

CS 8999
Doctoral Thesis Prep
Fall 2026
Instructor: Dr. Carrie Bruce

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to synthesize the knowledge and skills developed in previous research courses and apply them to the doctoral dissertation process for students in Computer Science.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning in this course will occur by completing the work as specified. You are expected to work actively on the assigned activities each week. As a general guideline, one credit hour equals roughly three hours of work per week.

ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (404-894-2563) <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/Links to an external site.> . All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. They will then contact me with instructions.

STUDENT-FACULTY EXPECTATIONS AGREEMENT

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgment, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. The Student-Faculty Expectations articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

STUDENT WELL-BEING:

At Georgia Tech, we are concerned about your overall physical, social, and mental well-being. A comprehensive list of wellness related resources has been compiled and maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-being (student-resource-guide (gatech.edu)

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

These credits are graded on a **Pass/Fail (Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory)** basis. **Satisfactory" (S)** grade is assigned upon demonstrating adequate research progress, while **"Unsatisfactory" (U)** indicates insufficient progress.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are assumed to have read the Honor Code and consented to be bound by it. Violations of the Honor Code are taken extremely seriously and will result in a failing grade for the course and referral to the Dean of Students for further action. Specific violations include (but are not limited to):

- **Unauthorized Collaboration:** Unauthorized interaction with another Student or Students in the fulfillment of academic requirements.
- **Plagiarism:** Submission of material (including words and ideas) that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another person or persons, without adequate credit notations indicating the authorship.
- **False Claims of Performance:** False claims for work that has been submitted by a Student.
- **Grade Alteration:** Alteration of any academic grade or rating so as to obtain unearned academic credit.
- **Deliberate Falsification:** Deliberate falsification of a written or verbal statement of fact to a Faculty member and/or Institute Official, so as to obtain unearned academic credit.
- **Use of AI to solely or in large part produce work that you present as your own.**
- **Use of AI in a manner that violates the policy specific to the assignment, assessment, or other work instructions.**

POLICY ON USE OF GENERATIVE AI

For this course, we treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT, Claude, Copilot, etc. the same way we treat collaboration with other people: you might be welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with AI-based assistants. However, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include in your assignment anything that was not written or produced directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes). Including anything you did not write or produce in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. Additionally, you cannot expect to use AI as work effort just because you have properly cited it.

If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying AI, we recommend the following heuristics:

Heuristic 1: Never hit "Copy" within your conversation with an AI assistant. You can copy your own work into your own conversation, but do not copy anything from the AI conversation or other AI workspace back into your assignment.

Instead, use your interaction with the AI assistant as a learning experience, then let your assignment reflect your improved understanding.

Heuristic 2: Do not have your assignment and the AI agent open at the same time. Similar to the above, use your conversation with the AI as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your revised knowledge.

This heuristic includes avoiding using AI directly integrated into your composition environment: just as you should not let a classmate write content, design work, or code directly into your submission, so also you should avoid using tools that directly add content to your submission.

Deviating from these heuristics does not automatically qualify as academic misconduct; however, following these heuristics essentially guarantees your collaboration will not cross the line into misconduct.