

**Joshua Gordon, M.D., Ph.D.**  
**MIND Institute Distinguished Lecturer Series – November 8, 2017**

**Biographical Information**

Dr. Gordon received his MD/PhD degree at the University of California, San Francisco and completed his Psychiatry residency and research fellowship at Columbia University. He joined the Columbia faculty in 2004 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry where he conducted research, taught residents, and maintained a general psychiatry practice. In September of 2016, he became the Director of the National Institute of Mental Health.

Dr. Gordon's research focuses on the analysis of neural activity in mice carrying mutations of relevance to psychiatric disease. His lab studies genetic models of these diseases from an integrative neuroscience perspective, focused on understanding how a given disease mutation leads to a behavioral phenotype across multiple levels of analysis. To this end, he employs a range of systems neuroscience techniques, including *in vivo* anesthetized and awake behaving recordings and optogenetics, which is the use of light to control neural activity. His work has direct relevance to schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, and depression.

Dr. Gordon's work has been recognized by several prestigious awards, including the The Brain and Behavior Research Foundation – NARSAD Young Investigator Award, the Rising Star Award from the International Mental Health Research Organization, the A.E. Bennett Research Award from the Society of Biological Psychiatry, and the Daniel H. Efron Research Award from the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology.

**Presentation Abstract (4:30 presentation)**

*A neural circuit approach to mental illness*

At this unique and exciting time for psychiatry, novel therapies for individuals with mental illnesses seem just around the corner. In particular, recent technological advancements in the study of neural circuits provide reasons to be optimistic that the field is headed in the right direction. Nonetheless, maximizing the chances of translating these advancements into real improvements in patient care requires a carefully considered road map. In this context, I will discuss my laboratories' work on understanding the neural circuit basis for psychiatrically relevant behaviors, as well as what a neural circuit-based translational road map might look like.