

ECON 4803/ECON 8803: AI for Social Good

3.0 credit hours

June 29, 2026 – Aug. 06, 2026

Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, 9:30 am – 11:40 am

Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons 129

Instructor

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Professor of Economics

Associate Dean, Ivan Allen College

Office Hours: Thursday 11.40 to 12.15 Old CE Room 221

General Course Information

Description

This course introduces the use of AI in analyzing some of the most pressing social challenges of our times. We will discuss how AI may be used to better understand problems including but not limited to food insecurity, education and health access, well-being and sustainability. The course is not about how to code but about applying AI and ML tools to provide solutions to big social problems.

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

None

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will have the foundational ability to:

- Research some of the complex social problems
- Analyze these problems using data and AI tools
- Understand the advantages and limitations of AI tools

Assignments

Attendance and Participation: 10%

Homework Assignments: 30%

Project: 60%

All Dates will be posted on Canvas

Suggested Reading

[AI for Social Good: Using Artificial Intelligence to Save the World](#) by Rahul Dodhia, Wiley

[AI for Good: Applications in Sustainability, Humanitarian Action, and Health](#) by Juan M. Lavista Ferres (Author), William B. Weeks (Author), Brad Smith (Foreword)

Podcast

[Three ways India is using AI for development](#)

[AI in Africa: Barriers, opportunities and policy](#)

Course Policies, Expectations, & Guidelines

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 plagiarizing on any work for the class will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodation 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.

Attendance

Given the small size, class meeting schedule, and interactive nature of this class, attendance is expected at each class meeting. 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. ***If you are not feeling well or are sick, including a cold, etc., please do not come to class but inform me via email.***

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/> .

Extensions & Late Assignments

I expect you to turn your assignments in on time. I also understand occasional extraordinary circumstances, and I am not unreasonable if you have a truly extraordinary situation. As in your future professional life, communication about such situations is vital.

If your assignment is submitted on Canvas after the due date and time published, and we have not agreed on an extension or late submission, you will receive only partial credit (max up to 50%) for that assignment.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech we believe it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectations that you can have of your instructor and that I have of you. 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.

Food and Drink

Please refrain from eating during class to minimize distractions for yourself and your classmates. The smells and sounds associated with eating can cause distractions for you and your classmates and be bothersome to those with sensory sensitivities. Having a bottle of water, cup of coffee or tea, or a soda in class to drink is certainly allowed and encouraged! We will take breaks through the class meeting. Please feel free to bring a snack for this break period.

Additional Resources for Students

If you need assistance in the course, or in other areas, please don't hesitate to reach out for help. Resources to keep in mind if you're facing challenges while at Tech include the Dean of Students (<https://studentlife.gatech.edu>), the Counseling Center (<https://counseling.gatech.edu>), the GT Police (<https://police.gatech.edu>), Stamps Health Services (<https://health.gatech.edu>), and the Department of Belonging and Student Support (<https://belonging.gatech.edu/studentssupport>). Your instructor has also completed Safe Space and QPR training.

If you are having issues with housing, food insecurity, clothing, or other financial issues, please be aware of possible assistance available to you through the STAR Program (Students' Temporary Assistance and Resources). More details on the STAR Program are available at: <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/star-services>