

Real Estate Development Methods

CP 6640 | Fall 2026

Instructor: Geoff Koski

Class Time: Thursday, 5:00 – 7:45 PM

Location: 129 Clough

Office Hours: By appointment

Email: geoff@kbagroup.com

Course Description

This course focuses on evaluating real estate development projects using an analytical framework based on:

- market dynamics,
- development economics,
- urban context, and
- public policy.

The course emphasizes critical thinking, evidence-based reasoning, and the ability to articulate and defend judgments in a professional setting.

Students will analyze built and emerging real estate development projects and assess the decisions that led to their outcomes.

Class discussions will focus on understanding why projects worked, what conditions enabled that success, and what could have been improved.

Learning Objectives

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

- Evaluate real estate development projects using an analytical framework based on coherence, feasibility, and execution risk
- Interpret market signals and assess real estate demand in relation to location and product
- Understand how capital and public intervention influence development outcomes
- Identify the key drivers of success in built projects
- Communicate and defend development evaluations in a structured discussion environment.

Required Materials and Readings

Most readings regarding project critiques will consist of selected excerpts and short articles made available through Canvas.

Materials will draw from real estate development, urban economics, and strategy to support project evaluation. Authors may include:

- Richard Rumelt
- Edward Glaeser
- Jane Jacobs
- Peter Linneman
- William Fischel.

All materials will be provided in accessible formats through Canvas.

Course Format and Structure

This is a discussion-based course centered on the evaluation of real-world development projects. Students are expected to evaluate projects prior to class and arrive prepared to discuss and defend their conclusions.

Each class session will typically include:

- Brief instructor-led framing of key concepts
- Student-led presentation of a selected project
- Moderated discussion and synthesis
- Structured evaluation using a common framework.

Early sessions will establish foundational concepts and introduce the evaluation framework. Subsequent sessions will focus on applying this framework to built projects across a range of product types and market contexts.

The Atlanta region will serve as a primary reference point, though projects from other markets will also be used.

Assignments and Expectations

Typical Weekly Preparation

Students are expected to:

- Review assigned projects and supporting materials
- Complete an evaluation of each project using the course framework

- Be prepared to discuss and defend their conclusions.

Grading

- **Class Participation:** 50%
- **Case Leadership:** 30%
- **Final Project:** 20%

Class participation is evaluated on a 1–5 scale per session based on the quality, structure, and evidence supporting each student's contributions.

Participation reflects preparation, clarity of thinking, use of the course framework, and the ability to contribute meaningfully to discussion.

Final letter grades will be assigned in accordance with Georgia Tech grading policies.

Class Participation

Active participation is required in every session.

Participation will be evaluated based on:

- Consistent use of the evaluation framework
- Ability to support claims with relevant evidence
- Clarity and structure of arguments
- Engagement with and response to other students
- Judgment in contributing effectively without dominating discussion

Quality Over Quantity: Students are graded on the quality and substance of contributions.

Case Leadership

Each student will lead at least one session by:

- Presenting a selected development project
- Framing key issues and decisions
- Initiating discussion using the course framework.

Final Project

Students will complete an evaluation of a development project using the course framework. The final project will be submitted as a presentation.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Course Introduction and Evaluation Framework

Week 2: Foundations of Market and Development Logic

Weeks 3–5: Evaluation of Built Projects (Market, Product, Location)

Weeks 6–8: Evaluation of Built Projects (Financial Logic, Execution, Public Role)

Weeks 9–12: Advanced Case Discussions and Guest Sessions

Weeks 13–14: Final Project Presentations

A detailed weekly schedule, including assigned projects and readings, will be provided in Canvas.

Accessibility

Georgia Tech is committed to providing equal access to educational opportunities for all students.

Course materials will be provided in accessible formats through Canvas. Students who require accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services and are encouraged to communicate with the instructor early in the semester to ensure appropriate support.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with the Georgia Tech Honor Code and all institute policies regarding academic integrity. Any violation of these policies will be handled in accordance with Georgia Tech procedures.