

# Brain Mapping Center SEMINAR SERIES

Sponsored by the UCLA Brain Mapping Center Faculty

The focus of these talks is on advancing the use of brain mapping methods in neuroscience with an emphasis on contemporary issues of neuroplasticity, neurodevelopment, and biomarker development in neuropsychiatric disease.

Hosted By: Marco Iacoboni, MD, PhD, Professor in Residence, Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior, UCLA

## **“An integrative view of motivated cognition”**



**Yuan Chang Leong, PhD**

Postdoctoral Scholar  
University of California, Berkeley

[Click to here register](#)

Imagine playing a heated tennis match and hitting a shot that might or might not have grazed the sideline. Would your motivation to win make you more likely to see the shot as having stayed within bounds? Most of us can recall a time when we or people we know were biased to see what is desirable rather than what is. In this talk, I will discuss recent work examining the pervasive influence of goals, beliefs and rewards on how people perceive and respond to their environment. I will first present a series of studies that leverages psychophysics, computational modeling and neuroimaging to study how the brain sees what it wants to see. These studies provide converging modeling and neural evidence that motivation biases both what people report seeing (i.e. a “response” bias) and what they see (i.e. a “perceptual” bias) in favor of desirable percepts. I will then present a second line of work that uses real-world news footage, linguistic analyses and neuroimaging to study how prior beliefs bias the interpretation of political information. I will show how divergent neural responses between conservatives and liberals lead to subsequent attitude polarization on American immigration policy. Together, these studies seek to advance an integrative view of motivational influences on human cognition that ties together a formal analysis of behavior, affective states, and brain function.

**April 1, 2021 11:00am - 12:00pmPDT**

<https://uclahs.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJUrc--hrjwpH9SshxWYacWiiZ2iQrwAunGT>

For more information contact: Mary Susselman (mwalker@mednet.ucla.edu)