

Randall J. Ellis, PhD

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Education

Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, NY

August 2017-September 2022

Doctor of Philosophy, Biomedical Science

Focus: Behavioral and molecular neuroscience, computational biology, biomedical informatics

Thesis Advisor: Yasmin L. Hurd, PhD

Florida Atlantic University (FAU), Boca Raton, FL

August 2010-December 2014

Bachelor of Science, *cum laude*, Neuroscience & Behavior

Minor, Psychology

Research Experience

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Biomedical Informatics at Harvard Medical School

October 2023-present

Laboratory of Chirag Patel, PhD

Studying aging and neurodegeneration using single-cell multi-omics, neuroimaging, and electronic health records

Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Biology at Tufts University

January 2023-October 2023

Laboratory of Michael Levin, PhD

Studying neuronal signaling and limb regeneration using computational neuroscience, next-generation sequencing, and microfluidics

Graduate student, Friedman Brain Institute at Mount Sinai

July 2018-January 2023

Laboratory of Yasmin L. Hurd, PhD

Studying the clinical, behavioral, and molecular underpinnings of opioid use disorder

Graduate rotation student, Department of Pharmacology at Mount Sinai

October 2017-June 2018

Laboratory of Avi Ma'ayan, PhD

Studying the application of machine learning to predict diagnosis of substance use disorders

Postbaccalaureate Intramural Research Training Award (IRTA), National Institute on

Drug Abuse, Baltimore, MD

August 2015-August 2017

Laboratory of Michael Michaelides, PhD

Studying the identification of molecular targets of cocaine and the application of machine learning to decoding natural scenes from neuronal calcium responses

Undergraduate Research Assistant, Center for Complex Systems and Brain Sciences at May

2013-January 2015

Florida Atlantic University

Laboratory of Robert P. Vertes, PhD

Studying the effects of midline thalamic lesions on odor/texture discrimination and the effects of dextromethorphan on depressive-like phenotypes

Undergraduate Research Assistant, Center for Complex Systems and Brain Sciences at Florida Atlantic University
January 2013-May 2013
Laboratory of J.A. Scott Kelso, PhD Studying human-machine motor Coordination

Research Grants

08/09/2021 – 01/30/2023 (early term.) NIH F31DA051183 (NIDA) Role: PI

Project Title: Opioid effects on cognition and addiction: Molecular underpinnings

07/18/2019 – 06/30/2020 NIH T32GM062754 (NIGMS) Role: Trainee

07/01/2020 – 06/30/2021 (Reappt.)

Project Title: Teaching Biomedical and Pharmacological Trainees to Produce FAIR Data for AI & ML Applications

Publications

[Google Scholar](#) | [ORCID](#)

Ellis, R. J. Questionable research practices, low statistical power, and other obstacles to reproducibility: why preclinical animal research would benefit from registered reports. *eNeuro* (2022).

Ellis, R. J., Sander, R., Limon, A. Twelve key challenges in medical machine learning and solutions. Invited commentary for Special Issue on Challenges in Machine Learning Research, *Intelligence-based Medicine*.

Ferland, J.-M. N., **Ellis, R. J.**, et al. Long-Term Outcomes of Adolescent THC Exposure on Translational Cognitive Measures in Adulthood in an Animal Model and Computational Assessment of Human Data. *JAMA Psychiatry*, 80(1), 66-76 (2023).

Ferland, J.-M. N., **Ellis, R. J.**, Rompala, G., Landry, J. A., Callens, J. E., Ly, A., Frier, M. D., Uzamere, T. O., Hurd, Y. L. Dose mediates the protracted effects of adolescent THC exposure on reward and stress reactivity in males relevant to perturbation of the basolateral amygdala transcriptome. *Molecular Psychiatry* (2022).

Ellis, R. J.*, Bara, A.*, Vargas, C. A.*, Frick, A. L., Loh, E., Landry, J., Uzamere, T. O., Callens, J. E., Martin, Q., Rajarajan, P., Brennand, K., Ramakrishnan, A., Shen, L., Szutorisz, H. & Hurd, Y. L. Prenatal $\Delta 9$ -tetrahydrocannabinol exposure in males leads to motivational disturbances related to striatal epigenetic dysregulation. *Biological Psychiatry* (2021).

Gomez, J. L., Bonaventura, J., Keighron, J., Wright, K. M., Marable, D. L., Rodriguez, L. A., Lam, S., Carlton, M. L., **Ellis, R. J.**, Jordan, C. J., Bi, G., Solis, O., Pignatelli, M., Bannon, M. J., Xi, Z.-X., Tanda, G. & Michaelides, M. Synaptic Zn^{2+} potentiates the effects of cocaine on striatal dopamine neurotransmission and behavior. *Translational Psychiatry* 11, 570 (2021).

Ellis, R. J., Rahman, T., Sherman, J. & Hurd, Y. L. SnapShot: Neurobiology of opioid use disorder. *Cell* 184, 1648-1648.e1 (2021).

Suprun, M., **Ellis, R. J.**, Sampson, H. A. & Suárez-Fariñas, M. bbeaR: an R package and framework for epitope-specific antibody profiling. *Bioinformatics* 37, 131–133 (2021).

Egervari, G., Akpoyibo, D., Rahman, T., Fullard, J. F., Callens, J. E., Landry, J. A., Ly, A., Zhou, X., Warren, N., Hauberg, M. E., Hoffman, G., **Ellis, R.**, Ferland, J.-M. N., Miller, M. L., Keller, E., Zhang, B.,

Roussos, P. & Hurd, Y. L. Chromatin accessibility mapping of the striatum identifies tyrosine kinase FYN as a therapeutic target for heroin use disorder. *Nature Communications* 11, 1–15 (2020).

Ellis, R. J., Wang, Z., Genes, N. & Ma'ayan, A. Predicting opioid dependence from electronic health records with machine learning. *BioData Mining* 12, 3 (2019).

Michaelides, M., Miller, M. L., Egervari, G., Primeaux, S. D., Gomez, J. L., **Ellis, R. J.**, Landry, J. A., Szutorisz, H., Hoffman, A. F., Lupica, C. R., Loos, R. J. F., Thanos, P. K., Bray, G. A., Neumaier, J. F., Zachariou, V., Wang, G.-J., Volkow, N. D. & Hurd, Y. L. Striatal Rgs4 regulates feeding and susceptibility to diet-induced obesity. *Mol Psychiatry* 25, 2058–2069 (2018).

Ellis, R. J. & Michaelides, M. High-accuracy Decoding of Complex Visual Scenes from Neuronal Calcium Responses. *bioRxiv* 271296 (2018).

Ellis, R. J., Michaelides, M. & Wang, G.-J. Neurodysfunction in Addiction and Overeating as Assessed by Brain Imaging. in *Processed Food Addiction: Foundations, Assessment, and Recovery* (CRC Press, 2017).

Gomez, J. L., Bonaventura, J., Lesniak, W., Mathews, W. B., Sysa-Shah, P., Rodriguez, L. A., **Ellis, R. J.**, Richie, C. T., Harvey, B. K., Dannals, R. F., Pomper, M. G., Bonci, A. & Michaelides, M. Chemogenetics revealed: DREADD occupancy and activation via converted clozapine. *Science* 357, 503–507 (2017).

Reviewer Experience

Editorial Board member of Intelligence-Based Medicine (Elsevier)

September 2020-present

Reviewed 120+ papers on clinical machine learning

Reviewed for Annals of Medicine, Nature Scientific Reports, eNeuro

Professional Experience

Teaching Assistant, Neuromatch Academy Computational Neuroscience, July 2021

Facilitated ten graduate, undergraduate, and postdoctoral students through three weeks of online tutorials and group projects

Freelance grant consultant on NIH grants involving neuroscience, computational biology, and machine learning, 2020-present

Instructor, two 6-week Python courses for middle school students, Summer 2020-2021

Private tutor, Python and machine learning for data scientists, postdocs, and students at graduate, undergraduate and high school levels, 2018-present

EEG Neurofeedback Technician, Caron Renaissance, Boca Raton, FL *Conducted EEG neurofeedback as part of a clinical team treating addiction and other psychiatric and behavioral disorders*, January-August 2015

Awards & Honors

GENEWIZ NextGenSeqers Grant, \$5000 for next-generation sequencing, May 2021

Interviewed by the Allen Institute for Brain Science about work on decoding natural scenes from neuronal calcium responses ([video](#)), November 2018

NIH Postbaccalaureate Intramural Research Training Award: Two-year fellowship at the National Institute on Drug Abuse under Michael Michaelides, PhD. August 2015-August 2017

2nd Place in the Biological Sciences, Oral Presentation category at Florida Atlantic University's Undergraduate Research Symposium for "Antidepressant Efficacy of Dextromethorphan in the Forced Swim Test." April 2015

Graduated Cum Laude – Florida Atlantic University, December 2014

Undergraduate Research Grant (April 2014) to assess the effects of an NMDA antagonist, dextromethorphan, on a pre-clinical depression assay, the Porsolt forced swim test.

Phi Kappa Phi

Oral Presentations

Genomic prediction of alcohol and opioid use disorders using machine learning

Ellis, RJ, Zhou, H, Galimberti, M, Kranzler, HR, Gelernter, J, Hurd, YL.

- NIDA Genetics and Epigenetics Cross-Cutting Research Team Meeting, March 2021

Antidepressant Efficacy of Dextromethorphan in the Forced Swim Test

Ellis, RJ, Vertes, RP.

- FAU's Fifth Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, Boca Raton, FL, April 2015

Frequency Coordination in Virtual Partner Interaction

Ellis, RJ, Dumas, G, Tognoli, E, Kelso, JA.

- FAU's Third Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, Boca Raton, FL, April 2013

Posters

Machine Learning Identifies SHISA7 as a Translational Target of Heroin Abuse Directly Relevant to Drug-Seeking and Reversal Learning

Ellis, RJ, Ferland, JMN, Landry, JA, Callens, JE, Uzamere, TO, Pandey, G, Hurd, YL.

- Innovators in Neuroscience: From Molecules to Mind, Columbia/Mount Sinai, May 25-26, 2021
- Friedman Brain Institute's 13th Annual Neuroscience Retreat, Mount Sinai, April 30, 2021

Fyn Kinase Linked to Glutamatergic Related Synaptic Alterations and Tau Pathology in the Striatum of Human Heroin Abusers

Ellis, RJ, Akpoyibo, D, Egervari, G, Landry, J, Callens, J, Roussos, P, Hurd, YL.

- Annual Neuroscience Retreat at Mount Sinai, New York, NY, May 2019

High-accuracy decoding of complex visual scenes from neuronal calcium responses

Ellis, RJ, Michaelides, M.

- Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 2018

Prediction of Substance Dependence Status from Electronic Health Records with Machine Learning

Ellis, RJ, Wang, Z, Genes, N, Ma'ayan, A.

- Intelligent Systems in Molecular Biology, Chicago, IL, July 2018

- BD2K-LINCS Data Science Symposium, Miami, FL, February 2018

Visual Decoding of Neuronal Calcium Responses Using Deep Neural Networks

Ellis, RJ, Michaelides, M.

- Inaugural Conference on Cognitive Computational Neuroscience, Columbia University, New York, NY, September 2017

Empirical validation of cocaine targets in the striatum identified using big data

Ellis, RJ, Gomez, JL, Rodriguez, LA, Michaelides, M.

- Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 2017
- NIH Postbac Poster Day, Bethesda, MD, June 2016, 2017
- NIDA Poster Day, Baltimore, MD, May 2016, 2017

A bioinformatic pipeline for the discovery of translational targets relevant to cocaine abuse

Ellis, RJ, Gomez, JL, Rodriguez, LA, Michaelides, M.

- Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA, November 2016

The Cocaine Ignorome: Assessing Differential Gene Expression Predicted via Bioinformatic Analysis

Ellis, RJ, Gomez, JL, Rodriguez, LA, Michaelides, M.

- Johns Hopkins Behavioral Pharmacology Research Unit Symposia, July 2016

Antidepressant Efficacy of Dextromethorphan in the Forced Swim Test

Ellis, RJ, Vertes, RP.

- Synapse Poster Session at Max Planck Florida Institute, Jupiter, FL, January 2015
- Florida Undergraduate Research Conference, Daytona, FL, February 2015

Effects of Electrolytic Lesions of the Reuniens and Rhomboid Nuclei on Cognitive Behaviors Using the Intradimensional Extradimensional (IED) Task in Rats

Ellis, RJ, Pinedo, P, Linley, SB, Vertes, RP.

- FAU's Fourth Annual Undergraduate Research Symposium, Boca Raton, FL, April 2014