

Graphic Medicine (VXQ) Syllabus

Fall 2026 (AY Fall 2026-Spring 2027)

(variable credits)

VIP Proj Team: SO I 2601

VIP Proj Team: JR I 3601

VIP Proj Team: JR II 3602

VIP Proj Team: SR I 4601

VIP Proj Team: SR II 4602

VIP Proj Team: SR III 4603

VIP Proj Team: GR I 6601

VIP Proj Team: GR II 6602

VIP Proj Team: GR III 6603

Instructor Information

Instructor: Leah Misemer

Email: lmisemer6@gatech.edu

General Course Information

Description

Graphic medicine is a growing field that focuses on how visual communication can be used for public health purposes. Medical professionals and public health organizations have started using comics to communicate with stakeholders because the form's storytelling capabilities encourage empathy. Research has shown that patients and caregivers are more likely to pay attention to and understand information presented as a comic, rather than as an informational pamphlet.

Additionally, visual storytelling and production offers opportunities to speak across language barriers, making graphic medicine a useful approach in multilingual contexts. On this team, we will create research-based comics and other projects meant to help medical information reach broader audiences. The goal of this course is to explore the intersections of health, storytelling, and visual communication.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course sequence, students will be able to:

1. **Analyze previously published or produced media** as models for their own productions.
2. **Produce informative, persuasive, and empathetic visual stories** about medicine and disability for broad audiences.
3. **Research medical conditions, treatments, and patient experiences** using a combination of peer reviewed research, interviews, and previously published patient narratives.
4. **Design, plan, and market** an exhibition featuring work from our lab in conjunction with GT organizations and community partners.

5. **Develop a graphic medicine workshop** designed to increase health literacy and facilitate connection with patients.

Required Course Materials

Graphic medicine is an actively growing scholarly field with a number of resources available to those interested in exploring more. These include:

Website: graphicmedicine.org (one stop shop for recordings, reviews, new article announcements, etc.)

YouTube:

- GM Monthly Roundup (podcast about what's new): <https://tinyurl.com/3xef8nfa>
- Drawing Together workshops (virtual drawing workshops led by various artists and scholars): <https://tinyurl.com/mtt5xpd4>

Book (purchase not required): *Graphic Medicine Manifesto*, by MK Czerweic et al., Penn State U P, 2015.

Journals:

- *Annals of Internal Medicine* hosts peer reviewed comics online at *Annals Graphic Medicine*: <https://tinyurl.com/424da5t8>
- *Graphic Medicine Review*: <https://tinyurl.com/j6avfr9t>
- *JAMA* (posts an annual "Best of Graphic Medicine" issue and occasionally has articles; can be accessed via GT Library)

Course Website

We will begin by using Canvas, but will switch to Basecamp by Week 3. All assignment turn ins, instructor communication, and documentation will take place in Basecamp due to its ability to house materials long term. Students can sign up for a free Basecamp account using the instructions found here: <https://basecamp.com/discounts>

Peer Evaluations

Peer evaluations are administered by the VIP Program [Click Here](#) to access peer-evaluations from off campus. [Click here](#) to access from on campus. You will be prompted to sign in. Users can only log in from on campus or via [VPN](#). Students can only access the peer evaluation portion of the system during active evaluation periods. Failure to complete the peer evaluations will result in a full letter grade deduction. **Late submissions cannot be accepted.**

Grading Policy:

Each student is evaluated across three core areas, with three mandatory requirements. Regardless of role or experience, students must demonstrate achievement in all three areas:

1. Documentation and Records (33%)

- Weekly check-ins;
- Basecamp subteam maintenance/participation
- Handoff documentation

2. Personal Contributions (33%)

- Complete assigned quizzes, modules, essays, or reports
- Engage actively in the project
- Pursue knowledge relevant to the project
- Contribute to technical progress
- Experienced members may also contribute to project management

3. Teamwork and Interaction (33%)

- Participate in peer evaluations. Failure to submit results in a full letter grade deduction.
- On-time attendance in meetings INCLUDING SUBTEAM MEETINGS
- Midterm Benchmark deliverables
- Final Benchmark deliverables
- Collaborate toward team goals
- Coordinate and assist teammates
- Contribute to team presentations

4. Performance Assessments

Performance evaluations have become a standard practice in many industry settings, and the structure of our team's assessments is designed to mimic those practices. We will be using the newly developed VIP rubric for you to evaluate your own work (at mid-semester) and for me to evaluate your work (at mid- and end-semester). At mid-semester, you will receive a provisional grade and comments from me about what you are doing well and where you can improve

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

Course Policies

Attendance and/or Participation

Attendance and active participation in **team meetings** and **sub-team meetings** are required. These meetings are essential for:

- Coordinating project tasks and timelines.
- Sharing progress and receiving feedback.
- Learning from peers and mentors.
- Contributing to team decisions and direction.

Time Conflict Students

Time conflict students must be granted express permission from Dr. Misemer. Only returning students can register for a time conflict and those approved must attend all subteam meetings, complete all assignments and upload them to Basecamp, and meet (in person or virtually) with Dr. Misemer once during the semester. Students should come to these meetings prepared to discuss their goals, expected progress, and expected contributions. You are responsible for setting up those meetings by messaging Dr. Misemer via Basecamp or email. Time conflict students will be evaluated based on peer evals, submitted assignments (including weekly check-ins), and these meetings with Dr. Misemer.

Academic Integrity

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 [Georgia Tech's Honor Code](#) and the student [Code of Conduct](#).

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism 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.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) (404-894-2563) 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 Agreement

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](#) 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.

Use of External Resources

You are encouraged to consult external sources to support your learning and project work. However:

- Do **not present someone else's work as your own**.
- Always **cite and reference** external materials used in your documentation, code, presentations, or other deliverables.
- Proper attribution is essential to maintain transparency and integrity in a collaborative research environment.

Treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT and Github Copilot, the same way we treat collaboration with other people: you are 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 directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes). Including anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. If you have a question about whether your use of AI-generated content is appropriate, ask Dr. Misemer. If you'd like to cite AI-generated content, consult the following resource from APA Style: <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

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 \(gatech.edu\)](#))