

# GIS Professional Seminar

## Course Information

**Instructor: Ramachandra Sivakumar (siva@design.gatech.edu)**

**Course Prefix and Number: CP 6591-A**

**Term: Fall 2026**

## Course Description

This course provides MSGIST students with a bridge from the academic world to the professional GIS world. Main objective of the course is to prepare students for a successful career in GIS related fields. The course will cover topics relevant to a beginning professional in the geospatial industry. Course content will explore and review GIS core competency areas, body of knowledge, emerging trends, and ethics in practice. During the semester, students will be expected to develop and foster networking relationships with geospatial professionals and understand crucial roles each play in supporting respective organizations mission. Students will also be introduced to the GISP certification process.

## Course Learning Outcomes

By completing this course students will accomplish following objectives:

- Understand core competency areas in GIS Body of Knowledge.
- Understand the opportunities and challenges of evolving GIS profession and to be prepared for a successful career.
- Participate in one or more GIS professional activities and organizations.
- Review the full range of technical topics covered by GISP certification.
- Understand what constitutes an attractive, well-designed, portfolio.
- Develop relationships with local area GIS professionals.
- Understand and discuss ethical issues in GIS Practice.
- Contribute to technical forums, create discussion thread, and blog posts in relevant industry platforms.
- Engage and learn from GIS professionals through invited talks.
- Improve soft skills to be successful GIS professional.

## Required Course Materials

No textbooks or materials are required.

## Grading Policy

Student grades will be based upon continuous evaluation over the full semester. Points will be accrued on satisfactory completion of tasks outlined as per deadlines.

A = 90-100%; B = 80-89%; C = 70-79%; D = 60-69%; F = <60%

Late submissions will incur 10% penalty for each class it is late. Assignments submitted more than 3 days past deadline will not get credit.

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed a maximum of two excused classes. Unexcused absences will result in point deductions.

## Academic and Research 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 the student [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Academic Honor Code](#), especially [Appendix A: Graduate Addendum to the Academic Honor Code](#).

Students are expected to perform research in an ethical and responsible manner. All Doctoral and Master's Thesis students are required to take the [Responsible Conduct of Research training](#), and it is expected that students abide by the principles taught in that training while performing research.

Allegations of scientific or scholarly misconduct are handled in accordance with the procedures outlined by the [Policy for Responding to Allegations of Scientific or Other Scholarly Misconduct](#).

## Core IMPACTS

Not applicable.

## Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, [contact the Office of Disability Services](#) 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.

## Expectations of Students

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 [Expectations of Advisors and Advisees](#) articulates some basic expectations that you can have of your advisor and that they can have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek.