

[CP2020/4020] Intro to Urban & Regional Planning (3 Credits)

School of City and Regional Planning | College of Design | Fall 2026

Georgia Institute of Technology

Course Syllabus

◆ Course Information

Monday/Wednesday 11:00 AM – 12:15 PM @ TBD

Instructor: Chaeyeon Han (chan303@gatech.edu)

Office Hours: M/W 12:30 PM – 13:30 or by appointment @Center for Urban Resilience and Analytics (760 Spring St NW, Suite 217)

◆ Course Description

This course provides an overview of the planning of cities and metropolitan regions. The legal and historical context as well as substantive areas of urban planning are addressed.

◆ Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to

- Explain the historical development of human settlements and the emergence of cities
- Analyze city plans and understand the social, economic, political, and environmental forces that shape urban planning
- Demonstrate a solid understanding of foundational planning theories and key areas within the planning discipline
- Apply planning theories to real-world planning practices, policies, and case studies

◆ Required Materials

All required materials will be made available on our Canvas site. There are no textbooks that students must purchase. All readings and assignments will be posted on Canvas.

◆ Grading Policy

Class Participation and Attendance: 10%

Reading Reflections and Discussion: 20%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Group Project: 25%

Individual Project: 25%

Optional Extra Credit: 5%

90% <= A

80% <= B < 90%

70% <= C < 80%

60% <= D < 70%

F < 60%

◆ Course Requirements

Success and your grade are dependent on the following: attending lectures; providing thoughtful commentary in class; and demonstrating your acquired knowledge through written assignments, group projects, and exams.

Class Participation and Attendance (10%)

Class participation and attendance will help you to get the most of this course! It will make the content more meaningful, help with comprehension, and, most importantly, make the course more enjoyable. Attendance at all sessions is important, especially when there is a guest speaker. You may miss up to two sessions for any reason with no penalty. Beyond two absences, your attendance grade will be lowered. Please let me know if there are extenuating circumstances that will cause you to miss more than two classes, and I will do my best to work with your situation. I do not need to know details, but please let me know in advance.

Reading Reflections (20%)

Keeping up with the assigned reading and submitting reading reflections is required for this course and a great way to prepare yourself for lectures and exams. Reading assignments are included in the detailed course schedule below. Weekly discussion boards will be posted on Canvas with instructions and/or a prompt for you to answer based on that week's reading.

Midterm Exam (20%)

The exam will cover the first half of class. It will be a close book/notes, in-class test which may include short answer questions. Questions are from the readings, lectures, and discussions.

Group Project (25%)

You will form groups of 4 to 5 people. This group is semester-long as you will participate in in-class activities and discussions with your group members, as well as your final group project. For the group project, each group will be assigned one of the areas that we will have covered and will give a "TED talk" style presentation to the class. Instructions and a grading rubric will be distributed later in the semester. The TED Talk should focus on a specific issue within that topic area. This could be a theoretical concept of a practical issue related to that topic. One helpful note would be to find a podcast or article on your "issue" to help structure your talk.

Individual Project (25%)

For your individual project, you will each pick a city of your choice – your hometown, a place you have lived, currently live, or want to live, etc. You will review this city's comprehensive plan and write a paper reviewing the plan based on a set of criteria and questions you must answer. Instructions and a grading rubric will be distributed later in the semester.

Optional Extra Credit Assignment (5%)

The optional extra credit assignment will involve attending (either in-person or virtual) a public meeting in your community. This could include a City Council meeting, Zoning Board Meeting, Planning Commission Meeting, or other special-called meetings that are open to the public. You will be required to write a two-page summary of the meeting, which will include your thoughts and takeaways. Credit will be given as earned based on effort and quality. You may complete this assignment at any time throughout the semester.

Attendance Policy

Active class participation and consistent attendance are essential components of this course. Engaging in class discussions enhances understanding of the material and contributes to a more enjoyable learning experience. Students are permitted to miss up to two classes for any reason without penalty. Absences beyond this limit will result in a reduction of the attendance grade. If a student anticipates missing more than two classes, they must notify the instructor in advance. The instructor will make every effort to accommodate the student's circumstances.

Academic Honesty/Integrity Statement

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy. For information on the Georgia Tech Student Honor code, consult the website: <https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-life/academic-honor-code>. You are expected to uphold and abide by this Honor Code.

ADA Accommodations

If you require course adaptations or accommodations due to a disability, if you have emergency medical information that I should be aware of, or, if you need special arrangements in the event the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment to discuss within the first week of classes, or, as soon as possible after a change in your circumstances occurs which requires an accommodation.

Schedule Changes

Events may cause the instructor to rearrange class topics due to speaker availability, severe weather, etc. Schedule changes will be announced in class or via the course website and email.

Core IMPACTS Statement

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. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcomes:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and 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

COURSE OUTLINE (subject to change)

Week 1

August 24: Introduction and Overview

August 26: Introduction and Overview

Week 2

August 31: Introduction to Urban Planning

September 2: Urbanization and Urban Growth

Reading and Reflection:

- City Reader: Davis, Kingsley, 1965, "The urbanization of the human population."
- City Reader: Childe, V. Gordon, 1950, "The urban revolution."
- Puga, D. (2010). The Magnitude and Causes of Agglomeration Economies. *Journal of Regional Science*, 50(1), 203–219.

Week 3

September 7: NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

September 9: Urban Problems in Modern Cities

Reading and Reflection:

- City Reader: "The Great Towns," Friedrich Engels
- "Living Hell: New York's Tenements were Nightmares in the Early 1900s," Aimee Heidelberg, 2024, History Collection. <https://historycollection.com/living-hell-new-yorks-tenements-were-nightmares-in-the-early-1900s/>
- "A Tale of Two Planners: Jane Jacobs vs. Robert Moses," Lauren Walser, 2016, National Trust for Historic Preservation. <https://savingplaces.org/stories/a-tale-of-two-planners-jane-jacobs-and-robert-moses>

Week 4

September 14: Modern Cities and Wicked Problem

September 16: Land Use Planning and Zoning

Reading and Reflection:

- Rittel, Horst WJ, and Melvin M. Webber. "Dilemmas in a general theory of planning." *Policy sciences* 4, no. 2 (1973): 155-169.
- Plan A: City of Atlanta Comprehensive Development Plan (Introduction, pp.3-20)
- "Do You Know the Difference Between Land-Use Planning and Zoning?", Jennifer Blankenship, <https://www.nadigroup.com/insights/do-you-know-the-difference-between-land-use-planning-and-zoning>

Week 5

September 21: Land Use Planning and Zoning

- **Special Topics -- TBD**

September 23: Urban Governance and Policy

Reading and Reflection:

- City Reader: "The City as a Growth Machine: Toward a Political Economy of Place," Harvey Molotch
- City Reader: "The Right to the City," David Harvey

Week 6

September 28: Urban Design and Built Environment

September 30: Urban Design and Built Environment

- In-class movie: "Social Life of Small Urban Spaces"

Reading and Reflection:

- City Reader: "The City Image and Its Elements," Kevin Lynch
- City Reader: "The Design of Spaces," William Whyte

Week 7

October 5: NO CLASS – Fall Break!

October 7: NO CLASS – 2026 ACSP CONFERENCE

Week 8

October 12: Economic Development

October 14: Economic Development

- **Guest Speaker: Chaneum Park (SCaRP Ph.D. Candidate)**

Reading and Reflection:

- "Planning Local Economic Development, CH3: Concepts and Theory of Local Economic Development," Nancey G. Leigh & Edward J. Blakely
- "Planning Local Economic Development, CH6: Introduction to Analytical Methods for Local Economic Development Planning," Nancey G. Leigh & Edward J. Blakely

Week 9

October 19: MIDTERM EXAM REVIEW SESSION

October 21: MIDTERM EXAM

Week 10

October 26: Housing

October 28: Housing

- **Special Topics -- TBD**

Reading and Reflection:

- “A ‘Forgotten History’ of How The U.S. Government Segregated America” (Podcast), NPR.
<https://www.npr.org/transcripts/526655831#:~:text=The%20whole%20building%20conference%20advocated,This%20was%20all%20recommendations.>
- “Housing: Commodity versus Right,” Mary Pattillo

Week 11

November 2: Environmental Planning and Sustainability

November 4: Environmental Planning and Sustainability

Reading and Reflection:

- City Reader: Towards Sustainable Development, World Commission on Environment and Development
- “Beyond the Tragedy of the Commons,” Elinor Ostrom

Week 12

November 9: Advocacy Planning and Community Development

November 11: Advocacy Planning and Community Development

- **Special Topics -- TBD**

Reading and Reflection:

- City Reader: “Advocacy and Pluralism in Planning,” Paul Davidoff
- City Reader: “A Ladder of Citizen Participation,” Sherry Arnstein

Week 13

November 16: Transportation Planning and Mobility

November 18: Transportation Planning and Mobility

- **Guest Speaker: Seung Jae Lieu (SCaRP Ph.D. Student)**

Reading and Reflection:

- City Reader: “The Drive-in Culture of Contemporary America,” Kenneth T. Jackson
- City Reader: “The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety,” Jane Jacobs

*November 21: Individual Project due (midnight)

Week 14

November 23: Planning in Practice, AI and Planning

November 25: NO CLASS – Thanksgiving!

Week 15

November 30: Presentation Prep

December 2: Student Presentations

Week 16

December 7: Student Presentations

- Final day of class