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<b>Department</b>	Biology/Neuroscience
<b>What course are you proposing to collaborate on?</b>	Reading, Writing and Presenting in Neuroscience
<b>In which semester would you be teaching this class?</b>	Spring 2013
<b>Project Title</b>	Using library resources to facilitate scientific communications

## Project Proposal (250–500 words)

I will be offering a new course entitled “Reading, Writing and Presenting in Neuroscience” (NEU301) in spring 2014. This course is a small, seminar–style format in which students will discuss a primary literature article in neuroscience each week. I believe this course is the perfect opportunity to connect students to the innovative tools and resources provided by the library.

The goals of the course are two–fold. One goal is to expose students to cutting–edge neuroscience research by reading, interpreting and analyzing the literature. The second goal is to provide students more experience with writing and presentation.

Each week, all students are assigned an article to read and summarize. One student is also selected to conduct background research on the week’s topic and to present his or her findings to the class. Clearly, students would benefit from the expertise of a reference librarian while completing this assignment. Thus, I would like to invite a librarian to visit the course and teach the students and myself how to use library resources such as Refworks. Furthermore, the librarian collaborator will be expected to provide on–going assistance to the students as they compile resources for their selected topic as well as to assist in the evaluation of the individual oral presentations.

Another component of the course that would benefit from a library partnership is the creation of a neuroscience blog. The purpose of the neuroscience blog is to provide a forum where students can publish their own analysis and commentary on a variety of neuroscience topics. Students will summarize and interpret important findings in the neuroscience literature for a broader audience with the goal of making the field more accessible to others. This will be a useful exercise for students since many high–profile journals use editorials, opinion pieces and brief communications to provide neuroscientists from across this broad discipline with a better grasp of specific subjects that they may know very little about themselves. The expertise of a librarian would be required to implement this part of the course since I have no formal training in web publishing.

Through the FLPP collaboration I hope to encourage my students to use and learn more about library resources that will facilitate effective scientific writing and communication. I look forward to participating in this partnership, and I believe my students and I will benefit greatly from it.

## Course Description/Syllabus

Co–requisites:

It is strongly recommended that you have taken Brain and Behavior and that this is your junior year.

Course Description/Objective:

This course satisfies the junior year writing in the disciplines requirement for Neuroscience majors (‘16).

The purpose of the course is to increase the amount of time spent reading, thinking about and communicating on a variety of Neuroscience topics. By the end of the semester it is expected that each student will have added confidence researching and reading primary literature and will have refined their communication skills (both writing and oral).

Required materials:

Handouts will be provided.

#### Attendance Policy:

Attendance is required. This is a seminar-style course with peer-led discussions. Two or more absences will necessitate a drop in letter grade.

#### Homework:

Weekly assignments will be to read and write on the topic chosen for that week. Turnitin.com will be used to submit an electronic copy of every assignment and see below regarding academic integrity.

#### Statement of Academic Conduct:

It is expected that you conform to the Stonehill College Academic Honor Code. To review this policy, please visit your Hill Book. There will be a zero-tolerance policy toward cheating and plagiarizing. A violation of Stonehill's Academic Integrity Policy may, at my discretion, result in, but is not limited to, receiving a zero for the assignment, or failing the course.

#### Grading Procedure:

50% up to 16, 2-page summaries/critiques/responses  
30% 1, 30-min oral presentation  
20% Class participation

#### Grading:

A = 93.5 - 100 B+ = 86.5 - 89.4 C+ = 76.5 - 79.4 D = 59.5 - 69.5  
A- = 89.5 - 93.4 B = 83.5 - 86.4 C = 73.5 - 76.4 F = 59.4 and below  
B- = 79.5 - 83.4 C- = 69.5 - 73.4

#### Statement of reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities:

Stonehill College is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with documented disabilities. If you are seeking reasonable classroom or testing accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, and/or Section 504 or the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, you are required to register with the Academic Resource Center (ARC). The ARC is located in Duffy 112 and can be reached at ext. 1033. To receive academic accommodations in this class, please obtain the proper ARC forms and meet with me at the beginning of the semester.

Additional details regarding coursework:

#### Oral presentations:

You will be required to meet with me at least once prior to giving your oral presentation. It is expected that before this meeting you have read the article, made notes, written down your thoughts, done some background research, and have begun preparing a Powerpoint presentation. These meetings will provide me with an opportunity to critique and help you prepare your presentation when it is already in the mid-to-late stages. If you need to sit down to hash out other details at the beginning stages, please plan to meet at least a week prior to our formal meeting. A librarian and/or other neuroscience professor will be invited to sit in on each of the presentations and will be asked to submit his or her own evaluation of the presentation. This will provide a unique perspective on the quality of the presentation and delivery rather than focusing simply on content.

#### Written assignments:

The purpose of written assignment is two-fold. Throughout the course the goal of the writing assignments will progress from "writing to learn" and will transition into "writing to demonstrate learning". The other goal of the writing assignments may be designed to demonstrate comprehension.

Every written assignment will be no more than two typed pages double-spaced with the correct bibliographic reference(s). Any additional requirements or change in requirements regarding the style or presentation will be given at least a couple weeks prior to the assignment being due. A librarian may assist in the grading of these assignments.

## Neuroscience Blog:

As a final group project, we will compile a series of written commentaries by each student over the course of the semester and use this work to create a neuroscience blog. The goal of this blog is to make the broad subject of neuroscience more accessible to people outside the field and to provide new insight or perspectives on a variety of neuroscience issues. In some instances we may even publish students' oral presentation or powerpoints to the blog to create a more diverse blog that incorporates different media. A librarian will assist the class in publishing the blog to the web.