellence and strength. Historically focused in two separate doctoral programs—the Doctoral Program in Neural Science (Center for Neural Science in the Faculty of Arts and Science) and the Doctoral Program in Neuroscience & Physiology (Vilcek Institute of Graduate Biomedical Sciences in the Grossman School of Medicine)—neuroscience education is now harmonized and engages faculty across multiple departments, inter-disciplinary centers, and campuses. Additionally, weekly colloquia and a variety of other jointly sponsored scientific and social events bring together neuroscientists from across NYU regularly. This one-page overview describes the opportunities available to graduate students in neuroscience at NYU as well as differences that exist between our neuroscience programs.

You can find more detailed information from our website: https://neuroscience.nyu.edu/.

Admissions. While students are admitted to either the Neural Science doctoral program or the Vilcek Institute, there is one application for both neuroscience programs. Applications are reviewed by a single faculty committee, and candidates are invited to interview with the programs jointly. In your application, you should note the research and faculty interests that drew you to apply to NYU. You can, but are not required to, select a preferred program (Neural Science or Vilcek's Neuroscience and Physiology) during the application process. The following should help you with this determination.

Academics. All students participate in the shared, team-taught neuroscience core curriculum in their first year. Students also declare an "area of specialization" that best captures their specific research interests, either Systems/Cognitive/Computational or Molecular/Cellular/Translational, which guides additional first year course requirements. After the first year, all students are expected to take advanced elective courses to obtain a depth of knowledge in their area of specialization. In the second and third year, students are also able to gain valuable teaching experience as TAs for undergraduate courses in Neural Science or for the medical school course in neuroanatomy.

Research. Faculty and students interested in all research areas—from molecular to cognitive—can be found in NYU's Arts and Science and School of Medicine campuses, as well as at the Nathan Kline Institute. During the first year, students choose individual laboratories for 2-3 rotations. Rotations form the primary mechanism by which students gain new skills and select their thesis laboratory. At least two rotations are required during the first year. Students choose their lab rotations with the guidance of the training program graduate advisors. Rotations can be in the laboratory of any of the approximately 100 approved neuroscience faculty member named on the faculty list.

Advising and Mentoring. In the first year, students in both programs are mentored by the Director of Graduate Studies or Graduate Advisor for their program. The requirements for selecting a research mentor, organizing and meeting with a thesis committee, passing a qualifying exam, and defending a thesis are also the same for all students.

Training Grants. Students from both programs are eligible for appointment on the four training grants held jointly between the Neural Science and the Vilcek Neuroscience and Physiology programs.

Vilcek Open Program. Students admitted to Vilcek can take advantage of Vilcek's Open Program. Through the Open Program, students may wait until after their first year to select a specific program affiliation. They can also choose to affiliate with more than one Vilcek PhD programs. Students entering via the Neuroscience & Physiology program can thus opt to pursue training in other research areas offered by Vilcek such as Developmental Genetics or Systems and Computational Biomedicine either in addition to or instead of Neuroscience. This allows students with broad research interests more flexibility during their PhD. Students in the Neural Science program can collaborate with faculty in different Vilcek programs and have co-mentors, but cannot transfer to a different degree program without submitting a new application.

Stipend and Benefits. Stipends for both programs are matched. NYU covers tuition and fees for all courses in both programs. Students in Vilcek and CNS are eligible to receive medical and mental health benefits and have access to a student health center. Students from both programs have access to dental insurance at an additional cost. All full time students are eligible to receive housing benefits during their tenure in graduate school. Students affiliated with Vilcek have access to subsidized student housing located near the Medical Center for 6 years (and can apply for longer if necessary). Students affiliated with CNS apply for housing in Stuyvesant Town for their first year through the MacCracken program, and after the first year, can apply for continued student housing (which is limited) or elect to receive an allowance to help offset the cost of market-rate New York City housing. All students are eligible to apply for travel grants and other awards funded by NYU, the Center for Neural Science, and the Neuroscience Institute.