Vosshall Lab Graphic Design Standards for Figures
Revised 7/20/2018

To simplify the production of figures for publication, please follow these guidelines when you compile your data into figures.

SOFTWARE: latest version of Adobe Illustrator CC

DOCUMENT SET-UP:
- standard letter size 8.5” x 11”
- RGB (usually)
- Set units to points (not inches)

LINES:
- 1 point
- Black (some software has a default gray)

FONTS:
- Arial
- Please never use Helvetica as a substitute
- Regular (not bold) except genes/RNA italic
- panel labels Arial 14
- (lower case: Nature. Upper case: Cell, Science)
- Sentence capitalization (not Title Capitalization) throughout
- accent text maximum Arial 10
- y-axis labels Arial 9
- y-axis numbers Arial 8
- smallest allowable font is Arial 6, but try to keep it at Arial 7 and above

DESIGN PRINCIPLES:
- Consistent use of color – pick one set of colors and use throughout the paper
- Try to avoid colors that cannot be seen by color-blind individuals (e.g. magenta/green not red/green)
- Symmetric layout: no white space gaps
- Center all axis labels and text elements on data
- Sparsen graphs: no minor tick marks
- Do not put text or arrows on top of data, especially images. Move these to blank space in the image, or off the image
- Scale bars on all images

GRAPHING PRINCIPLES:
- No bar plots unless absolutely necessary
- Preferred: dot plots, box plots, violin plots
- Avoid bars/stars for statistics with more than 2 comparisons. Use the a,b,c system: data labeled with different letters are statistically different
Dennis and Vosshall, Figure 3