Guidelines for CNS Honors Thesis

The CNS Honors Thesis should be written in the same general format as a J. Neuroscience Paper but including a longer and more comprehensive introduction that describes the state of general field that the work addresses in addition to the rational of the specific study or investigation that is at the heart of the thesis document.

Page requirements: The thesis should be written double spaced and should be approximately 25 to 40 pages in length including references figures, figure legends and tables.

Levels of Honors: We recognize 2 levels of honors in CNS - high honors and honors. Typically approximately the top 20% of the theses submitted will be given the designation high honors.

Specific recommendations for formatting:
1) Abstract: (~400 words) adequately summarizing the content of the thesis without introducing information not covered in the thesis.
2) Introduction: This part of the document should be longer and more comprehensive than a typical journal article, providing background and significance in support of the research aims as well as a larger and more comprehensive background of the general field of study into which this particular experiment fits. It should be on the order of 7-12 pages in length. This is a key part of the dissertation and is meant to show the breadth of knowledge the student has about his/her area of study.
3) Methods: a complete account of procedures and equipment, and including a statement of use of animal and/or human subjects (as applicable). Certain methodological information might be better placed in an appendix (e.g., a data entry sheet; computation details, etc). Looking at the subheadings in many JN papers gives a good guide as how to develop their methods section.
4) Results: a description of the results without discussion. In the case where the research is not complete, this section can consist of a detailed description of possible anticipated findings.
5) Discussion: an interpretation of the data consistent with the broad introduction. We recognize that discussion sections may be limited if results involved anticipated results, but the discussion should include possible outcomes and a discussion of the significance of those possible outcomes.
6) Acknowledgements and Disclosures: should fully identify who did what. Sometimes the student was the primary person for each part of the research, but sometimes another lab member takes the lead on one or more components. This point should be made clear.
7) References: a complete list of articles actually cited in the thesis, and formatted in J. Neurosci. citation format. The body of the paper would also cite references following J. Neurosci format.
8) Figures and figure legends: Follow the standard J. Neurosci requirements for figure size, style and content. Simple figures should not take more than about half a page maximum.

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