

VIP PROJECT TEAM Syllabus

CINEINNOVATE STUDIOS: EARTHSEED SOUTH VIP, Section VYI, 1 - 3 credits
FALL, 2026

Instructor Information

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General Course Information

Course Description

CineInnovate Studios: EarthSeed South is a Vertically Integrated Project (VIP) that brings together undergraduate and graduate students in an interdisciplinary, humanities-centered collaboration focused on sustainability, storytelling, and social justice. Inspired by the Afrofuturist vision of Octavia E. Butler, this course engages students in exploring how creative media can address climate change, food justice, and Black livability in the American South.

Working in sustained partnership with community organizations such as Patchwork City Farms and A Taste of Paradise Garden, students will participate in service-learning and field-based research centered on sustainable agriculture, cultural knowledge, and community resilience. These collaborations provide the foundation for a range of creative and scholarly outputs that amplify local voices and document ongoing environmental justice work.

Students in the VIP will operate as a collaborative media studio, producing an in-house, peer-reviewed digital journal; a series of micro-documentaries; and a podcast that highlights the people, practices, and philosophies shaping EarthSeed South. Through these projects, students will explore themes including food sovereignty, botanical and medicinal knowledge, and Afrofuturist approaches to environmental storytelling.

As part of a vertically integrated team, students will take on evolving roles across research, production, editing, and publication, contributing to long-term project continuity and mentorship across cohorts. The course emphasizes iterative production, peer review, and public-facing scholarship, culminating in contributions to the annual EarthSeed

Documentary Showcase and a growing digital archive of Black-led sustainability initiatives in Atlanta and the broader South.

By integrating media production with community engagement, CinelInnovate Studios: EarthSeed South positions students to use storytelling as a tool for environmental advocacy, cultural preservation, and social impact.

Course Learning Outcomes

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

- Engage critically with concepts of sustainability, food justice, and Afrofuturism (inspired by Octavia E. Butler) as they relate to the EarthSeed South initiative.
- Develop original story ideas and project proposals for micro-documentaries, podcast episodes, and journal contributions that highlight the work of community partners such as Patchwork City Farms and A Taste of Paradise Garden.
- Participate in volunteer and service-learning activities with community partners to gain firsthand understanding of urban agriculture, sustainability practices, and community engagement.
- Contribute to a collaborative studio environment through idea generation, peer feedback, and early-stage project development that supports long-term project continuity.
- Make substantial contributions to the team project;
- Experience different roles on a large, multidisciplinary team.

Required Course Materials

Tools and Software

4 to 5 GB of cloud-based storage (iCloud, Google Drive, Dropbox, or Box)

Smartphone with HD video capabilities

Otter Voie Meeting (Free Version)

Grading Policy

The premise of VIP is teams working on projects. Much like a real-world team, individual members work on different aspects of the project. Team members range from sophomores through graduate students, from first-time participants to students who have been involved for four or more semesters. The number of credits for which a student is enrolled is considered in

grading. Zero-credit students (reserved for paid participation only) participate in the same grading process.

Description of Graded Components

Your grade is based on three areas, along with three requirements. Although each student contributes in different ways, you must demonstrate achievements in all three areas below.

Documentation and records (50%)

- Detailed weekly entries in your VIP Notebook (not optional).
- VIP documentation, presentations/recommendations, and drafts of assets uploaded to the Teams' Folder, Dropbox, and Google Drive (transferring from Discord and other "work" sites)
- Contributions to in-class oral discussion, online writing in Canvas and Teams, and slideshow reports required by the instructors
- Engagement in project including email and in person communication with the instructors,
- Final assets for the semester added to the Google Drive

Teamwork and interaction (50%)

- Peer Evaluations submitted to the VIP Office (twice a semester)
- On-time attendance in class sessions and subcommittee meetings
- Active contributions to overall team and subcommittee goals
- Coordinates activities with other team and subcommittee members
- Assists other team and subcommittee members
- Team presentation(s) and related semi-final and final products

Course Policies

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. I will take attendance at the start of every session. Anyone who misses four classes or has four unexcused absences will automatically drop a letter grade. Anyone who accumulates six unexcused absences will automatically fail. Students who arrive more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time are considered absent. The Institute's [rules and regulations](#) for approved absences will be strictly adhered to. If you

must miss class, please contact me through MS Teams **at least 30 minutes before** class time to discuss excusing your absence.

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 needs, and to obtain an accommodation letter. Also, please schedule a meeting with me 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.

Course Expectations, Policies and Resources

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

- ENGL 1102

Microsoft Teams

We will use **Microsoft Teams** as the primary method of communication in this course. I will share weekly objectives, notes, journal prompts, prereading assignments, previewing assignments, and announcements through Teams. Microsoft Teams is the **best (and preferred) method** to contact us outside of class. If you are running late or need to take an excused absence, please notify me by sending a message through Teams. Emails will not suffice in these instances. If you would like to schedule a meeting with we outside of class, please send those requests via email.

Schedule of Classes

Weeks 1–2:

Topic: Introduction to EarthSeed South, Afrofuturism, and Sustainability

Weeks 3–4:

Food Justice, Urban Agriculture, and Community Partnerships

Weeks 5–6:

Documentary Storytelling & Ethical Community Engagement

Weeks 7–8:

Research Development & Story Ideation

Weeks 9–10:

Fieldwork Preparation & Volunteer Engagement

Weeks 11–12:

Project Development (Podcast, Micro-Docs, Journal Concepts)

Weeks 13–14:

Peer Feedback, Reflection, and Future Project Planning