

PSYC 4600 – Senior Thesis I
3 Credits | Fall 2026

Instructor Information

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General Course Information

Description

The first of a two-course sequence in which selected students conduct original research under the direction of a faculty mentor. In this course, students will develop a formal research proposal, including a review of relevant literature, research questions or hypotheses, and a proposed methodology. This proposal will serve as the foundation for the research conducted in PSYC 4601.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Formulate a clear and feasible research question grounded in psychological science.
2. Conduct and synthesize scholarly literature relevant to a proposed research topic.
3. Develop a research design, including appropriate methodology, measures, and analysis plan.
4. Evaluate ethical considerations in psychological research, including human subjects protections where applicable.
5. Produce a written research proposal that meets disciplinary standards.
6. Communicate research ideas clearly and effectively in written and/or oral formats.

Required Course Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. Readings and materials will be determined in consultation with the faculty mentor and will include scholarly journal articles and other relevant sources.

Grading Policy

This course is graded on a letter grade basis.

Final grades will be based on successful completion of agreed-upon milestones associated with the development of the thesis proposal. These may include literature review progress, proposal drafts, and participation in meetings with the faculty mentor.

Evaluation will consider:

- Quality and completeness of the research proposal
- Demonstrated progress over the course of the term
- Engagement in the research process
- Responsiveness to feedback

Specific expectations and evaluation criteria will be established collaboratively between the student and faculty mentor at the beginning of the term to allow students to reasonably monitor their progress.

Description of Graded Components

Research Proposal Development

Students will develop a formal written research proposal that includes a literature review, research questions or hypotheses, and a proposed methodology.

Progress Milestones

Students will complete a series of milestones, which may include annotated bibliographies, draft sections of the proposal, and revisions based on feedback.

Mentor Meetings and Engagement

Students are expected to meet regularly with their faculty mentor and demonstrate consistent engagement in the research process.

Course Policies

Attendance and/or Participation

This course does not include regularly scheduled class meetings. Students are expected to meet with their faculty mentor on a regular basis and engage consistently in research-related activities throughout the term. The frequency and format of meetings will be determined in consultation with the faculty mentor.

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 and to comply with the Georgia Tech Honor Code and Student Code of Conduct.

All work submitted in this course must be the student's own and must appropriately cite all sources.

Research Ethics

Students are expected to conduct research in accordance with ethical guidelines in psychology. Projects involving human participants must follow Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements, where applicable.

Extensions, Late Assignments, and Missed Work

Deadlines for proposal components will be established in consultation with the faculty mentor. Students are expected to meet agreed-upon deadlines.

In cases of significant illness or emergency, students should contact the Office of the Dean of Students. Adjustments will be made in accordance with Institute policies.

Student-Faculty Expectations

Students are expected to take an active role in the research process, demonstrate initiative, and communicate regularly with their faculty mentor.

Campus Resources for Students

The Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP) provides resources and support for undergraduate research students and their mentors. Additional academic and well-being resources are available through Georgia Tech.