

Syllabus
PUBP 4211/ PUPB 6606
Urban Policy/Urban Development Policy, 3 Credits
Fridays, 2:00pm- 4:45pm, Skiles 269

Instructor Information

Instructor	Email	Office Hours / Virtual
David Edwards	davide.atlanta@gmail.com	By Appointment

Description

In this course, urban policy and urban economic development are examined with a focus on how cities address historical racial inequities. The framework for the class combines urban planning with municipal management and policy, using a complex adaptive systems approach. The class examines what policies can remediate the consequences of the legacy of racial discrimination in public policies and private actions of the past. The class features weekly expert guest speakers who have made significant contributions in addressing these issues.

Pre- &/or Co-Requisites

There are no prerequisites for this class. Knowledge of and/or experience with historic municipal issues; current policy concerns in the metro Atlanta area; policymaking and elected decision-makers; and policy levers, influencers, and grassroots advocacy are all helpful, but not necessary, to excel in the course.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand how cities generate value and how cities can address historical inequities through urban policy and planning
- Speak fluently about the “nuts and bolts” of policymaking in today’s urban environment
- Effectively address urban problems and develop practical solutions
- Make effective presentations and communicate complex ideas
- Interact meaningfully with local political and nonprofit leaders

Course Materials

There is no assigned textbook for this course. All readings are posted on Canvas.

Course Website and Other Classroom Management Tools

Link to the use of a Canvas site

Course Requirements & Grading

You will submit all assignments in Canvas. See the syllabus for deadlines.

Assignment /Weight

Weekly Commentaries - Submit a short (1- or 2-paragraph) written commentary from the

readings for each week. Graded on a three point scale. A response scoring a (3) will have at least one key insight that you have learned from each of the assigned readings and at least one question that you would like to discuss or get clarity on in class. A response scoring a (1) will merely demonstrate that the assignments have been read. 30%

One-time Presentation – Small student teams will make a brief presentation to the class and facilitate a conversation about how a policy analyst should go about advising a mayor on an assigned public policy problem. 10%

Class Participation and Attendance – Class presence and participation points are given to encourage your active class participation and discussion. You will be rewarded with a perfect score if you come to all classes and actively contribute to the class discussion during lectures and during conversations with guest speakers. Your contributions should offer different and unique, but relevant, perspectives, move the discussion and analysis forward and build on the comments of others. 30%

Semester-Long Project - Each team will be assigned a neighborhood in Atlanta and will build a strategy for how to improve its health and close racial equity gaps. Three presentations will be made over the course of the semester. 30%

Grading Scale

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 0-59%

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 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 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 Professor Rafter as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Attendance, Participation, and Etiquette

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the course material. The classroom should be viewed as an important forum for collegial exchange – this includes constructive criticism, reaction, and discussion with colleagues. Multi-tasking is not acceptable in class. Please refrain from using cell phones. No technology should be used during conversations with speakers.

Inclusiveness

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 broader society.

Canvas and Communications

Canvas will be our portal and virtual home for materials, and most online interaction. While changes to the class schedule are expected to be minimal, students will be notified. Any changes to the syllabus and the most recent version will be posted on the Canvas site. If you need to miss a class, please let Professor Edwards know in advance, if possible. Professor Edwards is your main point of contact for the class.

Campus Resources for Students

Please avail yourself to the many resources Georgia Tech has available for students. You can learn about these and more resources at <https://www.sga.gatech.edu/resources/>:

1. Degree Audit Tool (DegreeWorks)
2. Tutoring and Academic Support
3. Change of Major Resources
4. Career Discovery and Development (C2D2)
5. Canvas
6. Library
7. Dean of Students Assistance (Academic, Financial, Personal)
8. Stamps Health Services Appointment
9. GT CARE (Mental Health Support)
10. VOICE: Sexual Violence Prevention & Victim-Survivor Support
11. SGA Sexual Misconduct Manual
12. Financial Aid
13. International Student and Scholar Services
14. LGBTQIA Resource Center
15. Veterans Resource Center
16. Women's Resource Center
17. Center for Student Diversity and Inclusion

Course Schedule

Aug 23: Week One - Introduction to the Course and Overview of Major Goals and Themes

Summarizes the objective of the course, which is to examine how cities can address historical inequities through urban policy and planning. We also hope to train students on the “nuts and bolts” of policymaking in today’s urban environment. Students will spend the semester working in teams and playing the role of policy advisor. In this first class we will also review the methodological approach for the class projects, conduct some presentation development training and talk about fundamentals of racial equity and analysis.

Aug 30: Week Two – The Impulse to Urbanize and Why Cities Create Value

Describes the process by which we became an urbanized species. Reviews Childe’s theory concerning the series of interrelated social, economic, political, and cultural

changes that led to the earliest states and cities. Introduces concepts of increasing returns to scale and network effects as primary drivers of the urbanizing impulse.

Readings:

- V. Gordon Childe (1950) “The Urban Revolution”
- W. Brian Arthur (1996) “Increasing Returns and the New World of Business”

Video:

https://www.ted.com/talks/geoffrey_west_the_surprising_math_of_cities_and_corporations

Case Study:

The Challenges of Urban Governance

Speaker: Honorable Shirley Franklin, former Mayor of Atlanta

Sept 6: Week Three – The Kind of Problem the City Is

Introduces Warren Weaver’s typology regarding the three types of problems that science is capable of addressing (problems of simplicity, problems of disorganized complexity, problems of organized complexity). Discusses Jane Jacobs’ contention that cities are problems of organized complexity and the implications of that insight for how we frame urban challenges.

Readings:

- Warren Weaver (1948), “Science and Complexity”
- Jane Jacobs (1961) “The Kind of Problem a City Is” Chapter 22 from *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

Case Study:

Organizing a City Government as a Complex System

Speaker: Doug Shipman, City Council President, City of Atlanta

Sep 13: Week Four - Emergence and the City as a Complex Adaptive System

Introduces the concept of Complex Adaptive Systems and why cities belong to this class of systems. Focus will be on the concept of “emergence”; that is, how the urban outcomes we value – public safety, health, education, and economic mobility – emerge from the fundamental conditions of neighborhoods

Readings:

- Darren Nel (2018) “Planning for Dynamic Cities: Introducing a Framework to Understand Urban Change from a Complex Adaptive Systems Approach”
- Nick Hanauer (2019) “Better Schools Won’t Fix America”

Case Study:

Education as an Emergent Outcome

Speaker: Kamau Bobb, Senior Director, Constellations Center for Equity in Computing at Georgia Tech

Sep 20: Week Five – Crime, Policing and the Heuristics Trap

Introduces the concept of heuristics and the role they play and the risks they pose in policy making. Applies Kahneman’s heuristic typology to the case of crime and policing.

Readings:

- Daniel Kahneman (2011) “Before You Make That Big Decision” *Harvard Business Review*

- Interview with Todd Clear on Mass Incarceration (2013)

Video:

Patrick Sharkey on the Fall of Violence and the New Urban Poverty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47IISvRXmpA>

Case Study:

Policing and its Relationship to Neighborhood Health

Speaker: Kamau Franklin, Founder, Community Movement Builders

Sep 27: Week Six – The Root Causes of Urban Outcomes

Municipal governments and their non-profit partners are organized and managed under the assumption that they are dealing with problems of simplicity or problems of disorganized complexity. They assume that the problems they face – crime, housing affordability, failing schools, health disparities – can be addressed through “point solutions” based on linear cause and effects that can be identified and measured. This session will focus on how causality should be understood within complex adaptive systems and its implications for urban governance.

Readings:

- Jack Shonkoff and Andrew Garner (2012) “The Lifelong Effects of Early Childhood Adversity and Toxic Stress” The American Academy of Pediatrics
- John Kania, Mark Kramer, and Peter Senge, “The Water of Systems Change”
- David Byrne and Gill Callaghan (2014) “Hunting Causes in a Complex World”, Chapter 8 in Complexity Theory and the Social Sciences

Case Study:

Social Determinants of (Everything We Care About)

Speaker: Jeffrey Collins-Smythe, Executive Director, Atlanta Regional Collaborative to Improve Health Outcomes (ARCHI)

Oct 4: Week Seven - Project Team Updates

Project teams will provide results from the Discovery Phase of their project. The class will provide feedback, identify gaps, and offer advice on how the teams should proceed.

Oct 11: Week Eight - The Role of the Built Environment in Generating Urban Outcomes

Describes how the array of public policies and private actions over the past century have disrupted the healthy functioning of our cities and concentrated mostly Black and low-income residents into disconnected and unhealthy neighborhoods. Discusses the limits of urban planning based on the conceptual models it deploys. How the fractal geometry of cities is instrumental to their role as networks.

Readings:

- Christopher Alexander (1965) “A City is Not a Tree”
- Sharon Wohl (2017) “From Form to Process: Re-Conceptualizing Lynch in Light of Complexity Theory”
- Michael Batty (2008) “Generating Cities from the Bottom-Up: Using Complexity Theory for Effective Design”

Case Study:

Public Infrastructure and the Urban Fabric

Speaker: Scott Ball, Urban Designer

Oct 18: Week Nine – The Physical Legacy of Racism

Describes how the racialized policies of the past are imprinted on the physical attributes of our neighborhoods. Explores how these attributes continue to drive outcomes as a result of the impact they have on the physical health of residents.

Readings:

- Richard Rothstein (2017) “If San Francisco, Then Everywhere?” Chapter One from The Color of Law
- Heather McGhee (2019) Chapter 2 from The Sum of Us
- Brian An (2019) “The Physical Legacy of Racism: How Redlining Cemented the Modern Built Environment”
- <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/08/24/climate/racism-redlining-cities-global-warming.html>

Case Study: Improving Economic Mobility through Place-Based Interventions

Speaker: Atiba Mbiwan, Executive Director, The Zeist Foundation

Oct 25: Week Ten - Intervening to Catalyze Preferred Emergent Urban Outcomes

Once the city is seen as a complex adaptive system, the types of interventions that can yield desired outcomes begin to surface. Introduces the concept of panarchy as a means to understand the evolution of complex adaptive systems and how it can be used to analyze neighborhood change. Focuses on the role that control parameters and attractors play in determining the future trajectory of a neighborhood.

Readings:

- Shirley Franklin and David Edwards (2012) "It Takes a Neighborhood"
- Paul C. Brophy (2020) “Revitalizing America’s Neighborhoods: A Practitioner's Perspective”
- Kate Ascher and Sabina Uffer (2015) “The High Line Effect”
- CS Holling (2001) “Understanding the Complexity of Economic, Ecological, and Social Systems”

Case Study:

Neighborhood Revitalization Through Changes in Control Parameters and Introduction of Attractors

Speaker: Carol Naughton, CEO of Purpose Built Communities

Nov 1: Week Eleven - Project Team Readouts

Project Teams will provide summaries of the Strategic Investment Options phase of their project. Class will provide feedback and offer advice on which options should be further assessed.

Nov 8: Week Twelve - Housing Markets and the Role of Government in Making Cities Accessible

Describes how city governments do and do not shape housing markets and reviews alternative approaches to promoting housing affordability

Readings:

- Michael Batty (2019) "Causality in Urban Development"

- Egbert Perry (2019) “A Policy Context for Addressing the U.S. Affordable Housing Crisis”
- Vicki Been, Ingrid Gould Ellen, and Katherine O'Regan (2018) “Supply Skepticism: Housing Supply and Affordability”

Case Study:

Housing Markets and the Role of Government in Making Cities Accessible

Speaker: Joel Dixon, CEO Urban Oasis Development

Nov 15: Week Thirteen - Urban Change, Gentrification and the Evolution of Cities

Discusses the dynamics of urban change, the benefits it delivers and the disruptions it can cause.

Focus is on gentrification, what we mean by that term, and what policy levers can be applied to reduce the disruptive effects of neighborhood revitalization.

Readings:

- National Low Income Housing Coalition (2019) “Gentrification and Neighborhood Revitalization: What’s The Difference?”
- Jason Richardson, Bruce Mitchell and Juan Franco “Shifting Neighborhoods: Gentrification and Cultural Displacement in American Cities”
- Ingrid Gould Ellen (2016) “Has Falling Crime Invited Gentrification?”
- <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/06/20/business/economy/starter-homes-investors.html>

Case Study:

Neighborhood Revitalization and the Path to a Healthy, Thriving and Accessible Neighborhood

Speaker: Gavin McGuire, Executive Director of the Grove Park Foundation

Nov 22: Week Fourteen (Last Day) - Project Team Readouts

Each project team will present their Final Policy Recommendations.

Nov 29: Holiday Break