

PUBP 2651/4651: Public Policy Internship – Syllabus

3.0 credit hours, Fall 2026

Prof. McNeil – Co-Director – Law, Science, and Technology (LST) Program

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Office Hours: TBD

General Information

Catalog Description

The public policy internship is intended to foster learning by supporting active participation and introspection into the internship experience. To receive credit for the course, students will perform their assignment as required by the employer, reflect on their experiences through daily/weekly journal writings, and prepare a research paper analyzing their work experiences relative to concepts or theories from the social sciences or policy studies.

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

There are no pre- or co-requisites for enrollment in this course, however enrollment is only for students who have secured an internship as approved by the School of Public Policy.

Course Supervision

Prof. McNeil, the LST Director, will oversee the various requirements you must meet to receive course credit for the internship. You will submit weekly reports via Canvas of your hours, along with a weekly reflection to Prof. McNeil, and you can also come to him with any questions, concerns, or matters you'd like to discuss.

Course Requirements & Grading

There are three course requirements, all of which must be completed, to pass this course. **Failure to complete *any one* of these requirements prior to the final day of classes will result in receiving a grade of F for the course.**

- Work a total of approximately 100 hours in your internship
- Timely submission of weekly reports/reflections to the LST Director
- Successful final paper to the LST Director

Grading Scale

Your grade in this course will be based upon the quality and timely submission of your weekly reports/reflections to the LST Director, and your presentation on a legal topic given to the LST Director. You have the opportunity to earn **1000** points over the course of the semester. Your total points earned will be divided by **1000** to determine a percentage grade, and your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90 – 100%
B	80 – 89%
C	70 - 79%
D	60 – 69%
F	Below 60% OR failure to complete any one of the three course requirements outlined in the section above

Weekly Reports/Reflections Journal to the LST Director

50 points each X 14 reports = 700 points

Each week of the semester, you will upload a weekly report/reflection journal in Canvas by 12 noon on Monday. This document will include the number of hours you worked in the week prior, the cumulative hours you have worked over the semester, and a narrative section in which you reflect on the week prior. You **MUST** use the template provided for the weekly report/reflection, and the document must be uploaded on Canvas prior to the time it is due in order to receive credit. Late submissions without prior approval will not be accepted. Due dates for each week's report/reflection are listed in Canvas, and they will be adjusted if Monday of a particular week is a holiday. You must submit a report/reflection each week one is due, even if you did not work that particular week due to scheduling reasons.

The work environment can be complex and fast paced. A **weekly report/reflection** journal will help you understand your role, work, and progress. You should reflect on your tasks, difficulties, insights, your opinions, and reactions, and discuss problems, contradictions, political issues, human behavior, etc. Your perspectives are likely to evolve during the semester. This is a project notebook, where the "project" is both your work and your personal development. Be sure to include reflections on how classroom learning has provided useful insight into (or is contradicted by) your experience.

Based on the content of these reflections, Prof. McNeil may also follow up with you to discuss any concerns you may have, challenges you are facing, etc., to help you move forward successfully in the internship. No confidential information about substantive matters on which you are working should be shared in these reflections.

Your grade will be based both on the completion and quality of your reflection.

Final Paper

300 points

For this, the intern will develop a research topic that allows them to analyze an aspect of the policy process related to your internship assignment and duties. You will select and refine your research question in consultation with your faculty advisor. It would be helpful to use the methodology of *participant observation*. An excellent 26 page guide on how to do this is: *Turning an Internship into a Research Opportunity* by Judith E. Scott and Susan S. Silbey: http://web.mit.edu/~ssilbey/www/pdf/intern_to_research.pdf Papers can examine current policy disputes, examine aspects of the policy process (e.g., the internship organization's role, strategies, etc.), examine the utility of policy concepts and models from college coursework, or offer evidence-based advocacy related to the internship assignment.

A one-page description of the proposed paper topic and a basic outline of the paper is due to Director McNeil by **November, 2nd 2026**. Topics should be discussed with Director McNeil before submission. At minimum, a 15-page final paper is to be submitted to Director McNeil during the final weeks of classes (**November 16th – December 8th**).

Course Materials

Course Text

There is no required text for this course.

Additional Materials/Resources

Templates for your weekly reports/reflections are provided on Canvas.

Course Website

There will be a course website on Canvas. Canvas will be used for submission of weekly reports/reflections, as well as grading.

Course 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. 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.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services at 404.894.2563 or <http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>, 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.

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. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectations that you can have of me 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.

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 LGBTQIA Resource Center (<https://lgbtqia.gatech.edu>). Your instructor has also completed LGBTQIA Safe Space 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>

Inclusion

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

Course Schedule - Weekly Report/Reflection Due Dates (Intern uploads in Canvas by noon on dates listed)

Monday, August 31

Tuesday, September 8

Monday, September 14

Monday, September 21

Monday, September 28

Wednesday, October 7

Monday, October 12

Monday, October 19

Monday, October 26

Monday, November 2 (also one-page description of the proposed paper topic and a basic outline of the paper is due)

Monday, November 9

Monday, November 16

Monday, November 23

Monday, November 30

Final Paper

To be submitted by the intern during the final weeks of classes (November 16th – December 8th) at a time agreed to by LST Director and the Intern.