

# LMC 4699: Audience Lab Undergraduate Research

FALL 2026 | CRN ##### | SECTION ###

**professor:** Dr. Allegra W. Smith (she/her/hers)  
**email:** [allegra@gatech.edu](mailto:allegra@gatech.edu)  
**drop-in hours:** Mondays 1pm–3pm, Thursdays 3pm–4pm, or [by appointment](#)

## General Information:

### (OFFICIAL) COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Undergraduate research conducted under the guidance of a faculty mentor.

### DR. ALLEGRA'S COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Undergraduate research is a scholarly or creative project conducted by an undergraduate student under the guidance of a faculty mentor that contributes new knowledge and/or discoveries to the broader professional community. Undergraduate research is a recognized high-impact practice and an important transformative learning experience for students. High-quality mentored research experiences build confidence, foster deeper understanding, and enhance personal and professional development.

This semester's undergraduate research project with Dr. Allegra involves collaboration with [Georgia Tech Institute Communications](#) to 1) build data profiles and 2) user-test for the Audience Lab, a generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool developed by the Director of Brand Marketing for testing and refining messaging. This will involve...

- collecting data from current undergraduate students and other campus stakeholders using survey methods
- inputting data and prompts into the Audience Lab custom GPT
- interviewing campus communications personnel about their workplace writing
- user testing the Audience Lab with campus communications workers to gather qualitative and quantitative feedback for further refinement of the tool

### COURSE GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of LMC 4699, students will be able to...

- Read and apply information obtained from professional journals and other sources in the fields of Rhetoric and Composition, Technical and Professional Communication, and other relevant disciplines
- Identify appropriate methods for collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data in the above mentioned fields

- Articulate the principles of Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) and apply them to facilitate ethical decision-making in research design, data collection, analysis and reporting
- Work independently and identify when guidance is needed, troubleshooting problems and searching for ways to do things more effectively

## **Required Materials:**

All required reading and viewing for this course will be made available on Canvas or through the [Georgia Tech Library](#) resources.

## **Grading Policy:**

I employ a contract grading approach when I mentor undergraduate researchers. This means that grades will be assigned according to specific, pre-determined requirements based on labor, rather than a subjective assessment of the quality of a student's work.

Possible course grades are 100%, 80%, 70%, 60%, 50%, and 0%.

If you complete all of the work assigned during the semester, and generally submit your work on time, you will receive at least an 70%.

In order to receive a 80% for the course, you must complete all work assigned during the semester, regularly meet all deadlines for activities, and consistently produce strong final products.

In order to receive 100% for the course, you must complete all work assigned during the semester meet deadlines for all activities, and consistently produce excellent final products.

If you fail to complete all of the assigned work during the semester, and/or consistently miss deadlines for activities or are not present for scheduled meetings, you will receive lower than a 70%.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Allegra for clarification or advice. At any point during the semester, you can ask for a "snapshot" grade to see how you're doing and make course corrections if necessary.

## **Attendance:**

Undergraduate research students will participate in research activities on a weekly basis commensurate with registered credit hours and as discussed with faculty research mentors.

## **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. See the [Institute Rules and Regulations](#) for some basic expectations that you can have of your mentor and that she has of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will

help build the environment we seek. Therefore, you are encouraged to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

## **Academic Integrity:**

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the [university's academic honor code](#).

## **Accessibility:**

If you are a student with learning needs that require accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404) 894-2563 or via [their website](#) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also email me within the first week of the semester to schedule an appointment to discuss your learning needs (you don't have to have a documented disability with the Office of Disability Services to do this!).

## **Mental Health Note:**

If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, or in need of support, student mental health services are available. For help, contact the Center for Mental Health Care & Resources at (404) 894-2575 or [its website](#), or through its counselors located at the Charles A. Smithgall, Jr. Student Services Building during business hours.

## **Basic Needs Statement:**

Any student who faces challenges securing food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in this course is encouraged to contact the [Office of the Dean of Students](#) (Student Engagement & Well-Being) and/or the Center for Mental Health Care & Resources for support. Additionally, the [Klemis Kitchen](#) (in four locations on campus) offers food pantry services and meals. You can also notify your professor if you are comfortable doing so; this will enable her to connect you with any resources she may have access to.

*Some course language and activities adapted from Wendi Tilden and Dean Rehberger.*