

GT 2030 Syllabus

Progress and Service Forum, Section CS, and 3.0 credits

Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor: Chad Slieper

General Course Information

Description

What is “Progress and Service” and how does Georgia Tech prepare leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition? In this course, you will explore the nature of complex problems that impact humanity while investigating your own unique potential to impact these problems. Through interactions with faculty, peers, and community leaders, you will learn to tackle complex problems from multiple perspectives, equipping you with greater insight into the roles and actions that enable leaders to make change. You’ll also use tools of reflection to begin developing your own unique identity as a professional, and begin to make connections between you, your role as a professional, and the impact you have on society.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should have the foundational ability to:

- Integrate multiple perspectives in defining complex problems
- Reflect on their identity development as professionals
- Describe how their actions as professionals impact society

Required Course Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. Topical readings, case studies, exercises, and other materials to prepare for class will be posted to Canvas prior to class meetings at no cost to you. These readings will include:

- Excerpts from Donald Schon’s *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (Routledge, 2017).
- Video clips from *A Brief History of the Future* (PBS, 2024).
- Ruth Nelson’s TIME Magazine article, *A world’s fair could be just what we need* (Time USA, LLC, 2024).
- Stephen Hester’s IEEE Explore Article, *Normalization of Deviance: Why Accidents are Not Always Accidental* (IEEE, 2023).

Other readings/assignments to prepare for class will be determined based on class discussions and topics of interest as the semester progresses and will be shared on Canvas free of charge.

Grading Policy:

Assignment	Date	Weight (Points out of 1000 total)
Reflection/Journal Entries (10 x 35 points)	Throughout semester	350 points
Informational Interview Summary	TBD	50 points
Professional Identity Statement	TBD	125 points
Problem Definition Project	TBD	350 points
Problem Definition Reflection	TBD	125 points

Description of Graded Components

Reflections/Journal Entries (10 x 35 points each = 350 points)

These weekly assignments ask you to reflect on topics we have been learning about in class, your own professional identity, or other topics on occasion. Please use a professional tone and language, good grammar and spelling, and writing generally acceptable for a college-level course, while still exploring your own unique thoughts and insights about the assigned topics.

There will be ten of these reflections assigned during the semester, and each is worth 35 points. If you make a credible, earnest effort at reflecting on the topic, and you do so using the professional style of writing described above, you will earn all 35 points for that assignment. If your reflection does not meet these criteria, you will earn a zero, however the instructor may allow you to revise and resubmit the assignment by a certain date to possibly receive full credit.

Make-up assignments will only be provided for those with an Institute Approved Absence or an absence the instructor excuses. These instructor-excused absences are very limited in scope, so please attend class regularly so as not to miss out on the points for these assignments.

Informational Interview Summary (50 points)

Part of the purpose of this course is to help you reflect on your own unique identity as a professional, as well as the impact professionals' actions have on society. To advance your learning toward those goals, you will be required to interview a working professional in a field you have an interest in entering. You will draft a summary of your interview for this assignment. More detail will be provided in class.

Professional Identity Statement (125 points)

As you clarify your own values, talents, and interests, you will also begin to reflect on the unique contributions you can make within the profession (or professions) you are thinking of pursuing. The professional identity statement is a professional piece of writing that can help you communicate to yourself and others the unique role you can play – a professional mission statement of sorts. More detail will be provided in class.

Group Problem Definition Project (350 points)

About midway through the semester you will be assigned to a small group to complete a project in which you use the skills and perspectives you've learned in class to define, not solve, a complex problem. You will have time in class to work on many aspects of the project, but there will also be a good bit of work your group will work to accomplish outside of class. More detail will be provided in class.

Problem Definition Reflection (125 points)

After finishing your group problem definition project, you will write a problem definition reflection that illustrates what you learned over the course of the semester, and particularly during that project, about how one integrates multiple perspectives in defining complex problems. This professional piece of writing will show how you have synthesized your learning in the course. More detail will be provided in class.

Grading Scale

You have the opportunity to earn up to 1000 points over the course of the semester. Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A 900-1000 points

B	800-899 points
C	700-799 points
D	600-699 points
F	0-599 points

Attendance and/or Participation

Given the small size, class meeting schedule, and interactive nature of this class, attendance is generally expected at each class meeting. While there is no penalty for an absence in its own right, please keep in mind that absences can also have a detrimental effect on your in-class reflection grade (see above). Classes will not be offered virtually due to the interactive nature of the course, but I encourage you to obtain notes from a classmate and come to me with any questions if you need to miss class.

Georgia Tech's official attendance policy can be found at <https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/4/>. In addition to the GT rules, it states "All students are responsible for obtaining an understanding of each instructor's policy regarding absences." Information about how to notify instructors when you need to miss class and what kind of documentation you should provide is at: <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/student-absence-regulations/>.

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 plagiarism 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.

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.

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

None

Extra Credit Opportunities

Extra credit opportunities may or may not be provided at the discretion of the instructor. Any extra credit opportunities that are provided will be made available to all students in the class.

Undergraduate Student Academic Success Resources

Academic Success and Advising (a unit in the Office of Undergraduate Education & Student Success) provides free support for your courses. Students can attend scheduled supplemental review (PLUS) sessions, stop by Drop-In Tutoring, or schedule a one-on-one appointment through Knack. To explore what options work best for you, please visit us online at success.gatech.edu/tutoring, email us at tutoring@gatech.edu, or come see us at Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons, Suite 283.

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.