University of Virginia School of Architecture
Department of Urban and Environmental Planning

Transportation Planning and Policy
PLAN 5740

Class time: 11:00AM – 12:15PM, Mondays and Wednesdays
First Class: August 28, 2013
Last Class: December 4, 2013
Room: Campbell Hall 325

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Office: Campbell Hall 413
Office Hours: Email for appointment

Course Description
This course provides a foundation for understanding transportation systems’ relationship to cities and people and managing urban transportation systems. We will:

(1) Explore transportation planning and policy from multiple perspectives.
(2) Address transportation planning and policy as it occurs in cities. We’ll look at how planners work to build transportation infrastructure, manage traffic, plan for multiple modes, and facilitate goods movement.
(3) Investigate current and emerging issues in transportation planning, including sustainability, accessibility, and equity.

A recurring theme in the course will be, “How can we reconcile our goals and objectives as transportation planners with the methods and constraints of the profession?” While this question is as challenging to answer today as it has ever been, we can also explore the accomplishments of transportation planners and policymakers in the past and the remarkable innovations in travel, technology, and policy and that are reshaping transportation right now.

The assignments for this class ask you to examine aspects of transportation planning and its practice, apply the lessons from the course to local issues, and require field work using transportation systems as a laboratory. There will also be a day-long field trip organized to introduce you to some important features of the regional transportation system and planning’s role in moving the city.

Topics Covered
The topics covered in this course, week by week, are as follows:

Week 1: Introduction / Key Concepts
Week 2: Milestones of Urban Highway and Transit Planning
Week 3: Transportation Policy: Finance and Mandates
Week 4: State, Local, and Regional Actors / Travel Demand Estimation
Week 5: Evaluating Transportation Projects / Case Studies
Week 6: Automobility / Congestion
Week 7: Dealing with Congestion: Pricing and Other Solutions
Week 8: Parking
Week 9: Transit
Week 10: Transit, continued
Week 11: Non-motorized modes: Walking and Biking
Week 12: Public Health, Economic Development, Sustainability
Week 13: Putting it All Together: Complete Streets
Week 14: Goods movement
Week 15: Future of Transportation

Course Requirements
There are five components to the course: (1) lectures and class discussion, (2) a field trip, (3) readings and weekly responses, (4) applied assignments, and (5) take-home final essay.

Lectures and Discussion (15% of grade, including field trip attendance)
Each class will have a lecture component, but discussion is encouraged (and required!). Part of your grade is based on attending class – and the field trip – and participating in the discussion. Everyone should feel comfortable contributing their thoughts and questions to the discussion. If you have any questions about this requirement, please let me know.

Part of the course will include an all-day field trip where we will examine aspects of the transportation system. We will find a date for the trip, likely in early November, at the start of the semester. Any student unable to participate in the field trip will be required to complete a second essay.

Readings and Weekly Responses (15% of grade)
There is one required textbook for the course:


The course also draws on a wide range of chapters, papers and reports. The lectures will not cover all of the material in the reading, so it is essential that you keep up with the required reading. Students should complete all required readings prior to the corresponding class session. Readings will be made available from the Resources/Readings section of the Collab website.

You’re going to be bombarded with a lot of material about transportation this semester, and it’s important that you take time to process this information as we proceed. To help with that process, you are asked to write short responses to questions I pose in the Collab class Forums.
will pose a question or ask you to respond to a specific reading or set of readings each week, to be due on the following before class.

*Your weekly responses are meant to draw out your own ideas and do not need to be written like a research paper or professional memo. As long as you finish your response by the due date, and it is thoughtful and meets a minimal length, you will get full credit.*

Over the semester, I will assign 20 “points” worth of responses (some will be worth one point, others two points). However, you only need 15 points to get full credit for your weekly responses requirement. In other words, you can BLOW OFF 5 points worth of weekly responses without in affecting your final grade. Just be sure to keep track of how many points you’ve already blown off!

**Applied Assignments (50% of grade overall)**

Central to the course is gaining experience with the methods and thinking of transportation planners. You will work on a series of three assignments that illuminate key parts of transportation planning practice. The three assignment topics are:

1. Working with Transportation Data (10% of grade)
   *Due Date: September 30, before class*
2. Policy Reviews and Goal Setting (10% of grade)
   *Due Date: October 28, before class*
3. Corridor Alternatives Analysis (30% of grade, group project)
   *Class Presentations: December 2 and 4*
   *Due Date: December 6*

I will distribute assignments, and we will discuss them thoroughly in class. All final products should be submitted to the course’s Collab site by due date stated when the assignment is given. Late papers will be accepted, but a late grade penalty of 1/3 grade per day will be applied to any papers turned in after the due date. The late penalty for assignments can be waived only with a written note from a medical professional.

**Take-Home Final Essay (20% of grade)**

Rather than complete an in-class final, you will complete an “open-book” final essay distributed on the last day of class. You’ll have a choice of several essay topics that draw on the course material.

*Due date: December 11*

**Reading List**

**Week 1 (8/28): Introduction / Key Concepts**


**Week 2 (9/4): Milestones of Urban Highway and Transit Planning**


**Week 3 (9/9, 9/11): Transportation Policy: Finance and Mandates**


**Week 4 (9/16, 9/18): Evaluating Transportation Projects / Case Studies**

• Ewing, Reid. 1993. “Transportation Service Standards—As If People Matter,” Transportation Research Record: Planning and Administration, 1400: 10-17.

**Week 5 (9/23, 9/25): Automobility / Congestion**


Week 6 (9/30, 10/2): Dealing with Congestion: Pricing and Other Solutions


Week 7 (10/7, 10/9): Parking, Transit


**Week 8 (10/16 – No Class Monday!): Transit, continued**


**Week 9 (10/23 – No Class Monday!): Transit, still continued**

- No new reading

**Week 10 (10/28, 10/30): State, Local, and Regional Actors / Travel Demand Estimation**


**Week 11 (11/4, 11/6): Non-motorized modes: Walking and Biking**

- Jaskiewicz, Frank. 2012. “Pedestrian Level of Service Based on Trip Quality.” Transportation Research Board.


Week 13 (11/18, 11/20): Putting it All Together: Complete Streets


Week 14 (11/25 – No class Wednesday!): Goods movement


Week 15 (12/2, 12/4): Future of Transportation

- Morozov, Evgeny. 2013. “My Map or Yours: Google’s plan to personalize maps could end public space as we know it.”
http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2013/05/google_maps_personalization_will_hurt_public_space_and_engagement.html