

PSYC4698: Research Assistantship
Section: TB
Credits: 1-3

Fall 2026

Instructor Information

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General Course Information

This course provides undergraduate students with hands-on, practical experience conducting research in the field of Cognitive Psychology and Neuroscience. Rather than a traditional lecture format, students will actively participate in the scientific process by assisting with ongoing empirical projects within the lab.

Research in the lab generally focuses on memory, emotion, and decision-making, including spatial navigation. Depending on the current needs of the lab and student interests, research assistants may contribute to projects investigating:

- **How humans remember events in their lives, and why they forget them**
- **How external factors like stressors or music can modulate memory**
- **How our minds store the layout of our environment and make decisions about where to navigate from one moment to the next**

Through this course, students will gain valuable skills in literature review, study design, data collection, data management, and scientific communication, preparing them for graduate studies or careers in psychological and neuroscience research.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Apply foundational research methods to assist in the data collection, coding, or analysis of psychological and neuroscience studies.
- Synthesize existing literature in Cognitive psychology and Neuroscience to support ongoing lab projects.
- Execute lab protocols accurately, ensuring the integrity and ethical handling of human subjects research data.
- Communicate scientific concepts and research progress clearly within a collaborative lab environment.

Required Course Material

There is no textbook.

Grading Policy

Because this is an experiential research course, your grade is determined by your reliability, active engagement, and the overall quality of your contributions to the lab, rather than traditional assignments or exams.

Your final grade will be evaluated holistically based on the following expectations:

- **Lab Attendance & Reliability:** Consistently arriving on time for your independently scheduled lab hours and actively participating in general lab meetings.
- **Research Contributions:** The care, accuracy, and effort you put into your assigned research tasks (e.g., data collection, literature reviews, or data coding) and your proactive communication with the research team.
- **Supervisor Feedback:** Your performance will be heavily informed by regular reports and evaluations from the graduate student who is directly supervising your day-to-day work in the lab.

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation Policy

Working in an active psychology research lab is a highly collaborative and time-sensitive commitment. Your reliability and active presence—both during independently scheduled lab hours and full lab meetings—are essential to the success of our ongoing studies.

While much of your data coding or literature review work may feel independent, science is not conducted in a vacuum. If you complete your tasks but fail to attend meetings or communicate with the team, you miss the core learning experience of this course: engaging in the scientific process. More importantly, uncommunicated absences directly impact your supervising graduate student's ability to maintain data integrity, troubleshoot study protocols, and meet critical research milestones.

Excused Absences and Institute Expectations

We adhere to all Georgia Tech Institute policies regarding excused absences. Absences due to documented illness, family emergencies, or Institute-approved activities will be excused. Furthermore, professional development is highly encouraged; absences for events such as the All-Majors Career Fair or off-campus graduate school/job interviews are permitted, provided they are communicated in advance.

Communication and Catching Up

If you must miss a scheduled lab shift or a full lab meeting, you are responsible for mitigating the impact on the research team. You must:

- **Communicate Early:** Notify your supervising graduate student as soon as possible before your scheduled shift.
- **Reschedule Your Hours:** Propose an alternative time later in the week to make up your missed hours so that data collection or coding tasks do not fall behind.
- **Consult the Team:** Reach out to your supervisor or peers to catch up on any lab updates, protocol changes, or new task assignments discussed during your absence.

Consistent, unexcused absences or a failure to reliably communicate schedule changes will be directly reflected in the "Lab Attendance & Reliability" and "Supervisor Feedback" portions of your final grade.

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

Campus Resources for Students

In your time at Georgia Tech, you may find yourself in need of support. Below you will find some resources to support you both as a student and as a person.

Academic support

- Center for Academic Success <http://success.gatech.edu>
 - 1-to-1 tutoring <http://success.gatech.edu/1-1-tutoring>
 - Peer-Led Undergraduate Study (PLUS) <http://success.gatech.edu/tutoring/plus>
 - Academic coaching <http://success.gatech.edu/coaching>
- Residence Life's Learning Assistance Program <https://housing.gatech.edu/learning-assistance-program>
 - Drop-in tutoring for many 1000 level courses
- OMED: Educational Services (<http://omed.gatech.edu/programs/academic-support>)
 - Group study sessions and tutoring programs
- Communication Center (<http://www.communicationcenter.gatech.edu>)
 - Individualized help with writing and multimedia projects
- Academic advisors for your major <http://advising.gatech.edu/>

Personal Support

Georgia Tech Resources

- The Office of the Dean of Students: <http://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/services>; 404-894-6367; Smithgall Student Services Building 2nd floor
 - You also may request assistance at https://gatech-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid383662?
- Counseling Center: <http://counseling.gatech.edu>; 404-894-2575; Smithgall Student Services Building 2nd floor

- Services include short-term individual counseling, group counseling, couples counseling, testing and assessment, referral services, and crisis intervention. Their website also includes links to state and national resources.
- *Students in crisis may walk in during business hours (8am-5pm, Monday through Friday) or contact the counselor on call after hours at 404-894-2204.*
- Students' Temporary Assistance and Resources (STAR):
<http://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/need-help>
 - Can assist with interview clothing, food, and housing needs.
- Stamps Health Services: <https://health.gatech.edu>; 404-894-1420
 - Primary care, pharmacy, women's health, psychiatry, immunization and allergy, health promotion, and nutrition
- Veteran's Resource Center: <http://veterans.gatech.edu/>; 404-385-2067
- Georgia Tech Police: 404-894-2500