THE SYNAPTIC BASIS OF COGNITIVE AGING

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Dr. Morrison’s research program focuses primarily on the neurobiology of aging and neurodegenerative disorders, particularly as they relate to cellular and synaptic organization of cerebral cortex. Within this broad arena, his lab works specifically on the interactions between endocrine factors (e.g., estrogen, stress steroids) and aging and the synaptic determinants of cognitive aging. His laboratory is particularly interested in age-related alterations in structural and molecular attributes of the synapse that compromise plasticity and lead to cognitive decline. These issues are addressed in mouse models, experimental analyses of rat and non-human primates, as well as the human brain. Since 1985 the NIH has funded Dr. Morrison’s research without interruption, and he currently directs a large NIH-funded program project on Estrogen and the Aging Brain, as well as one on the neurobiological basis of cognitive aging that has been designated as an NIH MERIT Award. Dr. Morrison has published over 300 articles on cortical organization, the cellular pathology of neurodegenerative disorders, the neurobiology of cognitive aging, and more recently the effects of stress on cortical circuitry. He has also edited 5 books on related topics. He is ranked among the most highly cited investigators in neuroscience (i.e. ISI HighlyCited/Neuroscience), and has served on numerous editorial boards, advisory boards, NIH committees, and the Board of Directors of the American Federation for Aging Research. Dr. Morrison has served as President of both The Harvey Society and The Cajal Club, and was elected to the Council of the Society for Neuroscience in 2010.

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