

USP 456 / 556: Transportation Problems and Policies - Fall Quarter 2024

Thursdays 4:00 - 6:30 p.m. - Room: Urban Center 204

Professor: Dr. Aaron Golub, Email: agolub@pdx.edu

Office Hours: *Several times during the week arranged directly through my appointment scheduler – just click and reserve a spot – no need to email me.* <https://calendar.app.google/Qyt245JmWdWwaxrE6>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will offer an overview of transportation problems and policies in the United States from a multi-disciplinary perspective. We will explore transportation's relationship to broader social problems and how it holds the potential to both exacerbate them, and help to solve them. We will study transportation as a complex socio-technical system – one shaped by complex social and political drivers, creating important outcomes, come good and some harmful. This system is shaped by multiple planning and policy approaches crossing disciplines, sectors, scales and strategies. We will begin by reviewing travel trends over the past four decades followed by an overview of the past century of transportation planning history. We then go through a series of “Policy Areas” in which key debates and policies have been developed, and continue to develop. We go through these policy areas in roughly the order of importance – starting with the most important challenge of managing automobile movement and congestion. We then cover policies addressing environment, climate, safety and equity. We finish by looking at emerging policy challenges around autonomous vehicles, micro-transit and other issues.

Note that this course is very broad and arguably foundational to any transportation practice. Students are encouraged to follow up with other transportation courses for more detailed focus on specific issues, such as:

USP 570 Transportation and Land Use (Spring)

USP 587 Travel Demand Modeling (Odd year Fall)

USP 544 Transportation Planning (Winter)

USP 548 Public Transit Planning (Spring)

USP 537 Economics of Urban Transportation (Even year winter)

USP 583 Transportation Finance (Odd year winter)

USP 511 Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning Lab (Fall)

USP 565 Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning (Spring)

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

After completing this course, students will master the following concepts:

- The history and dynamics of urban transportation change and development
- The environmental impacts of travel at the local, regional, and global scale
- The unpriced externalities of travel (air pollution, congestion, injuries and death, climate change)
- The dynamics of energy prices and supply and demand and its effects on transportation
- The microeconomics of travel (choice processes, nested choices, fixed and marginal costs)
- The effects of transportation systems on social equity
- The interaction between urban form and innovations in transportation technologies and travel costs
- Demographic changes and their effects on transportation demand
- Emerging new-mobility, micro-mobility, shared and autonomous systems (e-scooters, ridesourcing, etc.)

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

The course will include one required meeting per week, required and optional readings, short outside assignments, and one quarter-long project. It is imperative that everyone prepares the readings and the

assignments, as we will include a lot of detailed discussion and debate during class and everyone will be asked to contribute. It is essential to attend every meeting in this course.

Assignments will be judged for their coherence, clarity in writing, and the clarity of documentation (citing the sources you used). Make sure you cite all references and sources of data; and include a list of references at the end of your assignments if appropriate. All assignments should be uploaded as a Word or PDF files into the dropbox on the Canvas website for the class. Please also have access to the assignments in class (on your computer, phone, hard-copy – whatever you prefer) as they will be discussed.

There will be around 700 total points for the short assignments. The final grade will be calculated from weighting the short assignments and final project in the following manner:

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| 1. Short assignments based on the lectures and readings | 70% |
| 2. Major quarter assignment – policy presentation | 30% |

Short Assignments: There will assignments of various lengths (and point values) posted to accompany the lectures and sets of required readings. Most will be due just before the class in which they will be discussed. Assignment due dates are non-negotiable except for very extenuating circumstances (medical, family emergency).

Major Assignments: The major assignment will be case study presentation to be announced during the second class.

Final Grading Scale:

A 94.0 % and above ; A- 90.0 % ; B+ 87.0 % ; B 84.0 % ; B- 80.0 % , etc.

COURSE RESOURCES:

Readings: There is a *no* textbook for the course. A **Canvas website** is set up for the class. The site contains all assignments, required and optional readings outside of the textbook, and is where your completed assignments should be uploaded.

Note on submitting work online

Proficiency in the use of Canvas, PSU email, and other computer tools such as ZOOM or parts of Google suite is required for this course. This course requires consistent access to functioning computer equipment and Internet access throughout the length of the course. Reliance on a cellular connection may not provide reliable and fast access to online learning resources. Here are some broadband programs that are free or low-cost:

<https://www.highspeedinternet.com/resources/are-there-government-programs-to-help-me-get-internet-service>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to be ethical not only in the classroom, but also outside the classroom. It is in all students' interest to avoid committing acts of academic dishonesty and to discourage others from committing such acts. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: engages in any form of academic deceit; refers to materials or sources or uses devices not authorized by the instructor for use during any quiz or assignment; provides inappropriate aid to another person in connection with any quiz or assignment; engages in Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the act of claiming someone's work as your own through copying it without giving the creator of the work credit. Plagiarism can also include using another person's theories, ideas, or phrases without proper attribution. The simplest way to avoid plagiarizing is to always cite the sources from which you gather information or develop arguments – just cite anything you use from someone else (it actually

makes your work stronger!). Plagiarism is a serious issue and is a violation of the PSU [Student Conduct Code](#). University policy requires instructors to report all instances of plagiarism and penalize the perpetrator(s) according to guidelines set. Please see me if you ever have any questions about how to cite your work.

CAMPUS SUPPORT FOR RESPONDING TO HARASSMENT OR DISCRIMINATION

Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or sexual harassment, know that help and support are available. Information about PSU's support services on campus, including confidential services and reporting options, can be found on PSU's Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response website at: <http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help> or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672 or schedule online at <https://psuwrc.youcanbook.me>. You may report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to:

Title IX Coordinator - titleixcoordinator@pdx.edu

Richard and Maureen Neuberger Center (RMNC), 1600 SW 4th Ave., Suite 830

Deputy Title IX Coordinator and Dean of Students - 503.725.4422 - askdos@pdx.edu

Smith Memorial Student Union (SMSU), 825 SW Broadway, Suite 433

Please be aware that all PSU faculty members and instructors are required to report information of an incident that may constitute prohibited discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence that may have violated university policy or student code of conduct, I have to share the information with my supervisor, the University's Title IX Coordinator or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. However, the Title IX Coordinators will keep the information confidential and refer you to a confidential advocate. For more information about Title IX please complete the required student module *Creating a Safe Campus* in your CANVAS.

ACCESS AND INCLUSION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, useable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, <https://www.pdx.edu/drc>.

- If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and discuss your accommodations.
- Students who need accommodations for tests and quizzes are expected to schedule their tests to overlap with the time the class is taking the test.
- For information about emergency preparedness, please go to the Fire and Life Safety webpage (<https://www.pdx.edu/environmental-health-safety/fire-and-life-safety>) for information.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The USP Belonging, Justice and Dignity Committee identifies [a variety of ways for students to give feedback, seek assistance, and report a problem](#) (focused on issues related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion).

[Portland State University Prohibited Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#) - addresses the definition of discrimination and harassment and provides appropriate contacts for reporting cases.

The Office of the Dean of Student Life hosts the Academic Appeals process. Students who feel they have received a prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation may submit an [Academic Appeal Request](#). Before students submit this request, students must have appealed to the instructor (Aaron Golub), USP department chair (Greg Schrock) and appropriate dean (Dean Youde). Students should then read the [Academic Appeals Guidelines](#) to see if their grade dispute fits the purview of the Academic Appeal. For more information please visit the [Academic Appeals website](#), email askdos@pdx.edu , or call 503-725-4422.

SYLLABUS DISCLAIMER

All syllabi are subject to minor changes to meet the needs of the instructor, school, or class. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as deemed necessary. Students will be notified in a timely manner of any syllabus or schedule changes in class, and through the CANVAS announcements and class email. Please remember to check your PSU email and the CANVAS messages often.

COURSE CALENDAR

Class	Date	Subject
1	3-Oct	Intro - Social change, policy, plans, and investments
2	10-Oct	The current system [CLASS HELD ONLINE]
3	17-Oct	How we got here - transportation history
Policy focus areas:		
4	24-Oct	Congestion management
5	31-Oct	Energy; Air pollution
6	7-Nov	Social impacts and equity
7	14-Nov	Land use and transportation; Regional planning; Safety
8	21-Nov	Active Travel; Public transportation; Autonomous Vehicles
	28-Nov	<i>Thanksgiving</i>
9	5-Dec	Policy case presentations