

PSYC8997: Teaching Assistantship  
Section: MW  
Credits: 3

Fall 2026

### Instructor Information

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Instructor: Mark Wheeler

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### General Course Information

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This course represents the instructional practicum for doctoral students serving as Teaching Assistants (TAs) in the School of Psychology. The primary objective is to provide graduate students with practical, hands-on experience in university-level instruction, classroom administration, and student mentorship. The specific duties of the assistantship will vary based on the assigned course and the needs of the primary instructor, but all roles are designed to develop the professional competencies required for a future academic or instructional career.

### Course Learning Outcomes

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

- **Execute** instructional support duties efficiently, including grading, managing Canvas, and tracking student progress.
- **Facilitate** student learning through clear communication during office hours, review sessions, or lab sections.
- **Navigate** academic integrity issues and apply course policies fairly and consistently.

### Required Course Material

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There is no required textbook for this course.

### Grading Policy

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#### **Expectations and Responsibilities**

As a Teaching Assistant, you serve as a representative of the School of Psychology and an essential part of the instructional team. Your primary responsibility is to the faculty member teaching your assigned course.

At the beginning of the semester, you and your assigned instructor will outline your specific weekly duties. Common responsibilities include:

- Grading exams, papers, and weekly assignments in a timely manner.
- Holding regular weekly office hours.
- Managing the course's digital learning environment (e.g., Canvas).
- Leading specific lab sections, discussion groups, or review sessions.
- Proctoring examinations.

#### **Time Commitment & Professionalism**

You are expected to fulfill the weekly hour requirements associated with your specific stipend contract. You must maintain proactive, professional communication with your assigned

instructor, especially if you anticipate any delays in grading or need to reschedule office hours due to your own academic obligations (e.g., attending a conference).

This course is graded on a **Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U)** basis.

Your final grade is determined by your assigned instructor's evaluation of your performance. To receive a "Satisfactory" grade, you must:

1. Complete all assigned TA duties accurately and within the agreed-upon deadlines.
2. Maintain reliable attendance for all scheduled office hours, lab sections, and proctoring assignments.
3. Demonstrate professionalism, respect, and fairness in your interactions with undergraduate students and faculty.

Consistent failure to meet these expectations, unexcused absences from instructional duties, or violations of academic trust will result in an "Unsatisfactory" grade and may impact your future funding eligibility.

## Course Policies

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### **Fulfilling Instructional Duties**

Unlike a traditional course, your "attendance" in this practicum is defined by your reliability. You are expected to be present, prepared, and punctual for all scheduled instructional duties. This includes your established office hours, any lab or discussion sections you are assigned to lead, and all exam proctoring shifts.

### **Absences and Coverage**

We recognize that as a doctoral student, you have your own rigorous academic schedule, including research milestones and professional conferences. If you have a foreseeable conflict or experience an unexpected illness or emergency, you must:

1. **Communicate Immediately:** Notify the primary instructor as soon as you are aware of the conflict.
2. **Arrange Coverage:** For planned absences, it is your responsibility to coordinate with your fellow TAs to find coverage for your duties (e.g., swapping an office hour or proctoring shift) and present that solution to the primary instructor.
3. **Notify the Students:** If an office hour or review session must be unexpectedly canceled or rescheduled, you must post a clear announcement to the students via Canvas as early as possible.

### **Digital Presence and Communication**

Part of your attendance in this role is your digital presence. You are expected to monitor your university email and the course Canvas page regularly during the standard workweek. Responding to instructor inquiries and student questions in a timely, professional manner is a core requirement of your assistantship.

### **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**

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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 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
  - You also may request assistance at [https://gatech-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report/index.php/pid383662?](https://gatech-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid383662?)
- Counseling Center: <http://counseling.gatech.edu>; 404-894-2575; Smithgall Student Services Building 2<sup>nd</sup> 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