# VIP 2601: Building with Communities Syllabus

**Course Prefix**: VIP

**Course Number**: 2601

**Course Name**: Building with Communities

**Semester**: (SU/FA/SP)

**Academic Year**: 2026-2027

## Instructor Information

**Instructors: Ruthie Yow and Anna Tinoco-Santiago**

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## General Course Information

***ABOUT VIP***

The Vertically-Integrated Projects (VIP) Program operates in a research and development context. Undergraduate students that join VIP teams earn academic credit for their participation in design/discovery efforts that assist faculty and graduate students with research and development issues in their areas of expertise. If you have any questions about how VIP courses count towards your degree, reach out to your major academic advisor.

**VIP teams are:**

Multidisciplinary - drawing students from all disciplines on campus;

Vertically-integrated - maintaining a mix of second-year undergraduate students through PhD students each semester (first-year students also sometimes participate);

Long-term - each undergraduate student may participate in a project for up to three years and each graduate student may participate for the duration of their graduate career.

**Course Description:** This VIP is focused on executing projects related to the built environment in concert with partners in Atlanta and metro Atlanta. Students choose one of three project teams and are guided by an internal advisor and an external advisor (associated with the partnering organization).

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

The continuity, technical depth, and disciplinary breadth of these teams are intended to:

1. Provide the time and context necessary for students to learn and practice many different professional skills, make substantial technical contributions to the project, and experience many different roles on a large, multidisciplinary design/discovery team.
2. Support long-term interaction between the graduate and undergraduate students on the team. The graduate students mentor the undergraduates as they work on the design/discovery projects related to the graduate students' interests or research.
3. Enable the completion of large-scale design/discovery projects that are of significant benefit to faculty members' research programs.

**Required Course Materials:**

None

**Grading Policy:**

Grading for the course will be broken down as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Participation, Short Assignments, and Attendance | 25% |
| Team Project | 25% |
| Academic Planning Project | 25% |
| Career Readiness Project | 25% |
| **Total** | **100%** |

**Grade Scale**

A 100%-90%

B 89%-80%

C 79%-70%

D 69%-60%

F <60%

## Course Policies

### Attendance Policy:

This class is designed for students to become active participants, so it's vital that all students attend each class session and are fully engaged in all class activities. This means that you'll need to do more than just show up at the appointed time and place—you'll also need to come to class prepared to participate.

Please attend every scheduled meeting on time. That said, if you are exhibiting any symptoms of illness (fever over 100.4 F, coughing, nausea, etc.), please stay home to rest, seek medical attention if appropriate, and contact me as soon as possible. Excessive lateness and absences (3 or more per semester) can negatively impact your final grade outcome. If you have extenuating circumstances, I will try and work with you to address those challenges. Please communicate early and often if you are struggling with issues that may call for accommodations.

### Criteria for Successful Completion and Acceptable Student Conduct:

Creating an engaging and productive class experience is the responsibility of both the instructor and the students involved. To ensure you are getting the most out of our class and contributing positively to our learning environment, please be mindful of the following:

1. Please create a habit of checking your GT e-mail and Canvas daily. Important class announcements and information will be posted to Canvas, and you want to make sure you're fully equipped for success.
2. Grades will be posted to Canvas throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to keep track of your submitted assignments and grade progress throughout the semester. If something seems missing or off to you, please reach out to me to discuss.
3. To ensure everyone feels safe, heard, and able to learn in our class, please demonstrate appropriate classroom behavior at all times. This means that you should speak and act in a respectful manner towards your classmates, your Team

Leader, and your instructor. To review the Student Code of Conduct, please visit https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-life/student-code-conductLinks to an external site.

**Academic Integrity Statement:**

This VIP is a class based in your own discovery, exploration, and reflection of what you want your time at Tech and professional life to be. Unpacking your thought processes based on information you acquire through campus resources is a major component of the assignments. Therefore, the use of AI is strongly discouraged. If you wish to use AI as part of your brainstorming process, that is fine; however, per the Georgia Tech Honor Code, no work produced via AI should be submitted as your own. If you have questions about what constitutes acceptable use, please see the instructor.

The Georgia Tech Academic Honor Code applies to all work submitted in this course. To review the Honor Code, please visit https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-life/academic-honor-code.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or accurate assessment of achievement, please notify me as soon as possible so we can resolve the issue. Students with disabilities should also contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), whose purpose is to collaborate with students, faculty, and staff to create a campus environment that ensures all students have an equal opportunity to access the Georgia Tech community. ODS can be reached at 404.894.2563, dsinfo@gatech.edu, or disabilityservices.gatech.edu

Please contact me ahead of time to discuss any issues related to disabilities. I am happy to work with you.