Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter School of Public Policy – Capstone Opportunities for Partner Organizations

In the Carter School of Public Policy, we offer capstone project opportunities across various degree programs aimed at connecting students with external partners to tackle real-world challenges in public policy, sustainability, and more. These projects provide valuable insights for sponsoring organizations while giving students hands-on experience in applied research and consulting.

B.S. in Public Policy (BSPP) - Task Force Capstone

m Project Dates:

- Duration: Mid-August Late April
- Key Milestones:
 - Kickoff Meeting: Late August / Early September
 - o Design Review: Late November / Early December
 - o Final Presentation: April
- Proposal Submission Deadline: Ideally by early August

Scope:

- Year-long team project (typically 5 teams of 5-6 undergraduates)
- Focused on complex policy problems for public, nonprofit, or private clients with an emphasis on research, benchmarking, and strategic recommendations
- Student deliverables include a sponsor-facing product (e.g. technical report, presentation) and an academic research paper
- Clients participate in 3 scheduled meetings, provide data, and designate a point of contact
- A small participation fee is requested to support program costs

Past Project Examples:

- **City of Atlanta, Office of Sustainability:** Identified programs to support climate-resilient affordable housing
- Georgia Dept. of Behavioral Health: Benchmarked mobile crisis response systems across U.S. states
- Atlanta Regional Commission: Developed strategies for artist-based affordable housing and regional coordination
- The Nature Conservancy: Evaluated solar rooftop potential and dam removal policies in Georgia

Contact:

Dr. Christopher Hayter – chayer3@gatech.edu
Interested? Send a short email describing project; <a href="mailto:Subject line:"BSPP Task Force Proposal"

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M.S. in Sustainable Energy & Environmental Management (MSEEM) - Summer Capstone

m Project Dates:

Duration: May – AugustDeliverables Due: August

Proposal Submission Deadline: Ideally by early Spring

Scope:

- Individual graduate-level project with faculty oversight
- Data-driven, analytical work in sustainability, environmental management, or energy policy
- Student deliverables include a sponsor-facing product (e.g. technical report, presentation) and an academic research paper
- Sponsors can offer support via internships, stipends, or modest program donations
- NDAs may be signed to ensure confidentiality

Past Project Examples:

- Midcontinent ISO (MISO): Capacity market analysis for decarbonization planning
- Sierra Club & Drawdown Georgia: Assessed energy burden among Black households in Georgia
- Private Manufacturer: Conducted waste audit and life cycle analysis for improved recycling
- **City Client:** Evaluated smart irrigation options for water conservation
- Tech Company: Assessed feasibility of on-site solar and carbon offset strategies

Contact:

- Dr. Daniel Matisoff matisoff@gatech.edu
- Susan Graff sgraff7@gatech.edu

M.S. in Public Policy (MSPP) – Spring Capstone

m Project Dates:

• **Duration:** January – May

• Key Milestones:

Kickoff Meeting: Mid-January Midpoint Check-In: Late February Project Draft Due: Mid-April

Final Deliverable/Presentation: May

• Proposal Submission Deadline: Ideally by end of November

Scope:

 Client-based capstone completed individually or in small teams in the final semester of the MSPP curriculum under faculty supervision

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- Policy analysis, program/process evaluation, or evidence-based strategy (not lobbying)
- Student deliverables include a professional policy study for a public, nonprofit, or privatesector client via a sponsor briefing, technical report, and an academic-style research paper with analysis, options, and recommendations
- Sponsors should provide a primary contact, access to relevant data/documents, and 2–3 structured check-ins (60–90 min)
- NDAs available when needed; findings can be de-identified to protect sensitive information

Past Project Examples:

- Housing & Urban Development, City of Atlanta (Mayor's Office of Sustainability): strategies
 for sustainable, climate-resilient affordable housing; City of Chamblee: policy tools to
 encourage affordable housing
- Disaster Recovery & Resilience, City of Albany, GA / Georgia Tech Center for Economic Development Research: lessons from post-disaster redevelopment and disinvestment recovery
- Health & Human Services,
 - Georgia Dept. of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities: best practices for mobile mental-health crisis response
 - Center for Disease Control (CDC): evaluation and dissemination (e.g., Traumatic Brain Injury in children) and health policy analyses
- Economic Development & Finance,
 - Atlanta Emerging Markets, Inc.: capital access options for minority social entrepreneurs
 - o Invest Atlanta: incentive design to retain/attract scale-up tech firms
- **Public Safety, Roswell & Woodstock Fire Departments:** community fire-risk assessment and mitigation recommendations
- Environment & Biodiversity, Georgia Audubon & Georgia Native Plant Society: pathways to invasive-species bans and pro-native-plant legislation

Student Capabilities

- Policy analysis & evaluation
- Econometrics (R/Python)
- GIS & spatial analysis
- Survey design & qualitative methods
- Cost-benefit & scenario analysis
- Data visualization/dashboarding

™ Contact:

Dr. Brian Ain - yan74@gatech.edu
 Interested? Send 2-3 paragraphs describing the policy problem, desired outcomes, data/access available, and a primary contact; Subject line: "MSPP Capstone Proposal - [Organization]."

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