

GT 2030 Syllabus

Progress & Service Forum, 3.0 credits

Tu/Th 2:00-3:15 p.m., Old CE G10

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Christopher Lawton

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General Course Information

Description

Georgia Tech is committed to “developing exceptional, principled leaders . . . ready to produce novel ideas and create solutions with real human impact.” This course is an important first step in your path toward that goal. It is, quite simply, a moment to begin considering what our shared dedication to “progress and service” will mean for you.

This semester, we will turn the Institute’s Mission and Vision Statements into a series of foundational, practical, professional questions. We will work together to develop an initial set of tools for identifying and framing complex problems, shaping relevant lines of inquiry, evaluating complex past and present sources, and identifying and considering multiple perspectives. By practicing skills for reflecting on each point of our journey, you will also begin an invaluable—and hopefully lifelong—process of mindfully mapping connections between yourself, your role as a professional, and the impact you have on society.

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

None

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should have the foundational ability to:

- Integrate multiple perspectives in defining complex problems
- Reflect on their identity development as professionals
- Describe how their actions as professionals impact society

Leaders in Progress & Service

This course serves as a foundational course for Georgia Tech’s Leaders in Progress & Service initiative. Successful completion of the educational sequence will result in the award of a new proposed graduation distinction, “*Leader in Progress and Service*,” to be recorded on the diploma.

The educational sequence will require completion of:

- An approved foundational course with a grade of “B” or better,
- three approved and faculty-mentored “immersive learning” experiences (such as undergraduate research, study abroad, VIP, Create-X, community service) spread over 3 semesters, and
- participation in a campus-wide Progress and Service Summit, hosted by the Leaders in Progress and Service office and attended by invited experts, students, faculty, employers, and other community partners, along with an accompanying final reflection.

Learn more about Leaders in Progress & Service at <https://distinguishyourself.gatech.edu>. More information about the educational sequence will be provided by your instructor in the first week of class.

Course Requirements & Grading

Assignment	Date	Weight (Points out of 1000 total)
In-Class Reflections (10 x 35 points)	Throughout semester	350 points
Informational Interview Summary	10/01/26	50 points
Professional Identity Statement	10/22/26	125 points
Group Problem Definition Project	12/08/26	350 points
Problem Definition Reflection	12/10/26	125 points

Description of Graded Components

Reflections (10 x 35 points each = 350 points)

There will be ten reflections assigned during the semester, each asking you to thoughtfully consider an assigned topic, reading, set of discussions, or guest lecture. Please see the course calendar for due dates. Reflection prompts and instructions will be posted on our “Assignments” menu.

Informational Interview Summary (50 points)

Part of the purpose of this course is to help you reflect on your own unique identity as a professional, as well as the impact professionals’ actions have on society. To advance your learning toward those goals, you will be required to interview a working professional in a field you have an interest in entering. You will draft a summary of your interview for this assignment. More detail will be provided in class.

Professional Identity Statement (125 points)

As you clarify your own values, talents, and interests, you will also begin to reflect on the unique contributions you can make within the profession (or professions) you are thinking of pursuing. The professional identity statement is a professional piece of writing that can help you communicate to yourself and others the unique role you can play - a professional mission statement of sorts. More detail will be provided in class.

Group Problem Definition Project (350 points)

You will be assigned to a small group to complete a project in which you use the skills and perspectives you’ve learned in class to define, not solve, a complex problem. You will have time in class to work on many aspects of the project, but there will also be a good bit of work your group will work to accomplish outside of class. More detail will be provided in class.

Problem Definition Reflection (125 points)

After finishing your group problem definition project, you will write a problem definition reflection that illustrates what you learned over the course of the semester, and particularly during that project, about how one integrates multiple perspectives in defining complex problems. This professional piece of writing will show how you have synthesized your learning in the course. More detail will be provided in class.

Grading Scale

You have the opportunity to earn up to 1000 points over the course of the semester. Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	900-1000 points
B	800-899 points
C	700-799 points
D	600-699 points
F	0-599 points

Course Materials

Course Text

Terry Tempest Williams, *Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place* (1991)

<https://www.amazon.com/Refuge-Unnatural-History-Family-Williams/dp/B000VF6YD6>

[https://gatech.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TBListView?catalogId=10001&storeId=15054&langId=-1&courseXml=<textbookorder xmlns=""><courses><course dept="GT" num="2030" sect="HP3" term="F26"></course></courses></textbookorder>](https://gatech.bncollege.com/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/TBListView?catalogId=10001&storeId=15054&langId=-1&courseXml=<textbookorder xmlns=)

Additional readings, required exercises, and other materials to prepare for class will be posted to Canvas prior to class meetings.

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 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](#) (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 and Participation

Given the small size, class meeting schedule, and interactive nature of this class, attendance at each class meeting is expected. You must be here for the entire class period to be counted as having attended for that day. Everyone is allowed two no-questions-asked absences from class. More than two absences without approved written documentation will adversely affect your grade.

Collaboration & Group Work

Your work on your assignments should be your own. For the group project, I expect you to work out among your group an equitable division of labor, and work together on the overall direction of the project. If during your group project, you do not feel your team is working together in an equitable manner, please come to me sooner rather than later to help you facilitate a solution.

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 any assignment or exam will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

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 a zero for the 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. 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

Georgia Tech's Center for Teaching and Learning has noted that, "Research on learning shows that unexpected noises and movement automatically divert and capture people's attention, which means that one student's use of a mobile device (laptops, cell phones, tablets, etc.) can distract another student, thus disrupting their ability to learn. In addition, students using mobile devices often become engaged in matters that are not related to the class they are attending. Further, research indicates that students taking notes on laptops tend to process less as they take notes, and the depth of their learning suffers."

For these reasons, I strongly encourage you to take notes by hand on paper. Understanding that you may prefer to use a tablet or laptop to take notes, they, too, are permitted. However, please put your phones away and on silent during class.

Additional Resources for Students

I want to see you succeed not just in this course, but at Georgia Tech and during this time of your life in general. 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/student-support>).

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>