

PUBP 4010: POLICY TASK FORCE I
Course Number: 82808
Fall 2026

Day: Friday
Time: 9:30 am-12:15 pm
Location: Skiles 317

Instructors:

Chris Hayter

Contact: chayter3@gatech.edu
202-321-8730 (cell)

I will generally respond to you within four hours or less (with some exceptions)

Office: 307 D.M. Smith

Office Hours: I will always make time to meet with you. Contact me to set up a time.

Monica Novoa

Contact: monica.novoa@gatech.edu

Office: 317 D.M. Smith

Office Hours: Friday 1:30 – 2:30 pm or by appointment.

Course Description (from Course Catalog): Capstone project in which teams of students formulate, analyze, and recommend policy options.

Required Course Materials

All required readings will be distributed electronically via Canvas. There is no required textbook for this course. Students are expected to complete assigned readings prior to the class session for which they are listed.

Course Goal:

Provide team-oriented, experiential opportunities to comprehend and feasibly address social problems using human-centered design sprints and other innovation-oriented approaches.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1) Apply human-centered design (HCD) principles to analyze, design, and validate feasible policy solutions, including:

- Problem definition and framing
- Discovery and empathy
- Ideation and co-design
- Prototyping and proof-of-concept development
- Validation and testing with users and stakeholders
- Refinement and presentation

2) Design and advance a policy solution that is feasible within a two-year implementation horizon that account for organizational, resource, and political realities.

3) Communication to Non-academic Audiences

- Clearly and effectively communicate with non-academic audiences to observe and comprehend their needs, obtain feedback on hypothesized solutions, test solution proof-of-concepts, and share final deliverables.
- Effectively communicate through a variety of media to present processes, intermediate outcomes, and final outputs associated with HCD solution sprints.
- Continuously revise and adapt communication strategies and products based on feedback received from instructors, clients, and stakeholders.

Processes:

The HCD solution sprint approach will provide a common method for addressing social challenges. Students will approach problem solving as a process. Assignments will emphasize specific elements of this approach, including:

- **Exploration:** problem framing, mapping, narrowing, and validating.
- **Ideation:** brainstorming, combining and reconfiguring, proof-of-concept development.
- **Solution:** customer discovery, proof-of-concept refinement, evaluation, venture planning, pitch (“go or no-go” decision).

The semester will begin with an individual methods refresher exercise focused on exploring and defining a focal problem and corresponding solution with outside audiences, while also conducting background research on potential policy areas. Students will then work in teams for the remainder of the semester to address challenges presented during different assignments.

In-Class Exercises:

We will complete in-class exercises that focus on scoping and defining feasible problems, constructing solution prototypes, and other relevant class concepts. The primary goal of the assignments will be to illustrate the relationship between feedback and prototype reconfiguration, giving and receiving feedback, and how HCD may apply to career preparation. Insights and lessons learned will be discussed.

Teamwork and Peer Evaluations:

Teams are expected to exhibit equitable contribution to results and participation during presentations. Peer evaluations are an important component of final grades and will be used to assess individual contributions to team-based work.

Additional Criteria for Successful Completion

Successful completion of this course requires consistent attendance, equitable participation in team-based work, and timely submission of all assignments. Professional conduct, including respectful engagement with teammates, instructors, clients, and external stakeholders, is expected throughout the semester and will be reflected in participation and peer evaluation grades.

Grading Policy:

Assignments/Distribution (percentage)

15	Skill Building/Design Practice Exercises
15	Exploration Exercises
20	Campus Project: Scoping
30	Campus Project: Final
10	Peer Evaluation
10	Class Participation

Grading Scale:

Final grades 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 0-59%

Attendance Policy:

You are expected to attend all classes. According to Georgia Tech policy, excused absences (*e.g.*, illness, family crises) require written documentation, which can be obtained through the Office of Student Life (see link below). Communication is a critical factor that we use to determine whether an absence is excused. If you have advance knowledge of an absence, please let us know before the event. Absences that occur without prior notification or where proper documentation is not provided will be considered unexcused. For each unexcused absence, 5 percent will be deducted from your final course grade. Please consult this link to understand our mutual expectations, rights, and responsibilities, including in instance of a medical or personal emergency. <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/policies/student-absence-regulations/>

Also, attending out-of-class meetings with your teammates (and, if applicable, your instructor) is also required. Any absences will be factored into your peer evaluation and participation grades.

Finally, if you are a double major or are undertaking a minor, please check to ensure that other required courses do not conflict with scheduled task force time in both semesters which is always scheduled on Friday mornings.

Academic Honor Code

All students are expected to comply with the Georgia Tech Honor Code. By enrolling in this course, you affirm your commitment to the ideals of honor and integrity: *"I commit to uphold the ideals of honor and integrity by refusing to betray the trust bestowed upon me as a member of the Georgia Tech community."* For more information, see the [Office of Student Integrity](#).

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

One serious kind of academic misconduct is plagiarism, which occurs when a writer, speaker, or designer deliberately uses someone else's language, ideas, images, or other original material or code without fully acknowledging its source by quotation marks as appropriate, in footnotes or endnotes, in works cited, and in other ways as appropriate (modified from WPA Statement on "Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism"). If you engage in plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct, you will fail the assignment in which you have engaged in academic misconduct and be referred to the Office of Student Integrity, as required by Georgia Tech policy. We strongly urge you to be familiar with these Georgia Tech sites:

Honor Challenge — <https://osi.gatech.edu/students/honor-code>

Office of Student Integrity — <http://www.osi.gatech.edu/index.php/>

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to continually strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgment, and responsibility between faculty members and students. See the [Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement](#) for a full description of both faculty and student expectations. Violations of these expectations may be addressed through the Office of Student Integrity.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requiring accommodations should contact the [Office of Disability Services](#) (ODS) as early in the semester as possible. Once accommodations are established, students are responsible for providing their instructor with an Accommodation Letter from ODS. Please contact us within the first two weeks of class so we can ensure accommodations are in place before graded work begins.

<USG Core Impacts Language>

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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