Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), PSYC 6000
Fall 2026
Fridays, 10:00–10:50 am
Coon 248
Instructor: Rick Thomas
Office Hours: by appointment
Email: rick.thomas@psych.gatech.edu

Course Description
This course provides an overview of the ethical, professional, and regulatory principles that guide responsible research in the behavioral sciences. Students will examine policies, practices, and real-world cases relevant to conducting, reporting, and evaluating research.

Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
- Explain core principles of responsible conduct of research in behavioral science
- Identify federal, institutional, and disciplinary policies governing research with human and animal subjects
- Evaluate ethical issues in research design, data collection, and data management
- Apply best practices for data sharing, ownership, and reproducibility
- Describe the peer review process and its role in scientific integrity
- Determine appropriate criteria for authorship and publication credit
- Analyze responsibilities in mentor–mentee relationships and collaborative research
- Identify and evaluate conflicts of interest and their impact on research integrity
- Recognize forms of research misconduct and appropriate institutional responses
- Assess the broader societal, environmental, and ethical implications of scientific research

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Requirements
1. Attend all in-class sessions
2. Constructively participate in class discussions
3. Satisfactory completion of the CITI Online Training Course on ethics in human research (Social/Behavioral modules):
   CITI Human Subjects Training
4. Satisfactory completion of the CITI RCR Modules:
   CITI RCR Training

Grading
The course will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Failure to meet all of the requirements stated above will result in a failing grade for the course.

In-Class Sessions / Topics
Week 1: Research Compliance and Regulatory Frameworks
- Policies regarding the use of human subjects in research
  IRB Policies
- Policies regarding the use of vertebrate animals in research
  IACUC Policies
- Policies regarding radiation, radioisotopes, and nanotechnology
  Radiation Safety Manual
  EHS Chemical Safety Programs
Week 1 Learning Objectives:
- Identify key regulatory bodies (IRB, IACUC, EHS) and their roles
- Apply institutional policies to hypothetical research scenarios

- Distinguish between different categories of research risk and oversight requirements

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Week 2: Data, Publication, and Peer Review
- The peer review process
- Data acquisition and laboratory tools
- Data management, sharing, and ownership
- Authorship and publication

Week 2 Learning Objectives:
- Describe the stages and purposes of peer review
- Evaluate best practices in data management and reproducibility
- Apply criteria for authorship and responsible publication practices
- Identify ethical challenges in data sharing and ownership

Week 3: Professional Responsibility and Ethics in Practice
- Responsibilities and relationships of mentors and mentees
- Collaborative research
- Conflicts of interest (personal, professional, financial)
- Research misconduct and institutional responses
- Science and engineering in society

Week 3 Learning Objectives:
- Analyze ethical responsibilities in mentorship and collaboration
- Identify and manage conflicts of interest
- Recognize and classify forms of research misconduct
- Evaluate the societal and ethical implications of scientific research

STUDENT RESOURCES

GEORGIA TECH MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Emergency Phone Numbers | State & National Resources
If You Are in Crisis:
If this is a life-threatening emergency, please call **911** or, if on-campus, call the Georgia Tech Campus Police at **404-894- 2500**.
Students experiencing a crisis that requires immediate attention may speak with the Counselor On-Call at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. *Between 8 am and 5 pm Monday-Friday*, students should call the Center for Assessment, Referral and Education (CARE) at **404-894-3498** and identify that they are in crisis.
After hours, please call **404-894-3498** and select option 1 to speak to the after-hours counselor. You may also call the Georgia Tech Police at **404-894-2500**.
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The following list includes various services offered by Georgia Tech for the benefit of all students. For a more comprehensive list of health and well-being resources, events, and information, visit the GT Well-Being Connect page (Links to an external site.)or Health and Well-Being at GT (Links to an external site.)
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Georgia Tech Police Department
Website: http://www.police.gatech.edu (Links to an external site.)

Phone: 404-894-2500 (emergency and non-emergency)

Look here for:
- Centralized point of contact available 24/7 that can connect you to any requested mental health resources
- All officers are trained in Crisis Intervention Team, Mental Health First Aid, and QPR to assist in mental health crises
- GTPD offers Good Samaritan and 9/11 Amnesty: if a student needs help and either of you are intoxicated or under the influence of any drug, call GTPD, and neither of you will be in legal trouble for being in that condition.

Center for Assessment, Referral, and Education (CARE)
Website: https://care.gatech.edu (Links to an external site.)
Phone: 404-894-3498
Look here for:
- Single point of entry for mental health services at Georgia Tech, no appointment necessary
- After a primary assessment at CARE, students can then be referred to other mental health resources and services on or off campus, including the Counseling Center and Stamps Psychiatry.

Counseling Center
Website: http://counseling.gatech.edu (Links to an external site.)
Phone: 404-894-2575
Look here for:
- Students may be recommended to the Counseling Center after an initial consultation at CARE
- Services are confidential and free of charge to currently enrolled students
- Website includes a wide variety of self-help resources, found here (Links to an external site.)

Stamps Health Services
Website: https://health.gatech.edu (Links to an external site.)
Phone: 404-894-1420
Look here for:
- Primary care
- Pharmacy
- Women's health
- Psychiatry
- Immunization, allergy, health promotion, and nutrition services for students
- Open 8 am-5 pm Monday through Wednesday and Friday, and 9 am-5 pm on Thursdays
  o A list of after hours resources is available here (Links to an external site.).

LGBTQIA Resource Center   **Website:** http://lgbtqia.gatech.edu (Links to an external site.)
Phone: 404-385-2679
Look here for:
- LGBTQIA+ support, resources, workshops, training, and discussions
- Virtual office hours offered Monday through Thursday, as well as a number of virtual community events and workshops, found here (Links to an external site.)
- Extensive list of resources and information available here (Links to an external site.)

VOICE
Website: https://healthinitiatives.gatech.edu/well-being/voice (Links to an external site.)
Phone:
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    ▪ 404-385-4464 or 404-385-4451 (8 am-5 pm, Monday through Friday)
    ▪ GTPD: 404-894-2500 ask for the VOICE Advocate on call (after hours)

Look here for:
- Confidential support for victim-

survivors of sexual violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, and stalking

- Education on healthy relationships and preventing sexual violence
- Students seeking support or further information can call either of the above numbers during regular business hours to speak to a VOICE Advocate, or call the Georgia Tech Police at 404-894-2500 after hours and ask for the VOICE Advocate on-call.