Kinase interest you in curing addiction?

Tuesday, Mar. 17 | Biodesign Auditorium | 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

Drug-craving is a cardinal feature of addiction that is elicited by re-exposure to drug-associated cues. The intensity of cue-elicited drug-craving not only incubates during protracted withdrawal but becomes resistant to extinction. The Szumlinksii Lab theorizes that these phenomena contribute to the relapsing nature of addiction by driving perseverative cue super-reactivity in drug-abstinent individuals. Understanding the neurobiological underpinnings of perseverative drug-cue super-reactivity during protracted abstinence informs not only our basic understanding of drug-related learning, but the more rationale design and timing of anti-craving therapies. We have validated mTOR as a viable target for both reducing incubated cocaine-craving and ameliorating extinction failure and will describe these studies. This presentation will summarize our research journey and discuss the clinical implications of targeting addiction using currently approved, repurposed kinase inhibitors.

Karen Szumlinski, PhD

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Karen K. Szumlinski is a Full Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences and is affiliated with both the Neuroscience Research Institute and the Department of Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology at UCSB. She has authored over 110 journal articles and was awarded the UCSB Chancellor’s Faculty Award for Undergraduate Research in 2015. Szumlinski sits on the Editorial Boards of several journals including: eNeuro (Addiction Review Editor), Addiction Biology, Synapse, and several Frontiers journals. She is a Fellow of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, and a member of the College on Problems of Drug Dependence and the Research Society on Alcoholism.

This event is free, open to the public and seating is on a first-come, first-served basis