International Affairs 4744: Global Development Capstone

Syllabus Spring 2025

(last updated 01/06/2025)

Instructor:	Dr. Franziska Roscher Sam Nunn School/Habersham 110 franziska@gatech.edu (include INTA 4744 in subject line)
Course Timings:	Mondays and Wednesdays, 5:00 - 6:15 Clough UG Learning Commons, Room 323
Office Hours:	Tuesdays, 10:00 - 12:00, or by appointment Habersham 110

Course Description

This course "caps off" your Global Development Minor. As such, it builds on your understanding of global development issues and approaches. In this course, students will propose solutions to urgent, real-world problems, based on their in-depth knowledge of the issue, their familiarity with previous (attempts at) solutions, and their understanding of stakeholder perspectives. Students will work in teams to address multidisciplinary problems that fall within the scope of UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The capstone provides teams with an opportunity to define and analyze a problem, present analytical findings, and develop solutions and recommendations for a client. Students will design the approach, conduct required data collection and analysis, and present the findings through a number of presentations, written reports, and a poster. These closely simulate deliverables that might be required of you in a professional setting.

Students will leave this course with hands-on research experience, a deep understanding of development challenges, and the ability to put people first in the development process.

Prerequisites

INTA 2050 – Introduction to Global Development

Course Requirements & Grading

Your final grade will be based on six parts:

Participation	15%
Stakeholder Report	10%
Presentations	35%
Prospectus	10%
Poster	10%
Final Report	20%

1. **Participation (15%).** This course requires your active engagement and participation throughout the semester. In the beginning, that means completing and digesting the assigned readings. These readings contain information that is not contained in the lecture; conversely, the lecture will not cover everything contained in the readings. These readings will help you in selecting the problem to work on and set you up for success in developing a nuanced capstone project.
   You will also be required to participate actively in class discussions. That includes paying attention to your peers' presentations and providing constructive feedback. This feedback is vital for the development of your project. To ensure that everyone gets comparable, high-quality feedback, class attendance will be tracked and participation will be grated. You may have two unexcused absences per semester (see attendance policy below). Thereafter, missing classes will count heavily against your participation grade.

2. **Stakeholder Report (10%).** Once you have decided on a problem to tackle (and a client to tackle it for), you will be required to write a stakeholder report. For this report, you will identify who the relevant stakeholders are in the context that you are working in; how they are affected by the development challenge you are working on; and how they would be involved in any proposed solution. This task requires you to look at the problem from multiple angles, and to understand the context your problem is situated in. This will help you design suitable, sustainable, inclusive, and equitable solutions. Putting people first is an important part of development practice, and this report will help you practice that.

3. **Presentations (35%).** You will be required to give 4 presentations (together with your team) during the course of the semester. (Each group will be assigned a specific day and time slot for each presentation well in advance). These presentations represent distinct milestones in the evolution of your project, namely problem selection, review of the state of the field, first draft/prospectus and final report. These presentations are not meant to torture you, but to help you: At each stage, you will benefit from feedback from your peers, who will ask questions and provide suggestions on your presentations. These presentations will also help to keep you on track with your project throughout the semester, making sure that you have plenty of time for each stage in the process.

   - Problem presentation (5%): Each team will present the problem they have decided to tackle and why it matters. Your presentation should be no more than 10 minutes long, and use 6 to 8 slides.
   - State of the field presentation (10%): Each team will present the state of the field for their project. The presentations should clearly lay out what the problem is and why it is hard to solve/what the constraints are; which solutions have been tried before, and why they failed; what progress has been made towards solutions in the field; and where you see potential to make a contribution. (You do not have to have your proposed solution figured out yet at this point, but you might already have a hunch, or several hunches, about the direction you want to go). Your presentation should be no more than 20 minutes long, and use 12 to 15 slides.
   - Prospectus presentation (10%): Each team will present their plan for the final project, including the rationale for the proposed solution, the roadmap for the work they still plan to do, and the envisaged output. Your presentation should be no more than 20 minutes long, and use 12 to 15 slides.
   - Final presentation (10%): Each team will present their final project, focusing on the proposed solution. A proposed solution here means a recommendation for the client: Given the constraints of the setting and client, which of the many options would you recommend your client pursue, and why is the most promising route. You should lay out clearly which development concepts or theories your solution is drawing or building on; and how your solution takes all stakeholders into account. Your presentation should be no more than 20 minutes long, and use 12 to 15 slides.

4. **Prospectus (10%).** The prospectus is a proposal for (or first, rough draft of) your final report. The prospectus is a first stab at your proposed solution, so to speak, based on all the work you have already done. It will lay out the problem, everything you have learned about the field already (you will be drawing on previous

presentations and the stakeholder report for this!); where you see your final report going, and why; and what additional work you plan to do for the final report. The prospectus will collect all the work you have already done, and create a roadmap for all the work you still plan to do to finish the project. You will get extensive feedback on this prospectus, both in individual sessions with me as well as from the class during presentations. This will help you elevate the final output.

5. **Poster (10%).** Each group will put together a poster for their group project and present it at a department showcase. This is a great opportunity to showcase your work to other professors and students, and practice giving "the elevator pitch" about your project. Examples of successful posters will be shared a few weeks before the due date.

6. **Final Report (20%).** Your final paper will be a research paper that incorporates all the work you have done throughout the semester. It will clearly state the problem, identify the client and the stakeholders, provide background on the setting, give an overview of the state of the field, and spell out your proposed solution as well as the policy lessons learned from your project. The final report is also an opportunity for you to reflect on the lessons you have learned over the course of the semester. More details will be shared a few weeks before the final report is due.

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   65-69%
F   0-64%

Required Readings

Required readings are listed below for each class. Reading and understanding assigned texts is part of your grade, and will be essential in order to complete your writing assignments. All required reading materials will be available through the library or through canvas.

Course Policies

Academic Integrity. Per the Center for Teaching and Learning, "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. Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarizing on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, which will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations. For more information on the Honor Code, visit the OSI website."

Students can employ AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly) or their peers as a limited tool to support their work, but not as a substitute for completing the assignment themselves. Acceptable uses of peer collaboration and/or AI include the following: Preliminary searches for information, which a student will subsequently assess for validity and put in their own words; light copy editing; review for completeness. However, students cannot use AI or peers to produce partial or full drafts or assignments for them. Students must be able to pinpoint and appropriately cite the original source of any statistics, quotations, or claims. AI platforms often fail to accurately document the source of information they provide; in this respect, these platforms do not constitute an acceptable source.

Student-Faculty Expectations. At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to continually 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. 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.

As an instructor, I strive to support you and be flexible, where possible; in return, I expect you to be engaged and communicative. I am willing to work with you through problems you face, from scheduling conflicts to difficulties with the materials and beyond. But in order to do so, you need to talk to me *ahead of time*. I cannot fix problems that I don't know about; and I cannot make accommodations *after* deadlines have passed or grades have been given. If you tell me about problems, I am happy to consider options to address them – as long as these options do not interfere with the integrity and equity of learning experiences within the course. You can always send me an email or stop by office hours to discuss any issues you might face.

Please note that students never need to disclose physical health status, mental health status, and/or experiences of sexual harassment or sexual assault in order to receive accommodations. If you are experiencing hardship and you choose to tell me, I can help

connect you with appropriate university resources. Students should be aware that, in my capacity as a responsible employee, I must alert the Title IX Offices of any instances of sexual harassment or assault that I learn about from students. If you are a survivor of sexual harassment or sexual assault and prefer to discuss your experiences using confidential resources, please contact the Center for Mental Health Care & Resources (404-894-2575 or visit at Smithgall Student Services Building, Suite 238).

Attendance Policy. Since the success of the course depends heavily on student involvement and participation, you are expected to participate in every class session, barring an excused absence.

Excused absences are those that are a result of a verified illness or emergency or "approved Institute activities". In order to have an illness or emergency situation verified, you must contact the Office of Student Life who will contact me on your behalf to verify your situation. More information on this procedure can be found using the following link: https://studentlife.gatech.edu/resources/class-attendance. To be excused for participation in Institute activities, you must contact the Office of the Registrar to formally approve your absence. Absence due to a religious observance will be excused provided you inform me of the upcoming absence, in writing, within the first two weeks of class. Please note that I cannot, as a matter of policy, excuse any absences outside of these aforementioned channels.

Unexcused Absences are those not described above. I do understand that there may at times be obligations or unforeseen circumstances that come up that are important, but that do not fall under the category of an "excused absence". I cannot make individual exceptions to the general policy for such circumstances. However, to account for these circumstances, you are allowed two unexcused absences throughout the semester. Any unexcused absences may result in your participation score being lowered if the criteria for excused absences are not met and if alternative arrangements for participation have not been made. Please note that in the event of an unexcused absence, you will not receive any special accommodations (e.g. a tutoring session during office hours, a make-up exam, opportunities for a make-up presentation or in-class assignment) for the class sessions you miss.

Policy for Late Assignments. Late assignments are strongly discouraged. Managing your time and meeting deadlines are important skills to learn that will serve you well all your life. This is especially true in a collaborative team, where others depend on you to pull your weight. If a team needs an extension on a written assignment (stakeholder report, prospectus, final report), please approach me well ahead of time in order to figure out possible alternative submission deadlines. However, extensions for presentations are not

possible, since only certain weeks are set aside for student presentations (you may, however, switch your presentation slot with another team, if that helps you; just notify me about the change).

If a student either fails to request an extension in advance or fails to meet their proposed alternative deadline, they will incur a penalty of 20% off the assignment grade within the first 24 hours after the deadline. No assignments turned in more than 24 hours past the deadline will be accepted.

Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities. If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (often referred to as ADAPTS) at (404)89-2563 or http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/, as soon as possible, to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. If you would like to discuss your learning needs, please email me as soon as possible to set up a time to do so.

Date		Topic	Readings/Tasks
Jan 6	M	Introductions, Syllabus Review	
Jan 8	W	Finding a Research Question	Michael Nelson (2024). "The Research Question." In A Political Science Guide, https://politicalscienceguide.com/what-is-research/the-research-question-2/ GovWrites. "Posing a Question." In Writing in Government, https://govwrites.squarespace.com/posing-a-question What Are the UN Sustainable Development Goals? https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/what-are-un-sustainable-development-goals
Jan 13	M	Writing a Research Paper	Writing a Research Paper https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/ common_writing_assignments/ research_papers/index.html The Writing Process https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/ common_writing_assignments/ the_writing_process/index.html
Jan 15	W	Research Resources	World Bank. (2021). World Development Report 2021: Data for Better Lives
Jan 20	M	*Institute Holiday*	
Jan 22	W	Global Development Refresher	Banerjee, A. V., & Duflo, E. (2007). The Economic Lives of the Poor. The Journal of Economic Perspective, 21(1) Green, D. (2016). How change happens. Oxford University Press. Part I
Jan 27	M	Global Development Refresher	Toyama, K. (2010). Can Technology End Poverty? https://www.bostonreview.net/forum/can-technology-end-poverty/
Jan 29	W	Global Development Refresher	Holcombe, S H & Howard, M (2019); Practicing Development – For Positive Change. chapters 2, 3, 16
Feb 3	M	Feedback Session	Pitch the topic (and the "client") to instructor
Feb 5	W	Theory of Change	Theory of Change (2016), United Nations Development Group

			https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/UNDG-UNDAF-Companion-Pieces-7-Theory-of-Change.pdf Creating Your Theory Of Change. NPC's practical guide. (2014). https://www.thinknpc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Creating-your-theory-of-change1.pdf Green, D. (2016). How change happens. Oxford University Press. Chapter 12
Feb 10	M	Student Presentations	Present the problem/question you are interested in, and why it matters
Feb 12	W	Gaining Perspective	Bruce-Raeburn, A (2019). "International Development Has a Race Problem." (https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-international-development-has-a-race-problem-94840)
Feb 17	M	Gaining Perspective	Chattopadhyay, R and Duflo, E (2004). "Women as Policy Makers: Evidence from a Randomized Policy Experiment in India" Econometrica, Vol 72(5), 1409-1443
Feb 19		**Stakeholder Report Due**	
Feb 19	W	Case Study I	TBD
Feb 24	M	Case Study II	TBD
Feb 26	W	Team Meetings	
Mar 3	M	Student Presentations	Present the state of the field for your problem/question, answer questions from your peers and instructor
Mar 5	W	Student Presentations	Present the state of the field for your problem/question, answer questions from your peers and instructor
Mar 10	M	Team Meetings & Progress Check-Ins	
Mar 12	W	Team Meetings & Progress Check-Ins	
Mar 14		**Prospectus Due**	
Mar 17	M	*Spring Break*	
Mar 19	W	*Spring Break*	
Mar 24	M	Student Presentations	Present the first draft of your proposed solution (based on prospectus) and get feedback from your peers and instructor
Mar 26	W	Student Presentations	Present the first draft of your proposed solution (based on prospectus) and get feedback from your peers and instructor

Mar 31	M	Team Meetings & Progress Check-Ins Student Presentations	
Apr 2	W	Team Meetings & Progress Check-Ins Student Presentations	
Apr 7	M	Team Meetings & Progress Check-Ins	
Apr 9	W	Team Meetings & Progress Check-Ins	
Apr 11		**Final Report Due**	
Apr 14	M	Student Presentations	Final report presentation
Apr 16	W	Student Presentations	Final report presentation
Apr 18		**Poster Due**	
Apr 22	**TUESDAY, Apr 22, 5:00-6:30PM: Poster Showcase**		