

1st Year PhD Research Seminar

Course Information

Instructor: Daniela Staiculescu (daniela@ece.gatech.edu)

Course Prefix and Number: ECE 8801 A

Term: Fall 2026

Course Description

A course to introduce students to the ECE PhD program and to promote a close cohort.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course is designed to support ECE students in their transition into the doctoral program. After successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Find and begin working with research faculty advisors that suit their interests and career goals.
2. Develop foundational skills in analyzing and synthesizing ECE academic literature.
3. Articulate expectations, responsibilities, and milestones of the ECE PhD program.
4. Utilize campus and departmental resources for degree progression.
5. Build a supportive cohort within the first-year ECE PhD student community.

Required Course Materials

No textbooks or materials are required.

Grading Policy

This course is graded on a pass/fail basis.

Assignments: 50 points 6.25 points per assignment

In-person attendance: 30 points +2.5 points for each class, max missable 3

Final Presentation: 20 points 10 for presentation, 10 for reviews

A total of 70 points are needed to earn a P grade. If attendance or assignment completion are unattainable for you, please reach out to the instructors.

Attendance Policy

This course follows all Georgia Institute of Technology policies on attendance. You can read more about them here: <https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/>

Attendance for seminar courses are essential to promote discussion. Our main goal for this course is to foster community within your ECE PhD cohort, so attendance is highly encouraged and will factor into your overall grade.

Attendance points are awarded per class (+2.5/class). Students may miss up to three classes without penalty beyond the lost attendance points. If a student misses more than 3 classes unexcused, they will be given a grade of "U".

Academic and Research Honesty/Integrity Statement

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and the [Academic Honor Code](#), especially [Appendix A: Graduate Addendum to the Academic Honor Code](#).

Students are expected to perform research in an ethical and responsible manner. All Doctoral and Master's Thesis students are required to take the [Responsible Conduct of Research training](#), and it is expected that students abide by the principles taught in that training while performing research.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Allegations of scientific or scholarly misconduct are handled in accordance with the procedures outlined by the [Policy for Responding to Allegations of Scientific or Other Scholarly Misconduct](#).

Core IMPACTS

Not applicable

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. [The Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulates some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. Additional information for research-related work is given in [The Expectations of Advisors and Advisees](#). 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.