

PSYC7000: Master's Thesis
Section: MW
Credits: 1-3

Fall 2026

Instructor Information

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General Course Information

PSYC 7000 represents the supervised research hours required to complete your Master of Science in Psychology, fulfilling "Milestone 1a" of your doctoral progression. This course is designed to guide you from your initial entry into the School of Psychology through the successful defense of your Master's thesis. Over the course of these credit hours (9 minimum), you will work closely with your faculty advisor to conceptualize a research topic, form a thesis committee, publicly propose your methodology, execute the study, and defend your final manuscript.

While the MS in Psychology prepares you for continuation toward the Ph.D. or for advanced employment in business, industry, government, or education, this specific course focuses entirely on your independent ability to execute rigorous, graduate-level psychological research.

Prerequisites for Defense

Work on your thesis should begin immediately upon your entry into the program. However, you are not eligible for the oral defense of your thesis until you have satisfied all MS course requirements with a grade of B or better. Your transcript must also show 32 total hours of credit prior to your defense. Core coursework includes:

- Psyc 6018: Research Design
- Psyc 6019: Statistical Analysis I
- Psyc 6020: Statistical Analysis II
- Psyc 6000: Responsible Conduct of Research
- Two selected Psychology elective courses

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of your Master's Thesis, you should be able to:

- **Formulate** an original, theoretically grounded research question that addresses a meaningful gap in the current psychological literature.
- **Design and execute** a methodologically rigorous empirical study, demonstrating proficiency in selecting appropriate experimental paradigms, psychometric measures, and sampling strategies.
- **Analyze** complex psychological data using advanced statistical techniques, translating raw data into interpretable, evidence-based conclusions.
- **Navigate** the professional and ethical requirements of psychological research, including securing committee alignment, obtaining IRB approval, and managing data collection logistics.

- **Defend** scientific decisions and findings dynamically in a public academic forum, responding effectively to critique from a faculty committee.
- **Author** a comprehensive, publication-ready empirical manuscript that adheres to the formatting guidelines of the Georgia Tech Graduate School and the highest standards of the APA.

Required Course Material

There is no textbook.

Grading Policy

Because PSYC 7000 spans multiple semesters, your progress and grade are tracked through the successful completion of the following sequential milestones:

Phase 1: Conceptualization and Committee Formation

- **Research Topic Selection:** Collaborate with your Advisor to select a research topic, conduct a comprehensive literature review, and draft a preliminary methodology, design, and analytic approach.
- **Forming the Committee:** Select three committee members. This typically includes three tenured or tenure-track faculty from the School of Psychology. (Scholars from other GT Schools or external institutions may serve as the third member, but they cannot chair the committee). Final committee approval rests with the School's Chair or Graduate Chair.

Phase 2: The Proposal

- **Document Submission:** A copy of your final proposal draft must be submitted to each committee member and the Graduate Program Administrator **at least two weeks prior** to your scheduled proposal meeting.
- **Public Oral Presentation:** You will deliver a public oral presentation of your proposal to your thesis committee, faculty, and peers.
- **Formal Topic Approval:** Following a successful presentation, you must secure committee signatures on the "Request for Approval of Thesis Topic" form and route it through the Graduate Program Coordinator to the Graduate School.

Phase 3: The Oral Defense

- **Document Submission:** The thesis must be in a finished form (content, format, and typographical accuracy). You must distribute copies to your committee and the Graduate Program Administrator **at least two weeks prior** to the defense date. An electronic abstract must also be submitted to the Psychology office.
- **The Defense:** You will orally defend your completed research. The committee will vote to assign a decision of *'fail'*, *'pass with revisions'*, or *'pass'*. If revisions are required, the committee will outline clear instructions and determine whether the Advisor or the full committee will oversee their implementation.

Phase 4: Institute Finalization

- **Logistical Paperwork:** Approximately one semester before you expect to defend, you must submit an Approved Program of Study form, a Change of Major form, and a Petition for Degree form to the Registrar.

- **Final Submission:** After passing your defense and obtaining the signed thesis approval form, you must format your document according to specific Georgia Tech requirements (which differ from standard APA format) before submitting it to the Graduate School.

Course Policies

Supervisory Meetings

Your progression through these milestones relies on regular, professional engagement with your Advisor. You are expected to schedule and attend recurring supervisory meetings, arriving prepared with updates on your literature review, data collection, or manuscript drafting.

Project Management

While your Advisor and committee will provide theoretical and methodological guidance, you are the primary project manager. It is your responsibility to monitor your compliance with Institute deadlines, anticipate the two-week document review windows required by your committee, and proactively navigate the administrative requirements of the Graduate School.

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