

PUBP 4211 / PUBP 6606

Urban Policy / Urban Development Policy

3 Credits | Fridays, 2:00pm – 4:45pm | Engineering & Mechanics Room G8

Fall 2026

Instructor Information

Instructor	Email	Office Hours
David Edwards	davide.atlanta@gmail.com	By Appointment

General Course Information

Description

In this course, urban policy and urban economic development are examined with a focus on how cities can improve urban outcomes. The framework for the class combines urban planning with municipal management and policy, using a complex adaptive systems approach. The class examines what policies can improve the performance of cities with a focus on neighborhood health. The class features weekly expert guest speakers who have made significant contributions in addressing these issues.

Course Learning Outcomes

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

- Understand how cities generate value
- Speak fluently about the “nuts and bolts” of policymaking in today’s urban environment
- Effectively address urban problems and develop practical solutions
- Make effective presentations and communicate complex ideas
- Interact meaningfully with local political and nonprofit leaders

Required Course Materials

There is no assigned textbook for this course. All readings are posted on Canvas.

Course Website and Classroom Management Tools

This course uses Canvas as the primary course management platform. All course materials, assignments, and announcements will be posted on Canvas.

Grading Policy

You will submit all assignments in Canvas.

Assignments

- Weekly Commentaries — 30%
- One-time Presentation — 20%
- Semester-Long Project — 30%

- Class Participation and Attendance — 15%
- Peer Review — 5%

Description of Graded Components

Weekly Commentaries (30%) — Submit a short (1– or 2-paragraph) written commentary from the readings for each week. Graded on a three-point scale. A response scoring a (3) will have at least one key insight that you have learned from each of the assigned readings and at least one question that you would like to discuss or get clarity on in class. A response scoring a (1) will merely demonstrate that the assignments have been read.

One-time Presentation (20%) — Small student teams will make a brief presentation to the class and facilitate a conversation about how a policy analyst should go about advising a mayor on an assigned public policy problem.

Semester-Long Project (30%) — Each team will be assigned a neighborhood in Atlanta and will build a strategy for how to improve its performance. Three presentations will be made over the course of the semester.

Class Participation and Attendance (15%) — Class presence and participation points are given to encourage your active class participation and discussion. You will be rewarded with a perfect score if you come to all classes and actively contribute to the class discussion during lectures and during conversations with guest speakers. Your contributions should offer different and unique, but relevant, perspectives, move the discussion and analysis forward and build on the comments of others.

Peer Review (5%) — For the semester-long project, each team member will provide a review of each of their teammates' performance based on the following criteria:

- Provided material and substance thought leadership
- Delivered their contributions in a timely and equitable fashion
- Demonstrated willingness to work as a part of a team towards a shared goal

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%

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the course material. The classroom should be viewed as an important forum for collegial exchange — this includes constructive

criticism, reaction, and discussion with colleagues. Multi-tasking is not acceptable in class. Please refrain from using cell phones.

No technology should be used during conversations with speakers.

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. 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.

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. 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.

Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom

Multi-tasking is not acceptable in class. Please refrain from using cell phones during class. No technology should be used during conversations with guest speakers.

Inclusiveness

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in broader society.