

**School of Architecture | Georgia Tech | Summer 2026**  
ARCH 3135 R1: City Literacy, elective seminar (3 credits)

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Credit Hours: 3 credits  
Classroom: MOB  
Days and hours of class: TR 14:30-16:30

Instructor: Mark Cottle

### **Course Description**

Barcelona serves as a LAB for this course, and the course serves as a PORTAL to the city. The course provides a framework and a toolkit to help you make sense of your summer living in Barcelona and visiting other European cities. And, after the summer, to return with a head full of ideas and questions about what is possible in the cities and neighborhoods in which you live.

### **Course Overview and Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to answer the following questions:

What makes a great city great – its physical form or the life it affords its inhabitants?

How do cities come to be – what motivates their origins and subsequent development?

Who is the city for – the rich and powerful or for every citizen and inhabitant?

What do the escalating crises – economic, environmental, infrastructural, social, technological -- reveal about the present and future of cities?

### **Required course materials**

All required course materials – readings, reference materials, links to resources – will be uploaded to the course Canvas site.

### **Grading Policy**

The goals, procedures, deliverables, and specific grading rubrics are outlined in each assignment. The main criterion for all assignments is straightforward: engaging with, and completing, the assignment as described on Canvas and discussed in class.

### **Description of Graded Components**

The course deliverables are organized into two groups:

1. *Above the Ground Vantage* focuses on Physical Form, Geography, and Urban Morphology;
2. *On the Ground Experience* focuses on Social Fabric, Public Spaces, and Life in Public Spaces.

Each group consists of different types of assignments: Observation and Documentation; Formal and Comparative Analysis; Responses to Readings; Short Quizzes. Each group is worth 40% of the course grade.

The remaining 20% focuses on Lessons from Barcelona: A Reflection Essay and an Annotated Visual Compilation, "City Literacy: Five Takeaways".

### **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance is mandatory. Learning is discursive and situated. Missing classes during a summer semester with an accelerated schedule means missing a lot of material. While all course material is posted on Canvas, one cannot make up for the way it is presented and discussed in class. If you are unable to attend class because of health or an emergency, please inform the instructor as soon as possible.

### **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 as outlined in Georgia Tech's Honor Code and the student Code of Conduct. We will review these together during the first class.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity.

### **Core Impacts and Career-Ready Competencies**

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas.

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome: Students will analyze the complexity of human behavior within designed environments, and trace – through an examination of urban environments – how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies: Intercultural Competence; Perspective-Taking; Persuasion.

#### **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 obtain an accommodations letter. Please also email me as soon as possible so that we can arrange 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. Simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. We will go over the Student-Faculty Expectations listed in the GT Catalog in class.

<https://catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/>

#### **Extensions, Late Assignments, and Re-scheduled/Missed Exams**

All assignments will be upload to Canvas by the posted due date and time. Late assignments will be accepted, without penalty, for 24 hours after the due date and time. Extensions on projects will be given, and missed exams rescheduled, for exceptional reasons only upon discussion with the professor.

#### **Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom**

The use of mobile devices is NOT allowed during class.

#### **Undergraduate Academic Success Resources**

The Office of Undergraduate Education and Student Success has compiled a list of resources for undergraduate students, which are available on the Academic Success and Advising page.

#### **Student Well-Being**

At Georgia Tech, we are concerned about your overall physical, social, and mental well-being. Please review the comprehensive list of wellness-related resources compiled and maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-being. We will also review the resources listed together on the first day of class.