

Doctoral Program in Neuroscience

Name of the degree to be conferred	Doctor of Philosophy in Neuroscience
Educational purpose	To train researchers and highly skilled professionals as experts in neuroscience who have a broad academic basis in brain function and who can contribute to the understanding of the human mind as a higher brain function.
Vision of human resources development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals who have the highest level of expertise and analytical skills in normal and impaired brain functions and who can promote basic and applied research. • Individuals who can contribute to the resolution of various mental and behavioral issues in modern society based on specialized and interdisciplinary insights in a wide range of neuroscience fields. • Individuals who can drive human resource development and interdisciplinary research at educational and research institutions at home and abroad. • Individuals who have the awareness, self-management skills and individuals to act as professionals in the field of neuroscience based on researcher ethics.
Competencies specified in diploma policy	Evaluation perspectives
1. Knowledge creation competence: Ability to create new knowledge that can contribute to future society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Are there any research findings that can be considered new knowledge? ② Can we expect you to create knowledge that will contribute to future society?
2. Management competence: Ability to plan and implement measures to identify and solve challenges from a higher perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Can you make and implement long-term plans for critical challenges? ② Can you identify challenges, even in other areas of expertise, and solve them from a higher perspective?
3. Communication competence: Ability to express the true nature of academic findings positively and clearly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Can you explain the true nature of research content and specialized knowledge clearly and logically to researchers from different areas and to people other than researchers? ② Do you proactively share your findings with researchers and experts from your field of expertise and accurately answer questions?
4. Leadership competence: Ability to have objectives get accomplished under your leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Can you set attractive and compelling goals? ② Are you capable of building systems to realize goals and accomplish objectives as the leader?
5. Internationality competence: Possession of a high level of awareness and motivation to be internationally active and contribute to international society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Do you have strong awareness and motivation to contribute to international society and international activities? ② Have you obtained adequate linguistic skills for international information collection and action?
6. High level of expertise: Expertise in the neurosciences to develop and implement advanced research designs and produce superior research results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Can the student identify new challenges based on expertise in the field of neuroscience? ② Can the student develop and implement a research plan to solve the problems found?
7. Advanced research skills: Ability to conduct advanced research (experiments and surveys) in human and animal subjects in the field of neuroscience based on research ethics.	Can the student use advanced research methods in the field of neuroscience to solve research problems?
8. Research information gathering and dissemination skills: Ability to write, express, and debate in English appropriately to present and discuss research findings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Can the student grasp the latest research trends in the field of neuroscience published in international journals and apply them to their own research? ② Can the student accurately explain their expertise and research results in the field of neuroscience in an international context?
9. Practical research skills: Planning and leadership skills to apply expertise in the field of neuroscience to implement activities to solve real-world problems.	Can the student apply their expertise in the field of neuroscience to practice and lead activities to solve problems in the real world?
10. Ability to promote the planning, implementation, and dissemination of advanced research in the field of neuroscience based on logical thinking.	Can the student plan, conduct, and disseminate the results of advanced research in the field of neuroscience based on logical thinking?

Dissertation evaluation criteria

After satisfying the requirements stipulated in the University of Tsukuba's Graduate School Regulations, the dissertation must be judged as acceptable with the following two criteria confirmed by the final examination.

1. The dissertation must contain sufficient new academic knowledge in the field of neuroscience.
2. The applicant must have the high level of research skills necessary to work as an independent researcher in the field of neuroscience.

(Evaluation items)

1. Based on understanding of research trend in and outside Japan preceding research in relevant area, the significance and positioning of the said research in neuroscience is clearly described.
2. Contain a reasonable amount of original research findings that contribute to the advancement of the field of neuroscience to be published in academic papers.
3. Reliability of research outcomes have been sufficiently verified based on sufficient knowledge regarding research integrity.
4. Consideration for the research outcomes is reasonable and their conclusions are based on objective grounds.
5. Background, purpose, method, results and conclusions etc. of the research shall be summarized in an appropriate form as doctoral dissertation in the area of neuroscience. Those who wish to apply for a dissertation review must pass a preliminary examination in their department.

(System for examiner/examination method)

The dissertation review committee consists of four members, including three faculty members from the degree program (the primary advisor is one of the research supervisors) and one faculty member from outside the degree program. All members attend the final examination, which consists of an oral examination on the dissertation and related fields, and pass/fail decisions are made.

Curriculum Policy

1) Research skills based on the mastery of specialized knowledge and research methods in all areas of neuroscience; 2) Logical thinking skills, writing skills, advanced English expression skills, debating skills; 3) Communication and planning skills required for collaboration with experts in other fields; 4) Understanding and practice of research ethics, self-management skills and research leadership skills as a researcher; 5) The Basic curriculum is designed to help students acquire the ability to disseminate the results of scientific research to society, and the awareness and the human skills to support them as professionals who are sensitive and sincere in dealing with the mental challenges that society faces.

Curriculum organization policy

- In this course, the "Career Plan, Researcher Ethics, and TF Training Seminar" is a compulsory subject to develop a foundation for professional researchers and educators in neuroscience. In particular, students will be encouraged to clarify their career plans and strengthen their self-management skills through the use of MyIDP and other tools.
- In addition, students are encouraged to take open-ended subjects such as the "Foundation Courses" (free choice of subjects), "Introduction to Academic Integrity" and "Applied Ethics" as common subjects for the graduate school, in order to cultivate a broader perspective and to cultivate flexible thinking and research planning skills that are not limited by existing academic systems.
- Our department offers "Advanced Scientific Research Proposal in English" as a Foundation Subject for Major, and fosters advanced scientific English skills that will contribute to the writing of English papers and doctoral dissertations, as well as communication and debate at international conferences and in international collaborative research.
- The "Advanced Neuroscience Seminar" where students participate in research seminars held by internal and external research organizations, and the "Advanced Neuroscience Internship" where students are encouraged to participate in training courses offered by national and international educational and research institutions, to encourage the acquisition of cutting-edge techniques and knowledge that are essential for specialized research in neuroscience, and to give students hands-on experience of research activities in practical settings.
- The students will develop their research leadership skills through TF experience as a review/discussion of Introduction to Neuroscience, an introductory course in the Master's Program, an English Journal Club, and as a facilitator in an advanced neuroscience research seminar.
- "Neuroscience Dissertation Research" is offered in six compulsory courses to guide students through the process of deciding on a doctoral dissertation research topic, conducting research, three doctoral research qualifying exams, doctoral dissertation writing, doctoral dissertation final examinations, final public presentation of the doctoral dissertation, and obtaining the doctoral degree in a step-by-step manner, in order to ensure the quality and completion of degrees within the standard time frame.

Learning methods · Processes	<p>Learning in the first year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are required to take the " Career Planning, Researcher Ethics, and TF Training Seminar" held immediately after enrollment and formulate their own academic and career plans up to and after the completion of the doctoral course. In addition to learning about researcher ethics, students will also attend a basic course on researcher ethics in order to be involved in teaching first semester courses as a TF. • Acquire a broad perspective as a researcher by taking "The Inter-disciplinary Foundation Courses (free choice of subjects). • Students will acquire advanced communication, debating, and reading skills in English, as well as specialized and advanced knowledge and research methods in neuroscience by taking compulsory courses in "Advanced Scientific Research Proposal in English 1" and "Advanced Neuroscience Seminar 1". Students also take "Advanced Neuroscience Internship" to gain research experience at universities and research institutions in Japan and abroad. • Students are required to take "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 1" to determine the theme of their doctoral research, conduct literature research and preliminary research. "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 2" is to advance doctoral research. At the same time, preparation for the Qualifying Examination for Doctoral Dissertation Research (QE1) will proceed. <p>Learning after 2nd year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students take compulsory courses in "Advanced Neuroscience Seminar 2", "Advanced Scientific Research Proposal in English 2", free courses in "Advanced Neuroscience Seminar 3", and courses in "Foundation Courses (free choice of courses)" and other degree programs to further their studies as neuroscientists. • Students are required to take "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 3" to advance their doctoral research. At the same time, prepare for the Qualifying Examination for Doctoral Dissertation 2 (QE2). During "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 4," students will do research for their doctoral dissertations. At the same time, students prepare for the Qualifying Examination for Doctoral Dissertation 3 (QE3) and prepare for submission to an international journal. • Students complete "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 5" and work on their doctoral dissertation. In "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 6," students complete their doctoral dissertation. At the same time, they prepare for the final doctoral examination and the final public presentation of the doctoral dissertation.
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Evaluation of learning outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The evaluation of courses other than "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 2-6" will be conducted according to the evaluation method described in the syllabus. • In addition to the grades given by the academic advisor, courses in "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 2-6" will be evaluated according to the following, and credits will be awarded. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 2": Perform neuroscience dissertation research qualification examination 1 (QE1). Only successful applicants will be awarded credits for Neuroscience Dissertation Research 2. (2) "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 3": Perform neuroscience dissertation research qualification examination 2 (QE2). Only successful applicants will be awarded credits for neuroscience dissertation research 3. (3) "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 4": Perform neuroscience dissertation research qualification examination 3 (QE3). Only successful applicants will be awarded credits for neuroscience dissertation research 4. (4) "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 5": Credit for neuroscience dissertation research 5 will be granted only to those who have been accepted (or is judged to be equivalent) to present one refereed English-language paper as first author, which is a requirement for neuroscience dissertation submission. (5) "Neuroscience Dissertation Research 6": The final examination for neuroscience dissertation research will be conducted. It consists of a public presentation and oral examination based on the submitted neuroscience dissertation in dissertation format.
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Admission Policy

Desired students	Applicants must have majored in neuroscience, psychology, disability science, biology, or basic medicine in the master's course. Applicants must have achieved a certain level of proficiency in the master's course and have the ability and desire to become independent researchers after completion of the course.
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Selection policy	The entrance examination will be conducted through an oral examination. The following qualities will be emphasized in the selection process: (1) content and understanding of the research conducted in the master's course, (2) research planning ability, and (3) presentation ability.
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