

Editorial

New Mentored Journal Club

The Journal of Neuroscience's Journal Clubs have been popular since their inception in 2006. These articles are written by graduate students and postdocs and highlight research recently published in the journal. The feature was developed to provide graduate students and postdocs the opportunity to publish articles on their own, while also promoting important findings to a broader audience.

We are now changing the Journal Club feature in hopes of providing an even more rewarding and educational experience for authors. Specifically, we will provide more guidance to authors as they develop their articles, first by asking authors to submit an outline of their proposed article before getting into the nitty gritty of writing; and second, by pairing authors with a mentor that will help them to identify the most important results and implications of the highlighted article and to organize their thoughts into an easily accessible Journal Club. For this new process to succeed, there will be a monthly cap on the number of submissions that we consider, so we don't exhaust our mentor pool.

To begin, prospective authors (graduate students and postdocs only) should select an article published in *JNeurosci* within the past month that they think is worth bringing to the attention of a broader audience. They should write to jn@sfn.org to indicate what paper they would like to highlight and provide a brief description of any related experience they have (e.g., coursework or research). If no one else has reserved the desired article, the prospective authors will be invited to prepare a brief outline of the proposed article and select a mentor, either from our mentor pool or from their own institution. *JNeurosci* editors will review the outline and make any suggestions for reorganization or additional topics to cover. The authors will then write a draft of the Journal Club, which will be shared with the mentor. The mentor will provide feedback on content and organization after reading the highlighted article themselves. Finally, when the mentor and authors agree that the Journal Club is ready, authors will submit via the *JNeurosci* submission site. The editors will review the submission and ask for revisions as necessary.

It is important to note that the mentor will not be an author on the Journal Club but will guide trainees in writing an accurate and insightful article through the outlined process. The mentor will be acknowledged as such in the published article and will receive a letter of appreciation that they may wish to

use as documentation of community service. New mentors selected by prospective authors will be provided with mentoring guidelines developed with the intention of building mentorship skills.

The criteria for acceptance of a Journal Club will be similar to those that have been in place from the beginning. The article must provide an introduction that sets the stage for the specific questions being addressed in the highlighted study, including introduction to any proteins, brain areas, or behaviors that are featured in the study. After a clear statement of the objective of the study, the Journal Club should describe the most important results of the paper, not necessarily every figure. The Journal Club should then provide a summary of the main findings and conclusions. From there, the piece should discuss how the findings fit into a broader understanding of the question at hand, ideally suggesting hypotheses, describing how those hypotheses could be tested, and discussing potential results of those experiments and their implications. The Journal Club may also discuss important limitations to the conclusions, particularly if those are not obvious to most researchers.

The Journal Club has been a longstanding and unique feature of *JNeurosci*. The new Journal Club process is intended to be an enriching activity for both authors and their mentors, to provide networking opportunities for Journal Club authors, and to be a positive learning experience in developing scientific writing skills. We hope that our community will embrace the new mentored Journal Club, and we look forward to guiding the editorial process of this feature.

We encourage you to read more about these and other important changes to the Journal Club, including changes to publication fees that make this feature accessible and equitable for all early career researchers, in the Instructions for Authors (<https://www.jneurosci.org/content/jneurosci-journal-club>).

In Science,
Teresa and Sabine

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