

Course Syllabus: IT/Comm/Telecom Policy PUBP 6502 OCY

Fall 2026

MS in Cybersecurity, School of Public Policy, IAC

Delivery: 100% Web-Based, Asynchronous

Canvas for Content Delivery

Instructor Information

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General Course Information

Course Description

Telecommunications is the infrastructure for the information age. This course provides a long-term survey of telecommunication policy problems and issues. It covers fixed and wireless telecommunications, internet, broadcasting, cable and social media. Students will learn about the evolution of the information and communication industries, the impact of technological change on those industries, and the changing regulatory institutions associated with the rise and decline of various industries. The course covers issues such as competition vs. monopoly, telecommunications and national security, network neutrality; radio spectrum policy, content regulation on platforms, and contention over technical standards. The main emphasis will be on 20th and 21st century telecommunications in the U.S., but exposure to international institutions and the global political economy of communications is also included. **This is a core course for the policy track in the Online MS in Cybersecurity.**

Pre- and/or Co-Requisites

Students not in the policy track and with no exposure to public policy or political economy studies should take PUBP 6725 before this.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Analyze a policy controversy in information and telecommunications
- Identify similarities and differences between current and past policy controversies
- Identify economic features of information and communications that shape industrial organization
- Identify the main sources of rules, regulations and policy in communications
- Explain why those institutions have changed in the past 75 years

- Find accurate, useful data about ICT industries and policies (fall course only)

Course Materials

There are three textbooks from which readings are drawn. All required chapters will be available via Perusall.

- Gerald Brock, *The Second Information Revolution*. (2003) e-book in Ga Tech library
- Milton Mueller, *Universal Service: Competition, Interconnection and Monopoly in the Making of the American Telephone System* (online free at: <http://surface.syr.edu/books/18/>)
- Geoff Parker, Marshall van Alstyne and S. Choudhary, *Platform Revolution*.

Additional readings will be drawn from journal articles, regulatory proceedings, court decisions and news articles. Those will also be available in Perusall. Doing the readings and discussing them via Perusall is very important and forms a significant portion of your grade. Quizzes assess your comprehension of the readings and lectures. Additional recommended or supplemental materials may be posted in the Canvas site in response to relevant ongoing events. Any coordination of activity on Perusall including *quid pro quos* in responses or upvotes is considered cheating.

Course Website and Other Classroom Management Tools

This class will use Canvas to deliver course materials to online students. ALL course materials and activities will take place on the Canvas platform. To login to Canvas visit <https://canvas.gatech.edu/>

Assignment Distribution and Grading Scale

Here is a list of the assignments and activities required in the course. Grading is not “curved;” students will be graded based on how well they have met the requirements of the assignment and accomplished specific learning objectives. With the exception of quizzes, assignments will have a rubric associated with them so that students can see what criteria are used for grading and what weight is given to them.

Assignment	Release Date	Due Date	Weight
Reading assignments #1, #2, #3, #4 Reading analysis on Perusall	Beginning of each Module	Friday before end of Module	10% each
4 Quizzes on lectures	Last week of each Module	Sunday before end of module	10% each
Assignment #5 Policy Bingo	July 6	July 27	20%

Assignment Submission and Due Dates

All assignments will be due at the times listed above. These times are specified in US Eastern time and are subject to minor changes so please check Canvas. To convert from US time to your local time zone, use a [Time Zone Converter](#). Each assignment will have a separate entry in Canvas that explains in more detail what is expected and what criteria are used to grade it. The weighting of the different assignments in determining your final grade is clear from the table above. To complete some assignments, students will upload a file in the relevant assignment place in Canvas. Do not send assignments directly to the professors or TA's via email. They will not count towards the grade. Quizzes are taken within Canvas. Readings are done within the Perusall app. If there are technical issues, please notify the help desk, as

well as each professor immediately. Assignments should be graded with feedback within one week of when learners turn it in.

Quizzes

Quizzes are individual assignments – they provide an incentive to study the lectures and they strengthen your recall and understanding of the reading and lecture material. They are open book and not proctored, but we limit the time to 3 hours, so plan accordingly. Do not help other students answer their quiz questions – that is considered cheating. **Don't forget to take your quizzes!** They become available about a week before the end of the module and are due at the end of the module. They remain available for two days past the due date, and we deduct 2% for each late day. After two days, quizzes become unavailable.

Late assignments, Re-scheduling

The major assignments are due just before midnight on the due date. For the Reading (Perusall) assignments and Policy Bingo, there is no grace period; access shuts down when the time expires. For the quizzes, there is a 2-day grace period: for every day it is late, you lose two percentage points off what your score would have been. This policy will be applied regardless of the reason for your lateness. The only special circumstances that will be accommodated are those that literally incapacitate the student for a significant period of time, such as injury and hospitalization, floods, hurricanes, power outages for several days, etc. In such circumstances, credentialed documentation will need to be provided. Please do not waste the instructors' time asking for extensions for any other reasons.

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%

Keep in mind that a B average is required to graduate from the program.

Technology Requirements and Skills

To participate in this class, you need the following computer hardware and software:

- Internet connection with a **minimum** of 10 Mbps of download speed and 1 Mbps of upload speed
- Laptop or desktop computer with a **minimum** of a 2 GHz processor and 4 GB of RAM
- MS Windows, Mac OS, Chrome/Chromium OS, or Linux distros that are compatible or can emulate:
 - Microsoft Office Suite or comparable open-source applications
 - Adobe PDF software (open and convert)
 - Mozilla Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Chrome and/or Safari browsers to load Canvas

Note that iOS (iPhone and iPad) is not (yet?) compatible with Honorlock and cannot be used for taking quizzes.

Technology Help Guidelines

30-Minute Rule: When you encounter struggles with technology, give yourself 30 minutes to 'figure it out.' If you cannot, then post a message to the discussion board; your peers may have suggestions to assist you. You may contact the Helpdesk 24/7. When posting or sending email requesting help with technology issues, whether to the Helpdesk, message board, or the professor use the following guidelines:

- Include a descriptive title for the subject field that includes 1) the name of course 2) the issue.
- List the steps or describe the circumstance that preceded the technical issue or error. Include the exact wording of the error message.

- When possible, include a screenshot(s) demonstrating the technical issue or error message.
- Also include what you have done to try to remedy the issue (rebooting, trying a different browser, clearing cache, and so on).

Communication Policy

Email personal concerns, including grading questions, to the TAs or professor privately using the Canvas platform's messaging. Do NOT submit posts of a personal nature to the discussion board.

Email will be checked at least twice per day Monday through Friday. During the week, the Professor or one of the TAs will respond to all emails within 24 hours; on weekends and holidays, allow up to 48 hours. If there are special circumstances that will delay a response, I will make an announcement to the class.

Student Forum/Q&A discussion boards will be checked twice per day Monday through Friday; Saturday, these discussion boards will be checked at least once per day.

Weekly virtual office hours will be held using the Zoom app. Occasionally we can hold special topic office hours or suggest guest lectures. For questions related to technology, please contact Digital Learning at <https://b.gatech.edu/digitallearningsupport>

Online Student Conduct and Netiquette

Communicating appropriately in the online classroom can be challenging. In order to minimize this challenge, it is important to remember several points of "internet etiquette" that will smooth communication for both students and instructors:

Read first, Write later. Read the ENTIRE set of posts/comments on a discussion board before posting your reply, in order to prevent repeating commentary or asking questions that have already been answered.

Avoid language that may come across as strong or offensive. Language can be easily misinterpreted in written electronic communication. Review email and discussion board posts *before* submitting. Humor and sarcasm may be easily misinterpreted by your reader(s). Try to be as matter-of-fact and professional as possible.

Follow the language rules of the Internet. Do not write using all capital letters, because it will appear as shouting. Also, the use of emoticons and/or emojis can be helpful when used to convey nonverbal feelings.

Consider the privacy of others. Ask permission prior to giving out a classmate's email address or other personally identifiable information.

Keep attachments small. Avoid gigantic files; if it is necessary to send pictures, minimize the size.

Problem posts. Do not spam your classmates or instructors. The instructor reserves the right to remove posts that are not collegial in nature and/or do not meet the Online Student Conduct and Etiquette guidelines listed above.

University Use of Email

A university-assigned student e-mail account is the official university means of communication with all students at Georgia Institute of Technology. Students are responsible for all information sent to them via their university-assigned e-mail account. If a student chooses to forward information in their university e-mail account, he or she is responsible for all information, including attachments, sent to any other e-mail account. To stay current with university information, students are expected to check their official university e-mail account and other electronic communications on a frequent and consistent basis. Recognizing that some communications may be time-critical, the university recommends that electronic communications be checked minimally twice a week.

Plagiarism, Academic Integrity, and Large Language Models

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. All students enrolled at Georgia Tech, and all its campuses, are to perform their academic work according to standards set by faculty members, departments, schools, and colleges of the university; and cheating and plagiarism constitute fraudulent misrepresentation for which no credit can be given and for which appropriate sanctions are warranted and will be applied. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, please visit <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/honor-code/> or <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/18/>.

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.

The use of large language models is permitted within reason, but your writing should reflect your *Thinking*. Remember, it is by *going through the process* of writing that people formulate thought. Start by doing your own thinking and if you want to use an LLM to refine your thinking you can do so. That said, we use plagiarism detection technology, so make sure you use cite and any tool with care. We want learning outcomes to be met so if we have reason to believe you have copied and pasted text blocks without understanding the logic of a statement or characterization of an issue, you will be penalized for it.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at (404) 894-2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter.

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 students. See the GT [catalogue](#) for an articulation of some basic expectation that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Course Schedule

Module 1: Introduction and Concepts		
Topic	Deliverables	Readings
What is included in Information and Telecommunications Policy? Lessons 1 – 5	Assignment 1: Readings (due May 29) Quiz 1 (due May 31)	Economides & White, 1996 Platform Revolution, Chapters 1 & 2
Module 2: The Old Order in Communications		
Topic	Deliverables	Readings

Topic 1, The telegraph, Lessons 1-4	Assignment 2: Module 2 readings (due June 12)	Mueller (1997) Chapters 7, 8, 9 Hazlett (1990)
Topic 2, The telephone, Lessons 1-3		
Topic 3, Radio and broadcasting, Lessons 1 – 3	Quiz 2 (due June 14)	
Topic 4, Regulatory Consolidation Lessons 1 – 3		

Module 3: Liberalization: The New Order in Communications

Topic	Deliverables	Readings
Topic 1: Overview of Liberalization and Globalization, Lesson 1	Assignment 3: Module 3 readings	Brock, Chapters 10 - 14
Topic 2: Liberalization of domestic markets in the U.S. Lessons 1-4		
Topic 3: International Liberalization, Lessons 1-4		
Topic 4: Mass media liberalization, Lessons 1-3		
Topic 5: Mobile Telecommunications, Lessons 1-4		
Topic 6: Internet, Convergence and the Rise of Platforms, Lessons 1-3		
	Quiz 3	

Module 4: Contemporary Issues in Telecommunications

Topic	Deliverables	Readings
Topic 1: Broadband development, Lessons 1-3	Assignment 5: Module 4 readings	Crane (2018) Four questions for the neo-Brandeisians
Topic 2: Competition Policy, Lessons 1-4		
Topic 3: 5G and IoT, Lessons 1-4	Quiz 4	Calvert (2024) Algorithms and Content Moderation: Supreme Court Perspectives on the First Amendment Editorial Rights of Social Media Platforms
Topic 4: Spectrum, Numbers and Addresses, Lessons 1-5		
Topic 5: Free Speech, Trade and Security in Telecoms, Lessons 1-4		
		Kuerbis (2025) Data enclosure in generative AI: exclusivity, governance and market competition
		Mueller (2025) It's Just Distributed Computing: Rethinking AI governance

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Final assignment Policy Bingo
