Global Assistive Technology Innovation VIP Syllabus

Course Name:

Global Assistive Technology Innovation VIP

Semester:

Spring 2027

Academic Year:

2026-2027

Course Prefix:

VIP Proj Team: SO I; VIP Proj Team: SO II, VIP Proj Team: JR I, VIP Proj Team: JR II, VIP Proj Team: SR I, VIP Proj Team: SR II, VIP Proj Team: SR III, VIP Proj Team: GR, VIP Proj Team: GR II, VIP Proj Team: GR III

Course Numbers:

2601; 3601; 3602; 4601; 4602; 4603; 6600; 6602; 6603

Course CRNs:

91941; 90584; 90585; 90586; 90587; 90588; 92694; 93671; 93754; 93058

Course Credits:

1; 2; 3

Course Days & Location:

Thursday, 9:30 am – 10:20 am, East Architecture Room #214

Instructor Information

Instructors	Email	Drop-in Hours & Location
Zerrin Ondin-Fraser	zondin6@gatech.edu	Available upon request
Ellen Bassett	ebassett8@gatech.edu	
Tony Giarrusso	tonyg@gatech.edu	

Course Description

Description

This interdisciplinary, project-based VIP engages students in the design and development of locally relevant assistive technologies through real-world, community-centered partnerships. Students work in multidisciplinary teams to apply human-centered design, engineering, and innovation methods to address global access challenges while considering ethics, sustainability, and impact.

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

There are no pre-requisites or co-requisites for this course.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

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

1. Design and refine an accessible, user-centered digital platform for global assistive technology innovation.

2. Conduct UX research and usability testing to improve platform accessibility and user experience.
3. Collaborate with international partners to develop blueprints for a low-cost assistive technology production facilities.
4. Assess sustainability, scalability, and real-world impact of proposed solutions.

Course Requirements & Grading

VIP teams function like real-world project teams. Members work on different aspects of a shared project, ranging from sophomores to graduate students, and from first-time participants to those with multiple semesters of experience. Students may enroll for variable credit hours, which are considered in grading. **Note:** Zero-credit enrollment is reserved for paid participants and follows the same grading criteria.

Grading Overview

Each student is evaluated across three core areas, with three mandatory requirements. Regardless of role or experience, students must demonstrate achievement in all three areas:

1. **Documentation and Records (33%)**
   - Maintain individual documentation (required).
   - Contribute to team documentation: VIP Wiki
2. **Personal Contributions (33%)**
   - Complete reports and assignments required by your advisor(s).
   - Engage actively in the project.
   - Pursue knowledge relevant to the project.
   - Contribute to technical progress.
   - Experienced members may also contribute to project management.
3. **Teamwork and Interaction (33%)**
   - Participate in peer evaluations. Failure to submit results in a full letter grade deduction.
   - Attend meetings on time.
   - Collaborate toward team goals.
   - Coordinate and assist teammates.
   - Contribute to team presentations.

The different components of this VIP team and corresponding grade breakdowns are listed in the table below.

Assignment	Percent of Total Grade
VIP Notebook (individual)	15%
Team Wiki (team)	15%
Peer Evaluations (individual)	10%
Final Presentation (team)	20%
Final Report or Product (team)	20%
Attendance & Participation (individual)	20%

Description of Graded Components

Notebooks (Individual): Each student will develop a VIP notebook to track and document their efforts. We will use MS Team to develop and store these individual notebooks. The notebook should follow the VIP guidelines listed here: https://vip.gatech.edu/current-students/. An example e-notebook is also included in the files section of our Teams site. You will turn in your notebook mid-semester and will be provided a temporary grade and comments on potential improvements. This grade can be improved by making the zlisted changes before the end of the semester. You should be documenting what occurs during class in your notebooks, as well as what occurs in team meetings outside of class and your specific contributions.

Team Wiki (Team): Each sub-team will develop a sub-team wiki to store:

- Project information (specifications, documentation, progress, decisions, deliverables, etc.),
- Member information (team member names, contact information, sub-teams, etc.),
- Logistics (procedures, team policies and practices, meeting schedules, etc.),
- Information that you need to move the project forward the following semester.

We will use MS Team to develop and store these team wikis.

Peer Evaluations (Individual): Peer evaluations are completed via the VIP website. You will receive email reminders when the evaluations have opened, and you must complete them during the specified time period.

Presentations (Team): At the end of the semester, each team will give a 15-minute presentation on their project progress. Each team member is expected to contribute to the work being presented as well as the presentation slides. At the end of each presentation, advisors and peers will have the opportunity to ask questions.

Final Report or Product (Team): Both teams will produce reports by the end of the semester. Expectations will be clarified throughout the semester, and final products and reports will be evaluated based on their quality and completeness.

Attendance & Participation (individual): Attendance and participation are required to succeed in this VIP team, both within the classroom and with your teams outside of the scheduled lecture time. It is expected that all members of the team will be in attendance for midterm and final presentations. If you will miss class for any reason, please let the advisors know. College is stressful and life happens, so just communicate with us so we can make plans to accommodate any substantial absences.

Rubric

A = meets expectations on 12-14 standards and meets all * expectations
B = meets expectations on 10-11 standards
C = meets expectations on 8-9 standards
D = meets expectations on 6-7 standards
F = meets expectations on fewer than 6 standards

Standard Met	Area	Expectations
	Documentation (1/3 of grade)	
___*	Consistent to-do lists	Leaves each meeting with work to do; checks items off list as tasks/work are completed; progress/work can be tracked over time.
___*	Explanation of what was done (in individual notebook/documentation)	Sufficient explanation of work, progress, and next steps. Someone knowledgeable/skilled in the field would be able to understand decisions made, repeat what was done, and obtain the same result.
___	Reflects on what did/did not go well	Discusses what did and did not go well.
___*	Team-level documentation	Goals, timelines, task ownership, and meeting outcomes are clearly documented and updated.
___	Team-level documentation	Design artifacts, prototypes, testing results, and decisions are documented clearly and systematically.
	Contributions (1/3 of grade)	

___	Proactive	Identifies or asks for tasks to do; does not stop working and searches for solutions when obstacles arise – checks team documentation, searches online, reaches out to teammates, etc.
___	Learning	Acquires knowledge or skills needed for the project.
___*	Quality of effort	Work is timely, thorough, and accurate; Student comes to meetings prepared.
___*	Appropriate level of contribution	**Considering the course level and number of credit hours**, contributions to the project were appropriate. Early-stage contributions may include obtaining skills needed to do the work.
	Teamwork (1/3 of grade)	
___*	Attitude and participation	Demonstrates interest in the project; treats teammates with respect; pays attention to the people speaking during meetings; avoids distractions during meetings; participates in discussions around others' work; acknowledges the value of others' contributions.
___*	Engages with others' work	Knows what others on the team/subteam are doing; checks in/stays abreast of their progress; gives teammates constructive feedback and suggestions; helps or provides guidance to teammates; helps keep the team/subteam moving forward.
___	Communicates well	Facilitates communication within the team; exchanges relevant information with teammates; clear and timely communication.
___	Adaptable	Able to pivot when plans change or problems arise; willing to accept help; solicits and listens to suggestions and feedback; uses suggestions and feedback to improve.
___**	Peer evaluations	Completed peer evaluations by the deadline. Provided thoughtful feedback.

* Required in order to earn an A.
** Not completing peer evaluations is associated with a letter grade reduction. This is a policy of the VIP Program.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	0-59%

Course Materials

Materials/Resources

This course does not require a textbook. Weekly resources will be provided through the course MS Teams site.

Course Website and Other Classroom Management Tools

VIP's MS Teams: You will get an invitation to join

Peer evaluations are administered by the VIP Program Click Here to access peer-evaluations from off campus. Click here to access from on campus. You will be prompted to sign in. Users can only log in from

on campus or via VPN. Students can only access the peer evaluation portion of the system during active evaluation periods.

Course Policies, Expectations, & Guidelines

VIP is a collaborative, multidisciplinary, project-based learning and research experience. Your success in this course depends not only on your technical contributions but also on your active engagement with your team and the broader learning process.

Your Role in the Learning Process

As a VIP student, you are expected to:

- Take initiative in exploring and applying knowledge relevant to your project.
- Collaborate effectively with team members across disciplines and experience levels.
- Document your work thoroughly.
- Reflect on your learning and contributions throughout the semester.

This course is a real-world team environment, where learning is dynamic, self-directed, and collaborative. Your growth depends on your willingness to engage, contribute, and learn from others.

Team Meetings and Participation

Attendance and active participation in **team meetings** and **sub-team meetings** are required. These meetings are essential for:

- Coordinating project tasks and timelines.
- Sharing progress and receiving feedback.
- Learning from peers and mentors.
- Contributing to team decisions and direction.

Failure to attend meetings without valid reason may negatively impact your grade and your team's progress. If you anticipate missing a meeting, communicate with your team and advisor in advance.

Use of External Resources

You are encouraged to consult external sources to support your learning and project work. However:

- Do **not present someone else's work as your own**.
- Always **cite and reference** external materials used in your notebook, code, presentations, or other deliverables.
- Proper attribution is essential to maintain transparency and integrity in a collaborative research environment.

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. Review Georgia Tech's Honor Code and the student Code of Conduct.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

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.

Attendance and/or Participation

Attendance is required for this VIP team. Please maintain regular attendance. You should discuss planned absences with the advisors soon as possible after the beginning of an academic term. Absences will be excused for medical or family emergencies documented in writing.

Participation is required for this VIP team. You should come to classes prepared. You should read or watch the material for the week and be ready to engage in class discussions and activities.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

It is important that you should submit your individual and group assignments in a timely manner. Extensions and late assignments will be discussed case by case. Please reach out to the VIP advisors as soon as possible if you are experiencing an illness or family emergency to make alternate arrangements for work that has been missed, and continue coming to class.

Inclement Weather and Digital Learning Days

In the event of inclement weather or emergency-related campus closures, this course will shift to a Digital Learning Day. In-person activities will be replaced with online instruction or assignments. Students should check email and the course communication platform for updates. Deadlines may be adjusted as needed.

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.

Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom

As research on learning shows, unexpected noises and movement automatically divert and capture people's attention, which means you are affecting everyone's learning experience if your cell phone, laptop, etc. makes noise or is visually distracting during class. That said, many students find it useful to have a mobile device on hand to access course materials. With this in mind, we will allow you to take notes on your laptop, but request that you turn the sound off so that you do not disrupt other students' learning. In addition, please refrain from doing anything other than taking notes or looking at course materials on your laptop.

Campus Resources for Students

Undergraduate Student Academic Success Resources:
A list of resources for undergraduate students' academic success and information about advising can be found at Success at Tech.

- 1:1 Tutoring: Students looking for additional assistance outside of the classroom are advised to consider working with a peer tutor through Knack. Georgia Institute of Technology has partnered with Knack to provide students with access to verified peer tutors who have previously aced this course. To view available tutors, visit gatech.joinknack.com and sign in with your student account.

Graduate Student Academic and Professional Success 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)