Allopregnanolone has the potential to alleviate the effects of cocaine sensitization and withdrawal

Jon Harden – Biology major

Faculty advisor: Donita Robinson
Can the dopaminergic effects of cocaine be modulated with allopregnanolone?

• My lab is seeking to answer this question because allopregnanolone could potentially be used as a prescription drug to treat cocaine use disorder in adults.

• If we can treat cocaine use disorder pharmacologically/neurochemically, we might have better success at preventing addicts from relapsing.
What were our results?

• We successfully replicated a model of cocaine addiction in rats that will be used as a *baseline* for testing the viability of allopregnanolone to reverse the sensitization and withdrawal effects of cocaine.

• These results are important because they set the stage to evaluate allopregnanolone’s ability to treat cocaine sensitization in a rat model.

• If we can effectively treat cocaine sensitization with allopregnanolone in a rat model, this same treatment might be used to treat addiction in human subjects.