

Introducing *The Journal of Undergraduate Neuroscience (JUNE)*

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Most people have a curiosity that leads them to wonder how minds work, how minds fail, and/or how minds differ. Some people transform their desire to understand the brain into experiments that elucidate nervous system structure and function. Such investigators are not hard to come by; the Society for Neuroscience is a large and very active scientific organization. While one can certainly appreciate the beauty and mystery of the brain without neuroscience training, some theoretical and technical knowledge is, however, necessary to understand contemporary neuroscience research. Molecules, cells, systems, and behaviors are all studied with sophisticated technology from various perspectives. In response to innovations in neuroscience research, teaching faculty have developed undergraduate neuroscience curricula that examine the brain from varied perspectives and engage students in research as collaborators. To address the needs of these faculty challenged with educating and involving undergraduates in a large, rapidly developing, and diverse discipline, Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience (FUN) is pleased to launch *The Journal of Undergraduate Neuroscience Education (JUNE)* at www.funjournal.org.

FUN (www.funfaculty.org) is a unique professional organization composed of imaginative, perceptive, and enthusiastic educators dedicated to excellence in undergraduate neuroscience education. Since 1991, FUN has provided valuable opportunities for undergraduate educators to improve their craft through meetings, workshops, awards, and an electronic listserv. With the creation of *JUNE*, FUN now introduces a new vehicle that recognizes the value of educational scholarship by providing a journal to communicate innovations in undergraduate neuroscience education.

JUNE's mission is to communicate innovations in all aspects of undergraduate neuroscience education via peer-reviewed scholarly articles in an easily accessible format for an audience of undergraduate educators. *JUNE* is freely available to all who wish to read it at www.funjournal.org. Articles are available as printable pdf files along with supplemental materials such as movies.

JUNE can only meet its seemingly contrary goals of high quality and free access if undergraduate neuroscience educators embrace it as a community journal. If you like what you see in this first issue of *JUNE*, please forward the www.funjournal.org address along to your colleagues. Encourage educators doing good, innovative work in neuroscience education, to submit manuscripts. *JUNE* is a particularly appropriate mechanism for faculty to share unique knowledge and personal trademark activities that make their classrooms and labs exceptional environments for learning. Moreover, if you find a resource such as a book or website that provides a valuable example or perspective in your classroom, submit a review. If you have an opinion, write a letter to the editor. If there is a

topic you'd like to see addressed in an article, inform an editor. As you can see from the contents of this first issue, educational scholarship comes in many forms, from descriptions of new lab exercises that examine learning in young rats, neurogenesis in crayfish, and action potentials in plants to a comprehensive compilation of neuroscience content in popular film. Educational resources in the form of popular press books, textbooks, electronic lab manuals, and PBS television episodes are also reviewed. FUN is eager to produce a journal that addresses the needs of undergraduate neuroscience educators and *JUNE's* ability to address these needs requires your feedback and contributions.

JUNE's creation is due to a talented editorial board of neuroscientists who have distinguished themselves as innovative teachers. The editors represent the diversity in contemporary neuroscience by teaching a wide variety of courses and mentoring undergraduates in the laboratory, in the field, or at the bench. Julio Ramirez (Davidson), Gary Dunbar (Central Michigan), Russell Fernald (Stanford), Bruce Johnson (Cornell), James Kalat (North Carolina State), Carol Ann Paul (Wellesley), Denny Smith (Oberlin), Eric Wiertelak (Macalester), and Bob Wyttenbach (Cornell) have generously shared the vision and expertise necessary to launch *JUNE*. Four of these editors along with Karen Bernd, Gayle-Brosnan Watters, Larry Nolan, Karen Parfitt, and Alan Gittis met the significant challenge of contributing the excellent articles and reviews in this first issue. The insightful comments of the anonymous reviewers ensuring that articles published in *JUNE* meet the highest standards are also heartily acknowledged. *JUNE's* residence at www.funjournal.org was made possible by financial support from Executive Director Jeanne Narum at Project Kaleidoscope and Dean Clark Ross of Davidson College, to which FUN and *JUNE* are greatly indebted. Ron Stamey of Timeline Pictures deserves kudos for developing an elegant website and Mur Muchane, Chris Paradise, and Kiril Simov of Davidson College provided kind technical assistance.

While *JUNE's* production and maintenance costs have been minimized, FUN membership dues underwrite *JUNE's* costs. At the risk of resembling pleas from your public television or radio station, I ask that you consider becoming a FUN member (easily accomplished at www.funfaculty.org) if you find *JUNE* a valuable resource for your professional development. Excellence in undergraduate neuroscience education is critical to prepare new minds to contribute future insights into the vibrant quest to understand the brain. *JUNE* contributes to this important effort by providing a forum to communicate innovations in undergraduate neuroscience education.

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