Wellbeing and Mental Health VIP Syllabus

VIP-2601-VV6, VIP 3601-VV6, 4602-VV6, Variable Credits

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Instructor Information

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General Course Information

Description

This interdisciplinary, project-based course challenges students to apply skills in psychology, neuroscience, computer science, and more in the study of wellbeing and mental health in the student population at Georgia Tech. Students will have the ability to participate in a wide-range of projects including data analysis, data collection, and tool development, all with the intention of producing a final report important to our scientific understanding of wellbeing.

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. **Work alongside other students in an interdisciplinary team,** including students at various levels in their college career.
2. **Problem-solve issues encountered in data analysis and acquisition,** using differing backgrounds to understand problems from multiple angles.
3. **Learn to write academic papers**, including the final reports whose product will hopefully be submitted for publication.
4. **Experience research** in preparation for future academic journeys.

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: Final report and presentation, group deliverables
2. **Personal Contributions (33%)**
   - Complete assigned requirements such as CITI certification.
   - 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 classes and external meetings on time.
   - Collaborate toward team goals.
   - Coordinate and assist teammates.
   - Contribute to team presentations.

Rubric

		Poor	Adequate	Spectacular	
Documentation (1/3 of total)					
Individual Documentation	Consistent to-do lists	Does not consistently create to-do lists. Difficult to track when work was done.	Leaves each meeting with work to do, with intended work easy to find in notebook or project management platform. Checks items off as work is completed.		
	Explanation of what was done	Very little explanation of work and progress	Adequate explanation of work & progress Someone knowledgeable/ skilled in the field would be able to: - Understand decisions made - Repeat what was done - Obtain the same result	Same as previous + Includes reflections on what did/didn't go well, and next steps	
Team Documentation	Deliverables	Very little contribution to the regular deliverables.	Adequate contribution to the deliverables, indicating participation in the group and some communication with other members.	Contributes greatly to the regular deliverables, showing both a high proportion of contribution to the deliverable as well as indicating important progress towards the group's goals.	
	Final Project	Student does not show much involvement in the final product of the course nor can explain their contribution.	Student shows to be an important member of the group and actively participates in the final presentation and report.	Same as previous + Indicates awareness of the contribution of the project to the literature in the field.	
Contributions (1/3 of total)					
Attitude and approach		Uninterested in the project. Avoids work, waits for tasks to be assigned. Stops working when encounters obstacles, makes excuses.	Cares about the project. Proactively identifies or asks for tasks to do. Searches for solutions when encounters obstacles.	Same as previous + Has high standards for the team. Wants the team to succeed.	
Quality of effort		Sloppy or incomplete performance on weekly work. Unprepared, late, or misses meetings.	Work is timely, complete, and accurate. Comes to meetings prepared.	Work quality exceeds what is expected. Looks ahead, identifies and explores next steps.	
Learning		Unable or unwilling to develop knowledge or skills to contribute to the team.	Acquires knowledge or skills needed for the project.	Acquires knowledge or skills above/beyond the minimum needed for the project, to improve the team's performance.	
		Given the student's experience, course level, and number of credit hours...			

Personal contributions to the project	Very few contributions. The work was too simple. The work did not advance the project or help the student gain skills that would advance the project.	Adequate contributions. The work advanced the project and/or helped the student gain skills needed to advance the project.	Same as previous + Exceptional contributions.	
Teamwork (1/3 of total)				
Interaction	Interrupts or ignores teammates. Distracted during meetings (phone, email, etc.).	Avoids distractions during meetings and pays attention to others. Respects teammates' contributions, work, and ideas.	Same as previous + Shows an active interest in teammates' ideas and contributions.	
Engages with others' work	Does not pay attention to teammates' progress.	Knows what everyone on the team (or subteam) is doing.	Makes sure teammates are making progress. Provides encouragement or enthusiasm to the team.	
Communication	Does not share information. Takes actions that affect teammates without input.	Shares information with teammates . Communicates clearly.	Facilitates communication within team.	
Giving help and feedback	Gives no help or advice.	Helps and gives advice when asked.	Offers help and advice. Gives constructive feedback.	
Accepting help and feedback	Accepts no help or advice.	Respects and responds to feedback. Uses suggestions to improve.	Asks for feedback.	
Competed Peer Evaluations*	Did not complete peer evaluations.	Completed peer evaluations by the program's posted deadline.		

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

No materials will need to be purchased by students. All tools used for data collection and analysis will be provided.

Course Website and Other Classroom Management Tools

The course will be administered on Canvas, with all relevant resources being accessible on the platform. VIP groups may also use additional platforms for communication, including Microsoft Teams.

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 will be recorded at the beginning of each class period. Attendance will not be excused unless the instructional team receives a message before the start of class. Two missed classes will be allowed before points are removed from the total grade in the course.

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

Unless otherwise stated, all assignments will be due at 10 PM the night before a class period to ensure the wellbeing of students. These assignments will continue to be open until the beginning of class the next day, during which period submissions will be considered late and receive a 10% grade penalty. In-class assignments will not follow these guidelines, however, and will instead open at the beginning of the class and close at 4 PM, with no opportunities for late submissions. These due dates are final except for approved absences outlined below.

We follow Institute policies on planned and unplanned absences and understand that there may be unanticipated impacts to your health and well-being. In the event of a medical emergency or an illness that is severe enough to require medical attention or family emergency, please contact the Office of the Dean of Students as soon as possible to report the medical issue or emergency, providing dated documentation from a medical professional and requesting assistance in notifying me. Here is the form that you need to complete: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?GeorgiaTech=&layout_id=5 .

The Office of the Dean of Students will handle your information confidentially and will inform a decision as to whether communication with us is appropriate. We will honor a request from the Office of the Dean of Students to excuse a medical illness or emergency and allow make-up work. Make-up work will also be excused as mandated by University policy for approved Institute activities and religious holidays. In the case of approved Institute activities (e.g., field trips and athletic events), students should contact us as soon as you receive your documentation of approval from the Registrar's office or your faculty sponsor. In the case of absence due to observance of a religious holiday, students should inform us of the upcoming absence, in writing, within the first two weeks of class. With the appropriate documentation and notification for your absence in the aforementioned cases, you will be permitted to make up work or take a make-up exam within one week of the regular assignment or exam.

Inclement Weather and Digital Learning Days

When weather prohibits in-person attendance, an announcement will be made with a link to either Zoom or Microsoft Teams so the course can be taught online. In the event that the Institute is entirely closed, no class will be held online or in-person.

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

Students are encouraged to use mobile devices and laptops in the classroom to facilitate with group work.

Additional Course Policies

VIP Room and Equipment Use Policy

VIP rooms and equipment are shared resources used by multiple teams. To ensure a productive and respectful working environment, the following rules apply:

1. Room Usage Priorities

Room use is prioritized as follows:

1. Scheduled team meetings, lectures, and learning modules

2. Weekly sub-team meetings (multiple groups may share the space)
3. Video conferences or special meetings with VIP stakeholders
4. Other project-related work (multiple groups may share the space)

Room schedules are available on the VIP website.
Note: A "good neighbor" policy applies—students may use rooms during other activities as long as they do not cause disruption. Quiet individual work or studying is allowed when it does not interfere with scheduled uses. Similarly, multiple groups may use a VIP room at the same time.

2. Cleanliness and Conduct

- Everyone is responsible for keeping rooms clean.
- Food is allowed, but spills must be cleaned immediately.
- **Gum must be disposed of properly—do not stick it under desks or on carpets.**
- Rooms are monitored by cameras; violations may be reviewed via video.

3. **Equipment Use**

- Equipment may be designated for general use or assigned to specific teams.
  - General use examples: Projector in Klaus 1440, monitors in VL 465 and VL 463B.
  - Equipment assignments may change each semester.
- If unsure about equipment access, contact: vip-request@ece.gatech.edu
- Use equipment only for its intended purpose. Misuse may pose safety risks.

Important Equipment Rules:

- Equipment may not be removed from VIP rooms without a signed loan agreement approved by a VIP Director.
- You are financially responsible for any equipment not returned in good condition.
- You must know how to operate equipment safely. Approval to use equipment does not imply safety training has been provided.

4. Computer Accounts

- Accounts are for individual use only—do not share with others.
- All usage must comply with Georgia Tech, USG Board of Regents, and State of Georgia policies.
- Respect privacy and data integrity. Having access to a file does not mean you are authorized to read or modify it.

5. BuzzCard Access

- Access is a privilege and is logged.
- Rooms are under video surveillance. In cases of theft, vandalism, or messes, logs and footage will be reviewed.
- Do not allow unauthorized individuals into VIP spaces.
- Always secure the room (close the door) when leaving.

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)