

EBERHARD KARLS  
**UNIVERSITÄT  
TÜBINGEN**



# **Module Handbook**

## **Neural Information Processing Master of Science**

Academic Year 2020-21

Faculty of Science and Medical Faculty  
Graduate School of Neural Information Processing



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# 1. Qualification goals of the master course 'Neural Information Processing'

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This research oriented course of study aims at German and international students with a first academic degree (BSc) in physics, mathematics, computer science, cognitive science or engineering or in another relevant field of natural sciences. The theoretical and practical education comprises topics of computational neuroscience, machine learning, systems neuroscience, neurophysiology, psychophysics and statistics. Moreover, an emphasis is set on scientific writing and communication skills.

The overall goal of the course is to impart solid knowledge and competences to qualify students to independently plan and carry out complex analyses and develop sophisticated models of neuroscientific data, to choose appropriate methodological approaches, and to critically evaluate their findings in comparison with published data. The interdisciplinary nature of the program qualifies the students to also interact closely with experimental researchers. The qualification goals in more detail:

- Our graduates have a sound standing in the interdisciplinary field of computational neuroscience and machine learning, and broad knowledge of systems neuroscience.
- They have profound skills in mathematics and theoretical neuroscience, which allows them to theoretically dissect modeling questions in neuroscience.
- The students are able to implement basic and advanced algorithms for neuroscientific data analysis and modeling and to apply them to real data.
- Graduates have a solid theoretical and – to some extent – hands-on expertise in a range of state-of-the-art neuroscientific methods, including psychophysics, neurophysiology and imaging techniques and motor control.
- They are capable of critically scrutinizing the suitability of specific experimental approaches for studying various neuroscientific questions (*can I answer my scientific questions with the method at hand?*). Also, they will be able to combine techniques in a meaningful way to also make rather complex scientific problems accessible.
- Graduates have required English language competency at least equivalent to C1-level. They can present scientific findings of their research orally and in writing. Moreover, in discussions they are skilled to answer scientific questions in a proficient manner. At scientific meetings, they can communicate – in English – with experts in the field and contribute to discussions on current neuroscientific topics.
- During their studies and laboratory rotations, graduates have also gained general competencies such as time and conflict management, coping with stressful situations, as well as social skills and the capacity for teamwork. Furthermore, as members of an international course of study and by working in internationally composed research groups they also gain cross-cultural competence to some extent.

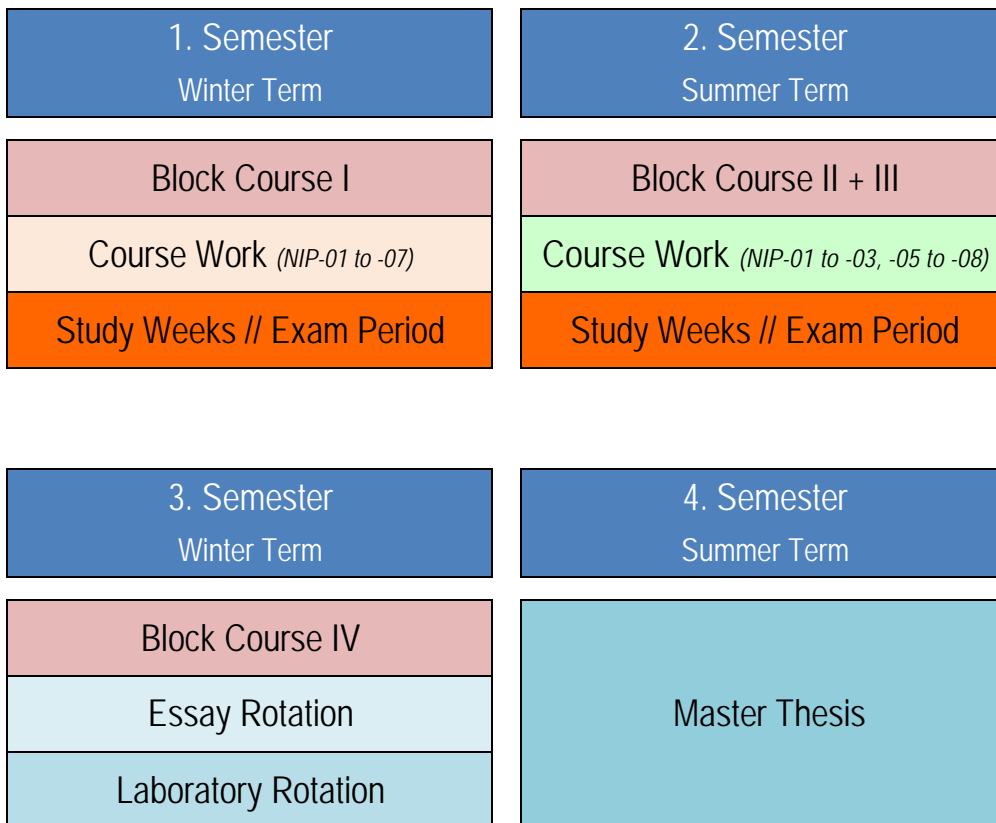
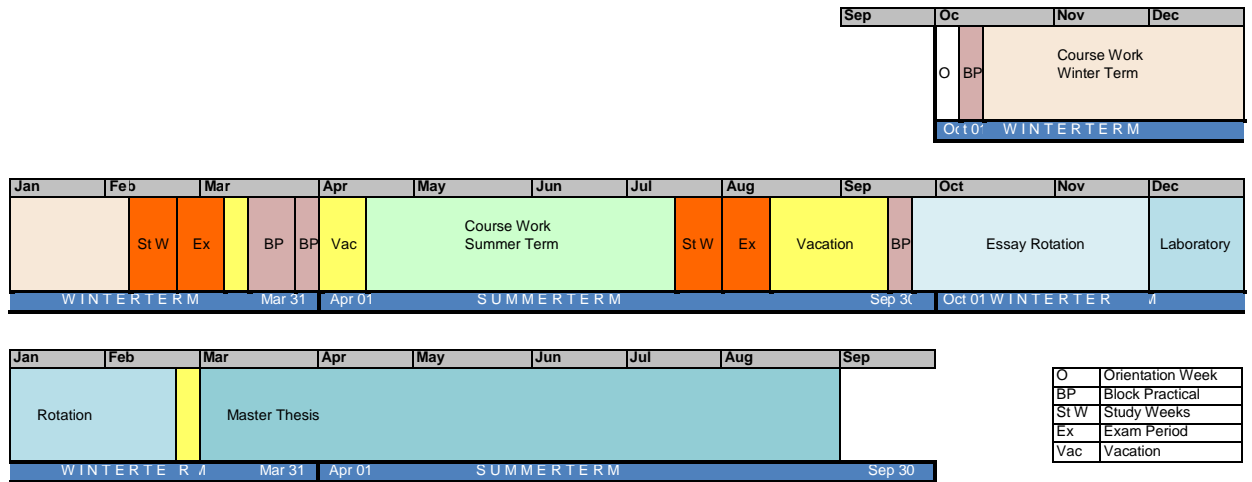
In conclusion, after successful graduation from the master course students are well prepared to engage, eventually, in a demanding doctoral research project and pursue a career in science.

## 2. Modules overview

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Module Code	Module Title	Semester	Credits
NIP-01	Theoretical Neuroscience	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10
NIP-02	Machine Learning	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10
NIP-03	Data Processing	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup>	9
NIP-04	The Neuron and Experimental Methods	1 <sup>st</sup>	6
NIP-05	Sensory Systems	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup>	10
NIP-06	Motor Systems	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup>	6
NIP-07	Introduction to Current Research	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup>	5
NIP-08	Electives	1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup>	9
NIP-09	Essay Rotation / Laboratory Rotation	3 <sup>rd</sup>	25
NIP-10	Masters Thesis	4 <sup>th</sup>	30
			<b>Sum 120</b>

### 3. Timeline of the master course



## 4. Semester / Courses / Credits

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1. Semester // Winter Semester		Credits
Functional Neuroanatomy ( <i>1 week block</i> )	2	
Neural Dynamics	5	
Machine Learning I	5	
Mathematical Basis for Computational Neuroscience	2	
Neurophysiology	3	
Neural Experimental Techniques	3	
Sensory Systems – The Auditory system	3	
Sensory Systems – The Visual System	2	
Motor Systems ( <i>2 week block</i> )	3	
Electives	3	
NeuroColloquium	0,5	<b>Σ 31,5</b>

2. Semester // Summer Term		Credits
Neural Coding	5	
Machine Learning II	5	
Neural Data Science	4	
Signal Processing	3	
Computational Motor Control	3	
Psychophysics and Non-Invasive Methods	3	
Retreat	2	
NeuroColloquium	0,5	
Electives	6	<b>Σ 31,5</b>

3. Semester // Winter Semester		Credits
Introduction to Scholarly Research and Writing	2	
Essay Rotation / Laboratory Rotation (incl. Seminars)	25	<b>Σ 27</b>

4. Semester // Summer Term		Credits
Masters Thesis	30	<b>Σ 30</b>
		<b>Σ 120</b>

## 5. Modules and examinations

Module	Module Element // Course	Course Requirements	Exam Period		
			Midterm WS/SS	Ex. Per. Spring	Ex. Per. Summer
NIP-01	Neural Dynamics	Written exam (2 h)		X	
	Neural Coding	Written exam (2 h)			X
NIP-02	Machine Learning I	Written exam (2 h)		X	
	Machine Learning II	Written exam (2 h)			X
NIP-03	Signal Processing	Written exam (2 h)			X
NIP-04	Neurophysiology	Written exam (4 h)		X	
	Neural Experimental Techniques				
NIP-05	Functional Neuroanatomy	Written exam (1,5 h)	X		
	Sensory Systems	Written exam (4 h)		X	
	Psychophysics and Non-Invasive Methods	Written (online) exam (2 h)			X
NIP-06	Motor Systems	Written mini-exams	X		
	Computational Motor Control	Written exam (2 h)			X
NIP-07	Retreat	Oral presentation	X		

### This examinations overview shows:

- all examinations in the first year of study (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester),
- the modules / module elements that are concluded with an examination,
- the type and the duration of an examination,
- the time points of the examinations (midterm, spring or summer examination period),
- and the number of exams in a given exam period (*please note the colour coding*).

## 6. Modules and courses

Code	Module	Coordinator	ECTS	Module Elements
NIP-01	Theoretical Neuroscience	Giese	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neural Dynamics</li> <li>• Neural Coding</li> </ul>
NIP-02	Machine Learning	Giese	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Machine Learning I</li> <li>• Machine Learning II</li> </ul>
NIP-03	Data Processing	Berens	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematical Basis for Computational Neuroscience</li> <li>• Neural Data Science</li> <li>• Signal Processing</li> </ul>
NIP-04	The Neuron and Experimental Methods	Euler	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neurophysiology</li> <li>• Neural Experimental Techniques</li> </ul>
NIP-05	Sensory Systems	Wichmann	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional Neuroanatomy</li> <li>• Sensory Systems</li> <li>• Psychophysics and Non-Invasive Methods</li> </ul>
NIP-06	Motor Systems	Schwarz	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motor Systems (Block)</li> <li>• Computational Motor Control</li> </ul>
NIP-07	Introduction to Current Research	Himmelbach	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Scholarly Research and Writing</li> <li>• NeuroColloquium</li> <li>• Retreat</li> </ul>
NIP-08	Electives	Himmelbach	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elective Courses I – III</li> </ul>
NIP-09	Essay Rotation / Laboratory Rotation	Himmelbach	25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Essay Rotation + Report + Seminar</li> <li>• Laboratory Rotation + Report + Seminar</li> </ul>
NIP-10	Master Thesis	Himmelbach	30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laboratory Work + Thesis</li> </ul>
			<b>Σ 120</b>	



## 7. Descriptions of individual modules (NIP-01 to NIP-10)

Module		Code: NIP-01	ECTS Credit points
Theoretical Neuroscience			10
Module coordinator	Contact		
Prof. Dr. Martin Giese	Centre for Integrative Neuroscience / Hertie Institute for Clinical Brain Research Computational Sensomotrics <a href="mailto:martin.giese@uni-tuebingen.de">martin.giese@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071-29 89124		
Duration of module	Cycle		
2 Semesters	Annually		

Module elements		
Course title	Course type	Semester*
Neural Dynamics	Lecture	WS
Neural Dynamics – Assignments	Assignments / Exercise Sessions	
Neural Coding	Lecture	SS
Neural Coding – Assignments	Assignments / Exercise Sessions	

\* WS = winter semester / SS = summer semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>This module provides an introduction to the main research topics of theoretical neuroscience. There are two major lectures, <i>Neural Dynamics</i> and <i>Neural Coding</i> which are combined with homework assignments. The two lectures give an overview on biophysical neuron models (e.g. Hodgkin-Huxley, Steven-Connor), synaptic transmission, more abstract models (e.g. integrate-and-fire), and point process models such as renewal neurons or generalized linear spiking neuron models. It further includes an introduction to network dynamics and basic concepts from nonlinear dynamics, Hopfield networks, dynamic neural fields, and Boltzmann machines, the classification of coupled integrate-and-fire neurons (synchronous/asynchronous, regular/irregular states), and learning rules, such as spike timing dependent plasticity and deep learning methods. Information theoretic tools and estimation theory is provided for the analysis of neural codes and sensory decision-making. Basic models of neural population codes and probabilistic population codes are introduced as well as a characterization of natural stimuli.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>After successful completion of this module students will know and be able to describe the main research questions in theoretical neuroscience and can apply relevant mathematical tools to tackle them. By solving homework problems, students will gather hands-on experience in carrying out mathematical modelling and analyses by themselves, which also includes computer simulations.</p>
<p><b>Teaching methods</b></p> <p>The two main courses in this module are taught as combined lectures (2h) and exercise sessions (1h), in which the homework assignments are discussed. Solutions to exercise problems will be presented by students to the class in the exercise sessions.</p>

**Prerequisites for participation**

Calculus, linear algebra, basic analysis, basic probability theory and familiarity with a programming language (e.g. Matlab, Python).

**Usability of the module**

Compulsory module in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the master program Neural Information Processing.

**Module requirements, exams and grading scheme**

Students are required to solve 50% of the exercise problem sheets as a prerequisite for participation in the final exams and present the solutions of at least one exercise problem to the class during an exercise session. The module will be concluded with two written exams (graded), one of which takes place in the spring and one in the summer examination period. The module grade will be calculated from the two exams, which are weighted according to their assigned credit points (5:5).

Workload assessment and credit points		
Module element	Workload*	CPs**
Neural Dynamics	Co: 30h + Re: 40h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
Neural Dynamics – Assignments	Co: 15h + As: 45h = 60h	2
Neural Coding	Co: 30h + Re: 40h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
Neural Coding – Assignments	Co: 15h + As: 45h = 60h	2
		<b>Total 10</b>

\* Co=contact time in class, Re=review after class, As=assignments/homework, Ex=exam preparation/exam

\*\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point

<b>Module</b>		<b>Code: NIP-02</b>	<b>ECTS credit points</b>
<b>Machine Learning</b>			<b>10</b>
<b>Module coordinator</b> Prof. Dr. Martin Giese	<b>Contact</b> Centre for Integrative Neuroscience / Hertie Institute for Clinical Brain Research Computational Sensomotrics <a href="mailto:martin.giese@uni-tuebingen.de">martin.giese@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071-29 89124		
<b>Duration of module</b> 2 Semesters	<b>Cycle</b> Annually		

Module elements		
Course title	Course type	Semester*
Machine Learning I	Lecture	WS
Machine Learning I – Assignments	Assignments / Exercise Sessions	
Machine Learning II	Lecture	SS
Machine Learning II – Assignments	Assignments / Exercise Sessions	

\* WS = winter semester / SS = summer semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>We provide a comprehensive overview of contemporary approaches in Machine Learning. Topics include (but are not limited to) probability theory, frequentist and Bayesian statistics, basic methods for classification and regression, elementary methods for unsupervised learning and dimension reduction, statistical learning theory, kernel methods, support vector machines, Bayesian inference and model selection, stochastic processes, graphical models, Hidden Markov Models, and approximation methods for learning and inference. We will exemplify the applicability of these approaches to various problem domains, e.g. neural data analysis and computer vision. Relevant software packages will be discussed. In addition, open problems in machine learning research will be discussed.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>Students will learn the theoretical basis of fundamental methods in machine learning. They will learn to establish and prove simple relationships in probabilistic modeling and inference. They will be enabled to choose the appropriate machine learning tools for given problems in data analysis and modeling. As a consequence of the homework exercises, students will also be familiarized with the implementation and application of methods of machine learning research and relevant software tools. By working on concrete problems students will be familiarized with the practical realization of machine learning algorithms and the related implementation issues.</p>
<p><b>Teaching methods</b></p> <p>The two main courses in this module are taught as combined lectures (2h) and exercise sessions (1h), in which the homework assignments are discussed. Solutions to exercise problems will be presented by students to the class in the exercise sessions.</p>

<p><b>Prerequisites for participation</b></p> <p>Calculus, linear algebra, basic analysis, and familiarity with a programming language (e.g. MatLab, Python).</p>
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**Usability of the module**

Compulsory module in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the master program Neural Information Processing.

**Module requirements, exams and grading scheme**

ML I: Students are required to submit 3 practical tasks on ILIAS which are graded and this practical part will count 40% towards the final grade. ML I will be concluded with a written exam, which will count 60% towards the final degree.

ML II: Students are required to solve 50% of the exercise problem sheets as a prerequisite to participation in the final exam and present the solutions of at least one exercise problem to the class during an exercise session. The module will be concluded with a written exam.

The module grade will be calculated from the two final results, which are weighted according to their assigned credit points (5:5).

Workload assessment and credit points		
Module element	Workload*	CPs**
Machine Learning I	Co: 30h + Re: 40h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
Machine Learning I – Assignments	Co: 15h + As: 45h = 60h	2
Machine Learning II	Co: 30h + Re: 40h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
Machine Learning II – Assignments	Co: 15h + As: 45h = 60h	2
		<b>Total 10</b>

\* Co=contact time in class, Re=review after class, As=assignments/homework, Ex=exam preparation/exam

\*\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point

<b>Module</b>		<b>Code: NIP-03</b>	<b>ECTS credit points</b>
<b>Data Processing</b>			<b>9</b>
<b>Module coordinator</b> Prof. Dr. Philipp Berens	<b>Contact</b> Institute for Ophthalmic Research Neural Data Science for Vision Research <a href="mailto:philipp.berens@uni-tuebingen.de">philipp.berens@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071-29 88833		
<b>Duration of module</b> 2 Semesters	<b>Cycle</b> Annually		

Module elements		
Course title	Course type	Semester*
Mathematical Basis for Computational Neuroscience	Lecture + Exercises + Tutorial	WS
Neural Data Science	Lecture with homework assignments	SS
Signal Processing	Lecture	SS

\* WS = winter semester / SS = summer semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>Modern neuroscience is full of large and complex datasets acquired with ever more sophisticated experimental methods. In this module we will cover essential techniques for neural data sciences and modelling various types of data (electrophysiology, optical imaging, transcriptomics, anatomy). This module contains courses covering the mathematical basics for the description of data, signal processing and neural data science. In many ways, it will make practical use of machine learning algorithms and models discussed in other modules. Topics include but are not limited to spectral analysis, filter design, Kalman filters, time series analysis, spike triggered average/covariance, spike sorting and dimensionality reduction techniques.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>The students must be able to name and explain essential techniques in signal processing and neural data science. The students should be able to analyse multidimensional data from neural systems, including spike trains, voltage/calcium signals, LFP, EEG, transcriptomes and morphologies. The students should be aware of the difficulties of applying signal processing and data analysis techniques to real data.</p>
<p><b>Teaching methods</b></p> <p>The courses in this module are taught in lecture-style with computer exercises. Students are expected to review topics after class and complete homework assignments. Homework assignments mostly consist of practical programming exercises.</p>

<p><b>Prerequisites for participation</b></p> <p>Calculus, linear algebra and analysis (series, integrals, derivatives); basics of machine learning and neural coding; familiarity with a programming language.</p>
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<p><b>Usability of the module</b></p> <p>Compulsory module in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the master program Neural Information Processing.</p>
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**Module requirements, exams and grading scheme**

MBC: Students are required to attend the class and participate.

NDA: Students are expected to obtain 60% of the points for the exercise sheet to pass the class and present the solutions of the exercise problems weekly. The grade is determined from the weekly assessment of exercise solutions.

SP: The module element will be concluded by two home assignments and one exam. The final grade will be calculated from the two performances, which are equally weighted.

The module grade is obtained by a weighted average from the NDA and SP grades based on the CPs.

Workload assessment and credit points		
Module element	Workload*	CPS**
Mathematical Basis for Computational Neuroscience (pre-course)	Co: 20h + Re: 40h = 60h	2
Neural Data Science	Co: 60h + Re: 15h + As: 45h = 120h	4
Signal Processing	Co: 30h + Re: 40h + As: 20h = 90h	3
		Total 9

\* Co=contact time in class, Re=review after class, As=assignments/homework

\*\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point

<b>Module</b>		<b>Code: NIP-04</b>	<b>ECTS credit points</b>
<b>The Neuron and Experimental Methods</b>			<b>6</b>
<b>Module coordinator</b> Prof. Dr. Thomas Euler	<b>Contact</b> Centre for Integrative Neuroscience Ophthalmic Research <a href="mailto:thomas.euler@cin.uni-tuebingen.de">thomas.euler@cin.uni-tuebingen.de</a> 07071-29 58028		
<b>Duration of module</b> 1 Semester	<b>Cycle</b> Annually		

Module elements		
Course title	Course type	Semester*
Neurophysiology	Lecture	WS
Neural Experimental Techniques	Lecture	WS

\* WS = winter semester / SS = summer semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>Information processing in neurons occurs on all levels of organization, genes, molecules, electrochemical activity of single neurons, neuronal networks and neuronal systems. This module will focus on neuronal function on a higher level, starting from the neuron's ability to generate electrical and chemical signals to network interaction and finally the generation of behaviour. Lecture 1 focuses on neuronal signals, their nature, their mechanisms of generation, and their transmission and processing at the intra- and intercellular levels. Basic concepts, key experiments and methodological tools to study these issues are presented. The topics covered include basic electro-chemical properties (resting, action and synaptic potentials), as well as basic characteristics of neural coding using spikes and computation using dendritic potentials. An overview on state of the art electrophysiological tools (intracellular current and voltage recordings of soma and dendrites; extracellular spike and local field potential recordings; micro stimulation) as well as novel experimental techniques probing neural function using light rather than electricity (calcium/voltage imaging, and optogenetic stimulation) will be given. The overview on different electrophysiological methods will be provided in more depth in Lecture 2 including of a discussion of their relative advantages and disadvantages for the study of neural systems. Lecture 3 will provide an overview of non-invasive methods such as electrophysiological (EEG/MEG) as well as imaging methods (fMRI, PET, etc.) covering both, their physical basis as well as their potential use and limitations. Finally psychophysical methods that assess the individual's behaviour generated by neuronal activity will be discussed.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>The aim of the module is to provide students with profound knowledge and basic competences on the physiology of neurons at the cellular and network level, and the methods used for its study. By the end of the module, students will have a solid understanding of electrical signal generation, processing and integration in neurons, transmission of the neuronal signal at the chemical synapse. They will also be familiar with the techniques used to study neuronal processing at the single cell, neuronal network, and neuronal systems level. Furthermore, they will have insight into psychophysical methods to study behavioural outcome of neuronal processing.</p>
<p><b>Teaching methods</b></p> <p>The courses in this module are taught in lecture-style with interposed tutorials. Students are expected to review topics after class by using their class notes, the hand-outs provided and recommended additional readings, such as textbooks and articles. The required textbooks are present in the Graduate Schools library. For the tutorials, short assignments have to be prepared and presented in class.</p>

**Prerequisites for participation**

All lectures are self-contained, however, basic notions of cell biology, physiology, and mathematics are needed.

**Usability of the module**

Compulsory module in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the master program Neural Information Processing.

**Module requirements, exams and grading scheme**

The module will be concluded with a written exam (graded) by the end of the winter term.

**Workload assessment and credit points**

Module element	Workload*	CPs**
Neurophysiology	Co: 30h + Re: 30h + As: 10h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
Neural Experimental Techniques	Co: 30h + Re: 30h + As: 10h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
		<b>Total 6</b>

\* Co=contact time in class, Re=review after class, As=assignments/homework, Ex=exam preparation/exam

\*\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point



Module		Code: NIP-05	ECTS credit points
Sensory Systems			10
Module coordinator	Contact		
Prof. Dr. Felix Wichmann	Department of Computer Science Neural Information Processing Group <a href="mailto:felix.wichmann@uni-tuebingen.de">felix.wichmann@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071 - 29 70420		
Duration of module	Cycle		
1 Semester	Annually		

Module elements		
Course title	Course type	Semester*
Functional Neuroanatomy ( <i>1 week block course</i> )	Lecture + Practical + Tutorial	WS
Sensory Systems – The Auditory System	Lecture	WS
Sensory Systems – The Visual System	Lecture	WS
Psychophysics and Non-Invasive Methods	Lecture	SS

\* WS = winter semester, SS = summer semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>In this module, we first provide an introduction to the functional organisation of the components of the central nervous system, from the spinal cord to the neocortex. This will build the basis for the students to follow the subsequent, more detailed courses. Thereafter, the anatomy and physiology of two model sensory systems – visual and auditory – will be covered from signal transduction at the sensory receptors to higher order processing and psychophysics. Common principles of neural coding and information processing will be emphasized.</p> <p>Finally, psychophysical methods that assess the individual's behaviour generated by neuronal activity will be discussed. Analysing and designing experiments, for example in the vision sciences, requires knowledge straddling the typical boundaries of many disciplines. In this course, we will therefore, cover some physics (light), electrical engineering (display devices), mathematical psychology (signal detection theory) and statistics (psychometric function estimation) in sufficient detail, to allow the students to both analyse and critically assess psychophysical experiments.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>The aim of the course is to provide students - coming from diverse, in general non-biological backgrounds - with a common platform of theoretical and practical knowledge about the microscopic, macroscopic and functional organisation of the brain with an emphasis on mammals. After successful completion of the module, students will be able to name and identify the major brain nuclei and their connectivity comprising the different sensory systems pathways and circuits and their role in sensorimotor integration. They will be familiar with the different types of sensory receptor cells and their signal transduction cascades. Furthermore, students will be able to differentiate the basic features of information processing and coding of sensory information in the different systems.</p> <p>In the psychophysics course, students will acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to critically assess experiments in the vision sciences and, most importantly, to design and analyse their own behavioural (psychophysical) experiments. Through homework assignments and computer exercises they will gain hands-on experience applying signal detection theory and psychometric function estimation to data, and avoid common pitfalls.</p>

### Teaching methods

The neuroanatomy course is a one-week block course consisting of lectures and tutorial-style, supervised practical parts. The two sensory systems courses [and the motor system course] are taught in lecture-style with interposed tutorials. For the tutorials, students are expected to come armed with questions based on the lecture material. Moreover, as an aid for preparing their tutorial questions and for exercise, the lecturers will provide a list of questions after the lectures. For the sensory systems lectures, a minimum total score of 80% on the exercise sheets is required to be admitted to the final examination. The psychophysics course is taught in lecture-style with homework assignments and computer exercises. For all courses, students are expected to review topics after class by using their class notes, the lecture slides and recommended additional readings, such as textbooks and journal articles.

### Prerequisites for participation

Basic notions of cell biology, physiology and brain organisation are needed as well as basic mathematical (probability, theory, calculus) and programming skills (Matlab).

### Usability of the module

Compulsory module in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the master program Neural Information Processing.

### Module requirements, exams and grading scheme

The final module grade will be compiled from separate examinations. The written exam covering the functional neuroanatomy course will be held shortly after completion of the course (midterm exam) and makes up 20% of the module grade. A second written exam between terms (at the end of the sensory systems block) covers the sensory systems lectures and makes up 50% of the module grade. A third exam (online) in the summer examination period covers the psychophysics course and contributes 30% to the module grade.

Workload assessment and credit points		
Module element	Workload*	CPS**
Functional Neuroanatomy	Co: 20h + Re: 40h + As: 10h + Ex: 20h = 90h	2
Sensory Systems – The Auditory system	Co: 30h + Re: 30h + As: 10h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
Sensory Systems – The Visual System	Co: 20h + Re: 20h + As: 5h + Ex: 15h = 60h	2
Psychophysics and Non-Invasive Methods	Co: 30h + Re: 30h + As: 10h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
		Total 10

\* Co=contact time in class, Re=review after class, As=assignments/homework, Ex=exam preparation/exam

\*\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point

Module		Code: NIP-06	ECTS credit points
Motor Systems			6
Module coordinator	Contact		
Prof. Dr. Cornelius Schwarz	Centre for Integrative Neuroscience Systems Neurophysiology <a href="mailto:cornelius.schwarz@uni-tuebingen.de">cornelius.schwarz@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071-29 80462		
Duration of module	Cycle		
2 Semesters	Annually		

Module elements		
Course title	Course type	Semester*
Motor Systems ( <i>2 week block course</i> )	Lecture	WS
Computational Motor Control	Lecture	SS

\* WS = winter semester, SS = summer semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>The Motor Systems course will introduce students to motor behaviour and sensorimotor integration and will provide a coherent view of the hierarchical organization of the muscular and neuronal motor periphery, pattern generators in spinal cord/brainstem, motor- and premotor cortex, as well as intermediate control loops mediated by the cerebellum and the basal ganglia. The structure and function of these brain areas for planning, generating and guiding movements, and their interconnectivity with the other components, will be discussed in detail.</p> <p>The course on Computational Motor Control completes the module and addresses motor behavior as an interaction of neural control, morphology and (changing) environments. Therefore, the lecture introduces methods for the development of models of biomechanics, motor control and motor learning processes. In the first part, the focus lay on the biomechanical modelling and the connection to neural control. The second part of the lecture will comprise the description and modelling of motor adaptation. Human adaptive motor behavior will be presented in various experimental setups. The effects of different learning strategies, impairments in motor adaptation in neurological patients and the use of motor learning principles in neuro-rehabilitation will be presented.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>This module provides students with diverse technical and theoretical educational backgrounds with a common platform of theoretical and practical knowledge on structure and function of the mammalian motor system, with some references to vertebrate and invertebrate systems.</p> <p>After successful completion of the module, students will be able to name and identify major brain nuclei involved in movement generation and sensorimotor integration. They will be able to describe the internal functional network organization and will be aware of major functional hypotheses in the field about the major sub-systems. They will have done first steps to successfully read, discuss and communicate the content of current journal publications on motor systems. They will be able to connect computational motor-neuroscience approaches with the actual hypothesized neuronal function of the different motor subsystems.</p> <p>Moreover, students will be familiarised with methods for modelling the interaction between biomechanics and neural control as well as quantitatively describe motor learning processes. This will enable the student to identify the requirements and possibilities for modelling complex movement behaviour in order to understand underlying control principles. Thereafter, they will be able to apply these models to various fields, such as rehabilitation robotics and medical engineering.</p>

**Teaching methods**

The courses in this module are taught in lecture-style with interposed tutorials. Students are expected to review topics after class by using their class notes, the hand-outs provided and recommended additional readings, such as textbooks and articles. The required textbooks are present in the Graduate Schools library. For the tutorials, short assignments have to be prepared and presented in class.

**Prerequisites for participation**

Basic notions of cell biology, physiology and brain organisation are needed.

**Usability of the module**

Compulsory module in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the master program Neural Information Processing.

**Module requirements, exams and grading scheme**

The block course in winter term will not be graded (pass/fail). Criteria to pass the course are regular attendance, the successful passing of three mini-exams (30 min duration, 50% correct answers), and the successful preparation and presentation of a seminar talk in class.

The summer term lecture will be concluded with an oral exam (graded) by the end of the term.

**Workload assessment and credit points**

Module element	Workload*	CPS**
Motor Systems	Co: 30h + Re: 30h + As: 10h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
Computational Motor Control	Co: 30h + Re: 30h + As: 10h + Ex: 20h = 90h	3
Total		6

\* Co=contact time in class, Re=review after class, As=assignments/homework, Ex=exam preparation/exam

\*\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point

Module		Code: NIP-07	ECTS Credit points
Introduction to Current Research			5
Module coordinator	Contact		
PD Dr. Marc Himmelbach	Graduate Training Centre of Neuroscience <a href="mailto:marc.himmelbach@uni-tuebingen.de">marc.himmelbach@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071-29 77177		
Duration of module	Cycle		
2 Semesters	Annually		

Module elements		
Course title	Course type	Semester*
NeuroColloquium	Talks ( <i>invited speakers</i> )	WS + SS
Weekend Seminar / Retreat ( <i>changing topics</i> )	Student Seminar	SS
Introduction to Scholarly Research and Writing	Lecture with homework assignments	SS

\* WS = winter semester / SS = summer semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>The aim of this module is to introduce the students not only to current research in the field of neuroscience but also initiate and foster discussions among students and with guests and lecturers about a broad range of topics at the interface between neuroscience and society. In addition, a one-week interactive course will offer the opportunity to learn about, discuss and practice scholarly writing and good scientific conduct.</p> <p>The NeuroColloquium is a long-standing, fortnightly seminar series organized by the Tübingen neuroscience community. The seminar presents internationally renowned researchers from various fields of neuroscience. The talks have a review-like character providing an overview of state-of-the-art neuroscience topics, from genes to behaviour and new methodologies. Students will get the opportunity to choose speakers of their interest and meet with them before and after the talk.</p> <p>Once a year, the master students of the two Graduate Schools will jointly attend a Weekend Retreat where they present and discuss topics that are generally not part of their regular curricular course program such as: Sex Differences in the Brain, From Basic Science to Marketable Drugs, Neuroprosthetics, Executive Functions, Philosophy of Mind, Ethics in Neuroscience, and Animals in Neuroscience Research. The seminar topics are usually chosen cooperatively by students and Graduate School staff and do change every year.</p> <p>Furthermore, the module offers an one-week introduction into Scholarly Research and Scientific Writing. Here the motivation is that being a successful scientist requires more than great experimental skills and a deep understanding of methods; scientists have to be able to present their work convincingly to various audiences, including their fellow scientists, students and colleagues, the agencies who fund their work, but also the critical public that finances research with from taxes. In addition, successful science builds on a network of mutual trust and rules of conduct (good scientific practice) that every scientist is to adhere to. Learning about these aspects should be an integral part of becoming a scientist, nevertheless this still tends to be neglected in favour of the 'actual' research work.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>The NeuroColloquium introduces students to a wide range of neuroscience research and make them 'look beyond their own noses'. Of the 8 speakers visiting per semester, 2 speakers will be selected, invited and hosted by students of the Graduate Schools. By doing so, students actively participate in organizing a seminar series and will thereby gain organizational skills and social competence.</p> <p>After successful accomplishment of the retreat, students will have achieved skills that are required for scientific</p>

work in general, including literature search and preparation and presentation of a seminar talk on an unfamiliar topic. In addition to discussing scientific topics, these retreats are also meant as social events where students from the two master programs meet with scientists and lecturer in a beautiful setting and a relaxed ambiance to get to know each other and to potentially initiate local co-operations.

After passing the one-week scholarly writing course, the students will have acquired a good sense of the ethical standards in science and of the necessary skills to write scientific papers. They will have learned and practiced summarizing and assessing scientific reports and papers, graphical presentation of data, structuring talks and preparing effective slides and posters, presenting findings to a scientific audience, and preparing a CV and a statement of purpose. In addition, the students have learned about the principles and practice of good scholarship, and discussed research ethics, with the focus on animal experimentation.

#### Teaching methods

The NeuroColloquium is a seminar series with invited speakers. The retreat requires students to deal with unfamiliar neuroscience topics in more depth. The students present talks on selected topics. The core findings and conclusions of the presentation will be discussed after the talk. The one-week course is a hands-on mixture of presentations, discussions and practical exercises. The course work (9:00 – 13:00) is complete by homework for the afternoons, which will help preparing or introducing the next day's topics.

#### Prerequisites for participation

None.

#### Usability of the module

Compulsory module in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of the master program Neural Information Processing.

#### Module requirements, exams and grading scheme

For the NeuroColloquium, regular attendance is required. For the Weekend Seminar, successful participation requires, in addition to attendance of all talks of the seminar session, a presentation of a 30-minute talk on a selected topic including hand-out. For the Scholarly Writing course, attendance of the morning session and completion of the homework is required. This module is not graded (pass/fail).

Workload assessment and credit points		
Module element	Workload*	CPS**
NeuroColloquium (14 talks in total in WS and SS)	Co: 21h + As: 9h = 30h	1
Weekend Seminar / Retreat (2 days)	Co: 30h + Se: 30h = 60h	2
Introduction to Scholarly Research and Writing	Co: 20h + Re: 10h + As: 30h = 60h	2
		Total 5

\* Co=contact time in class, Re=review after class, As=assignments/homework, Se=preparation of seminar presentation

\*\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point

<b>Module</b>		<b>Code: NIP-08</b>	<b>ECTS Credit points</b>
<b>Electives</b>			<b>9</b>
<b>Module coordinator</b> PD Dr. Marc Himmelbach		<b>Contact</b> Graduate Training Centre of Neuroscience <a href="mailto:marc.himmelbach@uni-tuebingen.de">marc.himmelbach@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071-29 77177	
<b>Duration of module</b> 2 Semesters		<b>Cycle</b> Annually	

<b>Module elements</b>		
<b>Course title</b>	<b>Course type</b>	<b>Semester*</b>
Elective Courses	n.a.	WS / SS

\* WS = winter semester, SS = summer semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>Depending on the subjects of their previous training and/or their particular interests, students are free to choose courses from the masters programs Neural and Behavioural Sciences or Neural Information Processing or from any other masters program offered at Tübingen University. The electives may comprise advanced neuroscience or neuroscience methods courses, statistics or programming courses as well as courses on ethical, philosophical or related issues. Before the start of the term, students will be provided with a list of selected courses to choose from. Courses selected by a student have to be approved beforehand by the module coordinator.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>The electives will impart students with specific knowledge and competencies in subject areas of their choice and may either deepen their knowledge in fields of their specialization or complement the training already provided with the compulsory curricular courses. By doing so, students can pursue their broad interest and can understand contexts and co-relations beyond the limits of their major discipline and, depending of the topics chosen, students will be imparted to discuss research topics interdisciplinary.</p>
<p><b>Teaching methods</b></p> <p>Depends on the type of course selected.</p>

<p><b>Prerequisites for participation</b></p> <p>Depending on the type of course selected. The course coordinator must approve the subjects of choice.</p>
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<p><b>Usability of the module</b></p> <p>Compulsory module in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the master program Neural Information Processing.</p>
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<p><b>Module requirements, exams and grading scheme</b></p> <p>According to the specifications provided in the module description of the respective masters program.</p>
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<b>Workload assessment and credit points</b>		
<b>Module element</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>CPS*</b>
Elective Courses	270h	9
		<b>Total 9</b>

\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point

<b>Module</b>		<b>Code: NIP-09</b>	<b>ECTS Credit points</b>
<b>Essay Rotation / Laboratory Rotation</b>			<b>25</b>
<b>Module coordinator</b> PD Dr. Marc Himmelbach		<b>Contact</b> Graduate Training Centre of Neuroscience <a href="mailto:marc.himmelbach@uni-tuebingen.de">marc.himmelbach@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071-29 77177	
<b>Duration of module</b> 1 Semester / 18 Weeks		<b>Cycle</b> Annually	

<b>Module elements</b>		
<b>Course title</b>	<b>Course type</b>	<b>Semester*</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Rotation ( <i>Essay Rotation</i> )	Practical	WS
+ Presentation of Essay Projects	Student Seminar	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Rotation ( <i>Laboratory Rotation</i> )	Practical	WS
+ Presentation of Laboratory Projects	Student Seminar	

\* WS = winter semester

<p><b>Module content</b></p> <p>Students are required to perform two rotations (18 weeks total, all day) where they work on small projects in research groups of their choice. In general, the assigned study is in line with currently ongoing research in the respective laboratory and supervised by an advanced doctoral student or a postdoc. Both, essay and lab project have to be concluded with a written report (formatted like a scientific paper) and with an oral presentation in the course of a seminar which provides a platform for the students to present their research projects done during the rotations. The curriculum requires students to perform one theoretical (essay) and one experimental (laboratory) rotation, which- ideally - should be performed in different research groups with distinct scientific questions and different methods.</p>
<p><b>Qualification goals / learning targets</b></p> <p>During the rotations, students will acquire a wide range of practical skills in state-of-the-art methods and they get to know current scientific questions and research approaches. The skills trained during lab rotations include literature survey, planning of research projects and design of experiments, documentation of data generated, critical evaluation and interpretation of results, compiling data for and writing of a report and, also, train social competences during collaboration with other members of the hosting research group. In the end, students have also learned to prepare and give an oral presentation on their research project and to defend their findings in discussions after the talk.</p>
<p><b>Teaching methods</b></p> <p>Supervised practical training in laboratories, including reading of research papers, writing of a report formatted like a scientific paper, oral presentation and discussion of the research findings. The student's progress is monitored through weekly meetings with her/his supervisor.</p>

<p><b>Prerequisites for participation</b></p> <p>Successful completion of the winter and summer (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>) semester modules and project-specific knowledge gained in the winter and/or summer semester.</p>
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**Usability of the module**

Compulsory module in the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester of the master program Neural Information Processing.

**Module requirements, exams and grading scheme**

The student's performance in the essay rotation will be assessed and graded by the supervisor according to the following criteria: Written report (80%), oral presentation of the project and discussion in the seminar (20%). The student's performance in the laboratory rotation will also be assessed and graded by the supervisor according to the following criteria: understanding of theoretical framework and literature overview (15%), practical work in the research group (30%), generation of own ideas (10%), oral presentation of the project and discussion in the seminar (15%), written lab report (30%). A relevant form will be provided.

Workload assessment and credit points		
Module element	Workload *	CPS**
Essay Rotation	Co: 6w = 240h	8
Writing of essay, preparing presentation, seminar	LR/Se: 7d = 56h	2
Laboratory Rotation	Co: 10w = 400h	13
Writing of lab report, preparing presentation, seminar	LR/Se: 7d = 56h	2
	Total 752 h	25

\* Co=contact time in laboratory, LR=writing of laboratory report, Se=preparation of seminar presentation + seminar

\*\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point (w=weeks, d=days, h=hours)

<b>Module</b>		<b>Code: NIP-10</b>	<b>ECTS Credit points</b>
<b>Master Thesis</b>			<b>30</b>
<b>Module coordinator</b> PD Dr. Marc Himmelbach	<b>Contact</b> Graduate Training Centre of Neuroscience <a href="mailto:marc.himmelbach@uni-tuebingen.de">marc.himmelbach@uni-tuebingen.de</a> phone 07071-29 77177		
<b>Duration of module</b> 1 Semester / 6 Months	Cycle n.a.		

<b>Course title</b>	<b>Course type</b>	<b>Semester*</b>
Experimental Master Thesis	Research project	SS

\*SS = summer semester

**Module content**  
To complete their studies, students are required to prepare a master thesis in a research group of their choice. In general, the assigned study is in line with currently on-going research in the respective laboratory and supervised by the group leader or at least by an advanced postdoc. The experimental master thesis will train students to perform research more or less independently within the given period of time. The master's project will be concluded with a written thesis formatted like a scientific paper.

**Qualification goals / learning targets**  
After successful completion of the master thesis, students have acquired profound practical skills in state-of-the-art methods applied in neuroscience. They are acquainted with current neuroscientific questions and recent publications in this particular field. They are trained in generating and analysing scientific data and writing a scientific report. In addition to scientific expertise, students will acquire soft skills, such as time and project management, working in international, interdisciplinary teams, English communication and writing skills, and rules of responsible conduct of research. Overall, with successful completion of the master thesis, students proof their scientific competence and demonstrate that they are well prepared to tackle demanding research projects such as, for example, a doctoral thesis (see also qualification goals of module NIP-09).

**Teaching methods**  
Supervised practical training in a research group, reading of research papers and writing of a master thesis.

**Prerequisites for participation**  
Successful completion of all theoretical (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester) and practical course requirements (3<sup>rd</sup> semester).

**Usability of the module**  
Compulsory module in the 4<sup>th</sup> semester of the master course Neural Information Processing.

**Module requirements, exams and grading scheme**  
Students are required to submit - after 6 months of work - 3 copies of their thesis to the office of the Graduate School. At the student's request and upon hearing the supervisor, the examination board may grant an extension of the submission deadline for up to 4 weeks at most. Two readers, one of which is the supervisor, will evaluate the thesis. The examination board will appoint the second reader.

<b>Workload assessment and credit points</b>		
<b>Module element</b>	<b>Workload</b>	<b>CPs*</b>
Master Thesis	23w x 5d x 8h = 920 h	<b>30</b>

\* 30 hours workload = 1 ECTS credit point (w=weeks, d=days, h=hours)