International Affairs and Technology Policy Making

Last Updated: Mon, 01/12/2026

Course prefix: INTA

Course number: 4050

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
35119

Instructor First Name: Juljan

Instructor Last Name: Krause

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

A growing number of geopolitical struggles today are fought through infrastructure: chips and compute, undersea cables and satellites, standards and supply chains, and the cloud platforms that increasingly mediate economic and military power. This course examines how international technology policy is made in practice when interdependence is inescapable but security stakes are rising. We focus on the policy instruments that translate technical capability into political leverage: export controls and industrial policy, platform regulation and content governance, cybersecurity strategies and alliance coordination, and the management of high-consequence transitions (e.g., post-quantum cryptography). While the course focuses primarily on the fast-evolving relationships among the United States, Europe, and China, the dynamics we study routinely extend beyond this core and shape technology policy worldwide.

Students learn to read strategies and policy documents as instruments of power, to identify assumptions and implementation risks, and to produce decision-grade outputs under real-world constraints. Assessment emphasizes professional policy writing, one in-class crisis simulation, and a final portfolio (submitted as an alternative final assessment) rather than in-class exams.

The course is organized around three recurring propositions:

- Infrastructure creates leverage. The most durable advantages often come from chokepoints, dependencies, and switching costs, not just ``innovation.''
- Governance happens in the plumbing. Standards, procurement policies, compliance regimes, liability rules, and interoperability constraints can lock in power and shape conflict.

- Dual-use is normal. ``Civilian'' systems routinely become security-relevant because they are widely deployed, privately operated, and difficult to replace quickly.

By the end of the course, students should be able to (i) explain how material and digital infrastructures (re)shape the international system, (ii) evaluate competing policy strategies across jurisdictions, and (iii) communicate clear recommendations to decision-makers under uncertainty and time pressure.

Course learning outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:
1. Diagnose an international technology policy problem by identifying the key actors, incentives,
institutions, and strategic dynamics.
2. Translate technical change into policy-relevant claims by distinguishing what is measurable,
what is uncertain, and what is hype.
3. Select and justify appropriate policy instruments, including standards, regulation, procurement,
industrial policy, export controls, alliances, and norms/treaties.
4. Write like a practitioner by producing concise, decision-grade memos that present options,
trade-offs, a recommendation, and an implementation pathway.
5. Stress-test strategies using cases and in-class simulations, with attention to cascades, escalation risk, and unintended consequences.
6. Communicate across organizational cultures (e.g., engineering, diplomacy, regulation) without sacrificing analytical precision.

Required course materials:

There is no required textbook. Readings will be drawn from academic articles, policy reports, government strategy documents, think tank analyses, and current affairs publications, and are accessible online and available on Canvas (see links in the Weekly Schedule section below). Optional/additional readings are exactly that: optional. Some weeks list more than others to offer a wider menu of sources, not to increase the expected workload, though you are always encouraged to read beyond the required minimum.

Grading policy:

Assessment is based on applied writing, one in-class crisis simulation, and a final portfolio submitted during the Registrar-scheduled final assessment window.

1) Participation & in-class labs/discussion (15%)
Ongoing. Includes preparation, discussion, and completion of in-class analytic artifacts. A great mark comes from consistent preparation and contributions that improve the class’s collective analysis. This includes demonstrating careful reading, asking informed questions,

and translating technical constraints into institutional and political realities.
2) Policy Analysis Brief (10%)
2–3 pages analyzing one policy/strategy document (problem definition, instruments, trade-offs, enforceability, and evidence). Due Fri 13 Feb 2026, 5:00pm. A great mark comes from disciplined, document-centered analysis. Your job is to make a policy/strategy document intelligible as a policy instrument: what it claims to solve, what it actually does, how it expects compliance, what it assumes about technology, and where its implementation risks are.
3) Policy Memo (20%)
4–6 pages, decision-grade memo (options, recommendation, implementation, risks). Due Fri 13 Mar 2026, 5:00pm. A great mark comes from writing like a practitioner: a clear problem statement, a small number of plausible options, explicit trade-offs, a justified recommendation, and an implementation pathway that takes politics and capacity seriously. Your memo should be concise, evidence based, and explicit about uncertainty.

4) Simulation: Undersea Infrastructure Crisis + After-Action Memo (20%)
In-class crisis simulation (Week 11) + 2-page memo (individual). After-Action Memo due Fri 10 Apr 2026, 5:00pm. A great mark comes from disciplined crisis reasoning: prioritizing under uncertainty, managing escalation risks, and communicating clearly under time pressure. The After-Action Memo should explain (i) what you did and why, (ii) what you learned about alliance politics and escalation management, and (iii) what you would do differently.

5) Final Portfolio (Alternative Final Assessment) (35%)
Portfolio package (analysis + risk register + feasibility/cost note + briefing slides). Due during the Registrar-scheduled final exam
slot for INTA 4050 (time TBA when posted; currently expected Mon 4 May 2026, 6–8.50pm)A great mark comes from integration, professionalism, and decision-readiness. It requires multiple complementary artifacts rather than a single essay. Your portfolio must include:
• Core analysis (4–6 pages): problem, stakes, options, recommendation, implementation.
• Risk register (1 page): top risks, likelihood/impact, mitigations, residual risk.
• Feasibility / cost note (1–2 pages): timeline, dependencies, who pays, what breaks.
• Briefing slides (5–7 slides): decision-ready summary that is targeted and inviting both in terms of content and presentation, crafted with your (imaginary) audience of senior decisionmakers in mind.

6) How your final course grade is calculated
Your course grade is computed as a weighted average of the five components listed above. Each component is graded on a 0–100 scale, multiplied by its weight, and then summed to produce a final percentage out of 100.
• Participation & in-class work: 15%
• Policy Analysis Brief: 10%
• Policy Memo: 20%
• Simulation + After-Action Memo: 20%

• Final Portfolio (Alternative Final Assessment): 35%
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%
Key due dates
PLEASE NOTE: These are hard deadlines.
• Fri 13 Feb 2026, 5:00pm: Policy Analysis Brief due
• Fri 13 Mar 2026, 5:00pm: Policy Memo due
• Mon 6 Apr 2026 (in class): Undersea Infrastructure Crisis Simulation
• Fri 10 Apr 2026, 5:00pm: Simulation After-Action Memo due
• Registrar-scheduled final exam slot (TBA): Final Portfolio due (currently expected Mon 4 May
2026, 6–8.50pm, but please double-check)

Late work, extensions, and unexpected events
Deadlines are part of the learning design in this course: they help you plan, help me grade fairly, and keep the class moving together. If something disrupts your ability to meet a deadline, please email me as soon as reasonably possible (ideally before the deadline) with a brief description of the situation and a proposed plan.
Extensions. I can often grant short extensions for good-faith reasons when requested in advance. In most cases, I will ask for documentation. You do not need to share sensitive details; when documentation is requested, a brief note from an appropriate authority (e.g., Student Health Services, a medical provider, the Dean of Students, or an accessibility/academic support office) confirming the situation is sufficient.
Late submissions. Unless an extension is approved, late work will receive a penalty of 5 percentage points per 24 hours (including weekends), up to 72 hours. After 72 hours, the assignment will receive a zero, except in cases of documented emergencies or official accommodations.
Final portfolio. The Final Portfolio is the course’s alternative final assessment and must be submitted during the Registrar-scheduled final assessment window (see syllabus). Late finalportfolio submissions can only be accepted in line with Institute policy and official accommodations.

Attendance policy:

Regular attendance is expected and contributes significantly to your grade. Given the evening timing and small class size, your presence and engagement are essential to the learning environment. If you must miss a class, please notify the instructor in advance. More than two unexcused absences will affect your participation grade.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

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.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.
Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.
This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:
• How do I understand human experiences and connections?
Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:
• Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social or geographic relationships develop, persist or change.
Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:
• Intercultural Competence
• Perspective-Taking
• Persuasion