

BMED 8901 Syllabus

Special Topics in Biomedical Engineering

Note: The course will take the place of BMED 7005: Teaching and Research Practicum II for a student who had to take it off cycle. This student will only be completing assignments directly related to the TAsip, as the others have already been completed.

Instructor Information

Instructor	Email	Drop-in Hours & Location
Rachael Pitts Hall	rachael.pittshall@bme.gatech.edu	By Appointment, UAW 1107

General Course Information

Description

This course equips graduate students with practical tools and strategies to enhance their teaching, research, and professional development. Topics include critical reflection, effective teaching and mentoring, leadership, professionalism, and communication across diverse academic and professional settings. Students will also develop skills to manage common challenges in graduate research, such as navigating career decisions, resolving conflicts, handling project setbacks, and managing stress.

Instruction combines interactive lectures with hands-on activities. Guest facilitators could include faculty, staff, and administrators from the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering, industry professionals, representatives from the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), and members of the Department's External Advisory Board.

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

This course should be taken concurrently with the second semester of teaching assistantship.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Design and contribute to student-centered learning experiences.
- Enhance teaching effectiveness through critical reflection.
- Develop as confident and community-minded researchers and educators.
- Build and sustain effective mentoring relationships.
- Apply project management and planning techniques to academic work.
- Communicate complex topics clearly to non-specialist audiences.
- Navigate group and classroom dynamics, using conflict management and collaborative learning strategies.
- Recognize the transferability of teaching and mentoring skills across diverse roles and settings.

Course Requirements & Grading

Component	Points
Weekly attendance (1.5 points each session)	12
Teaching Module	30
Mentorship Module	15
Communication Module	10
Project Management and process improvement	15.5
Relationship and stress management	7.5

Component	Points
Career Exploration	10
Total	100

Refer to Canvas for the most up-to-date deadlines for each assignment.

Grading Scale

This is a pass/fail class, and grades are assigned as follows:

S = 80% and above

U = 79% or below

Outside of the assignments above, missing more than two sessions (whether excused or unexcused) or receiving an overall TA evaluation score of 2 out of 5 or lower will result in a U in the course. If a grade of U is received, the student must retake the course in its entirety.

Course Materials

Course Website and Other Classroom Management Tools

A detailed course schedule, session descriptions, assignment instructions, and due dates are available on Canvas.

Course Policies, Expectations, & Guidelines

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and active participation are required for all course sessions. Because this course is discussion-based and meets a limited number of times, each session is essential to your learning and to the learning of others. Students are expected to arrive on time, remain for the full session, and engage respectfully in course activities. More than two absences (excused or unexcused) will result in a grade of U for the course.

Excused absences are granted in accordance with Georgia Tech policies. See [GT handbook](https://catalog.gatech.edu/policies/student-absence-regulations/) for more information: <https://catalog.gatech.edu/policies/student-absence-regulations/>. Additional details regarding attendance expectations, documentation, and make-up work are available on Canvas.

AI Use Policy

Unless explicitly authorized in an assignment, the use of generative AI tools is not permitted for graded course work. Use of AI in violation of assignment instructions may constitute a violation of the Georgia Tech Honor Code. Additional guidance is available on Canvas.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the [Georgia Tech Honor Code](https://catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/) (<https://catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/>) and [Student Code of Conduct](https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/) (<https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>). Suspected violations will be referred to the Office of Student Integrity. Teaching assistants are also expected to act with integrity in their instructional roles.

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 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.

Students are expected to maintain respectful and professional behavior in accordance with Georgia Tech's Student Code of Conduct and the Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement. Disruptive behavior that interferes with the learning environment will not be tolerated.

Core IMPACTS

Not applicable

Campus Resources for Students:

Graduate Student Academic and Professional Resources

A list of resources for graduate students is given on the [Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Education](#) website. Specific information for [current graduate students](#) includes

- [Academic Resources](#) such as the Communications Center, Language Institute, Library, Catalog, Registrar, resources for conducting research, Advocacy and Conflict Resolution resources, and how to manage unexpected situations that may impact your academic performance;
- [Student Resources](#) such as Campus Services, Child Care/Family programs, Health & Wellness, Career Services, and the Student Resource Guide; and
- [Professional Development](#) such as the programming from the Career Center and other professional development resources and events

Student Well-Being

At Georgia Tech, we are concerned about your overall physical, social, and mental well-being. A [comprehensive list](#) of wellness related resources has been compiled and maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-being ([student-resource-guide \(gatech.edu\)](#))

More resources on supporting student well-being on the syllabus and beyond are available through the [Learning Well Initiative](#).