

Monthly Neuro Seminar Series

Spring 2026



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States, Traits & Developmental Precursors: A Neurocognitive Perspective on Substance Use

This seminar will present a neurocognitive perspective on substance use, with a focus on how brain function changes during certain states, such as nicotine withdrawal, and how neurodevelopmental trajectories may confer risk for early substance use. I will first highlight work that distinguishes neurobiological processes linked with trait-level addiction severity from those linked with state-level nicotine withdrawal, and will discuss the role of a critical nucleus, the habenula, in specific aspects of tobacco use disorder. I will then describe plans to advance this work by characterizing neurocognitive mechanisms and consequences of nicotine withdrawal among electronic nicotine delivery system users. Next, I will shift to a discussion of neurodevelopmental trajectories that are associated with substance use initiation among adolescents. Specifically, I will report a series of longitudinal neuroimaging studies that suggest interacting neurodevelopmental and socioenvironmental pathways toward substance use vulnerability.

Tuesday, March 3
4:00 p.m.
SLC 285



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