

Spotlight on Neuroscience | Synaptic plasticity

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Dr. Tom Otis

Sainsbury Wellcome Centre

Tom Otis, Ph.D. is the Chief Scientific Officer at the Sainsbury Wellcome Centre for Neural Circuits and Behaviour and holds a Professorship in Neuroscience at University College London. Tom received his B.S. and M.Sc. degrees in Biological Sciences in 1988 and his Ph.D. degree in Neuroscience in 1993 all from Stanford University. Prior to SWC/UCL, he led a team of 45 scientists conducting early-stage drug development in neurodevelopmental disorders and psychiatry at Hoffman La Roche Pharmaceutical Company. Before Roche he served as the Edith Agnes Plumb Chair of the Department of Neurobiology at the University of California, Los Angeles. His research has focused on cellular and circuit function of the cerebellum and hippocampus, motor systems function and motor learning, and preclinical models of the neurological disorders spinocerebellar ataxia and amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.



Dr. Jennifer Y Sun

UCL Institute of Ophthalmology

Dr. Sun recently joined University College London as a Lecturer (aka Assistant Professor) to lead the Visual Plasticity Lab based at Institute of Ophthalmology.

Jennifer obtained her PhD from University of Southern California studying sensory cortical development and circuit computation using computational and

systems approaches. During her postdoc work at UCSF, she focused on the cellular and circuit mechanisms of neuroplasticity in developing and adult brain.

At UCL, her group Visual Plasticity Lab is looking into how neuroplasticity in the visual systems is regulated by visual and non-visual cues. To this end, they apply state-of-art imaging techniques, together with molecular, physiological, and computational approaches, to understand the basis of visual cortical plasticity.



Dr. Dion Dickman

University of Southern California

Dion Dickman is an Associate Professor of Neurobiology at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Dr. Dickman was born in Hawaii and did his undergraduate work at Washington University in St. Louis, studying synaptogenesis at the mouse neuromuscular junction in the lab of Josh Sanes. He earned his PhD in Neuroscience at Harvard University, where he characterized molecular and cellular mechanisms of synaptic transmission and membrane recycling under the mentorship of Tom Schwarz. Dr. Dickman did his postdoctoral training at UCSF with Graeme Davis, where he pioneered forward genetic approaches based on electrophysiology to reveal genes necessary for the homeostatic control of synaptic plasticity using the *Drosophila* neuromuscular junction as a model system. His lab is interested in the molecular mechanisms that achieve and maintain stable synaptic function using a combination of genetic, electrophysiological, pharmacological, and imaging approaches.