

# USP 411/511 Active Transportation Planning Syllabus

## CO-INSTRUCTORS

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- Mike Serritella ([ser7@pdx.edu](mailto:ser7@pdx.edu)) & Greg Griffin, PhD, AICP ([gregpgriffin@pdx.edu](mailto:gregpgriffin@pdx.edu))  
Mike is a Senior Planner with the Portland Bureau of Transportation, and a MURP graduate (PSU '18). Greg is a Principal Research Analyst with the Oregon Dept. of Transportation.
- Office Hours: Greg Monday 1:30-2:30 pm in URBN 312 [by appointment](#) in-person or online; or email either instructor for an appointment
- Expected Response Time: 24 hours, Monday-Friday

## COURSE INFORMATION

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- Fall 2026
- Location: ABX 208 (new Schnitzer School of Art building at SW Park Ave & College St)
- Meeting times: Mondays, 9:00 AM - 12:40 PM
- CRN: 14345, Credits: 4

## Course Description

A practical approach to bicycle and pedestrian planning and design through a project-based course that focuses on all aspects of the planning process. Students research and develop solutions for a current project opportunity in the Portland region and present recommendations in report and presentation form.

## Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are differentiated for the undergraduate and graduate sections using italics to align with expected roles, which are further described in each separate assignment with separate grading rubrics.

**USP 411** (undergraduate) will present opportunities for students to be able to:

- *Record* and *communicate* active transportation activity and infrastructure existing conditions;
- Co-create a public participation plan that centers equity while supporting social learning for community partners and students;
- Practice *drafting* and *communicating* collaborative solution ideas.
- Gain technical and communication skills for developing active transportation plans;
- Reflect on personal and collective accomplishments to support continuous improvement.

**USP 511** (graduate) will present opportunities for students to be able to:

- *Synthesize* and *integrate* active transportation activity information and infrastructure existing conditions;
- Co-create a public participation plan that centers equity while supporting social learning for community partners and students;
- Practice *evaluating concepts* using a prioritization framework.
- Gain technical and communication skills for developing active transportation plans;
- Reflect on personal and collective accomplishments to support continuous improvement.

## Resources

No book purchases are required. Key readings are hyperlinked below:



Roughton, C., van Hengel, D., Duncan, A., Weigand, L., & Birk, M. (2012). *Creating Walkable + Bikeable Communities*. Initiative for Bicycle and Pedestrian Innovation, Portland State University.  
[https://ppms.trec.pdx.edu/media/project\\_files/IBPI%20Master%20Plan%20Handbook%20FINAL.pdf](https://ppms.trec.pdx.edu/media/project_files/IBPI%20Master%20Plan%20Handbook%20FINAL.pdf)



City of Portland, Oregon. (2026). *About the 2045 Transportation System Plan (TSP)*. <https://www.portland.gov/transportation/planning/2045tsp>



NACTO. (2013). *Urban Street Design Guide*. Island Press.  
<https://nacto.org/publication/urban-street-design-guide/>

Additional materials will be provided in class lectures throughout the term.

## Major Assignments

Each of these assignments will be described in detail during class.

| ITEM                                                       | TYPE               | WEIGHT                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Skill Inventory & Project Preference                       | Individual         | 5%                        |
| Task #1: Existing Conditions Memo                          | Group              | 15%                       |
| Task #2: Public Engagement Plan                            | Group              | 15%                       |
| Task # 3: Project Ideas & Evaluation Framework             | Group              | 15%                       |
| Final Plan Report:<br>Compiled + Revised/Updated Tasks 1-3 | Group              | 20%                       |
| Final Presentation:                                        | Individual + Group | 15% (5% ind. + 10% group) |
| Self / Peer Assessments:                                   | Individual         | 15% (5% self + 10% peer)  |

## Grading Criteria

Undergraduate (USP 411) and graduate (USP 511) have separate grading criteria, emphasizing comprehension and application in USP 411, and synthesis and evaluation in USP 511. In general, assignments will be graded considering the depth, breadth, creativity, and engagement with class resources and lectures. A written grading rubric will accompany each assignment. In accordance with the [PSU Bulletin](#), a satisfactory grade is considered a C in undergraduate, and B in graduate classes.

## Course Attendance

Students could notify both instructors and their fellow team members at least 24 hours in advance of any planned absences and before class time given any unforeseen circumstances.

## Late work

Since the majority of assignments are group oriented, late assignments are not accepted without penalty. Due at/before due date/time with 15 minute grace period. Within 4 hours is 5% penalty; with 24 hours is 10% penalty (with 10% additional per day). More than 3 days is not accepted. Students who are consistently late/unreliable/absent should expect their final grade to be diminished through peer review.

## Flexibility Statement

The instructor reserves the right to modify course content and/or substitute assignments and learning activities in response to institutional, weather, or class situations.

## Tentative Course Schedule

| Date                    | Topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Assignments due                                                                |
|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1:<br>Sep 28, 2026 | Introductions<br>Course Overview<br>Better Blocks pitches<br>Building a Good Group<br><b>Assign Skill Inventory, Project Preference</b>                                                                                                                              | <b>Skill Inventory, Project Preference due Thursday, October 1st by 8:00pm</b> |
| Week 2:<br>Oct 5, 2026  | Groups Formed<br>Building Understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Existing Conditions</li><li>- Data Collection Methods</li></ul> <b>Assign Task #1-Existing Conditions Memo</b><br><b>Assign Task #2-Public Engagement Plan</b>                      | None                                                                           |
| Week 3:<br>Oct 12, 2026 | Split Session #1: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Field Visits (Groups 1-3)</li><li>- In Person Lecture (Groups 4-6)</li></ul> Policy and Plan Framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Goals, Objectives, Actions, Performance measures</li></ul> | None                                                                           |
| Week 4:<br>Oct 19, 2026 | Split Session #2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Field Visits (Groups 4-6)</li><li>- In Person Lecture (Groups 1-3)</li></ul> Policy and Plan Framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Goals, Objectives, Actions, Performance measures</li></ul> | None                                                                           |

| Date                        | Topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Assignments due                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 5:<br>Oct 26, 2026     | Public Engagement, Equity, Co-creation and Stewardship<br>Group work on Task 1                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Task #1 due<br/>Thursday, October<br/>29th at 8:00 pm</b>                                                                            |
| Week 6:<br>Nov 2, 2026      | Pedestrian Planning & Public Realm<br>Public Space Fundamentals<br>*Guest Lecture: Gena Gastaldi, PBOT<br><b>Assign Task #3-Project Ideas &amp; Evaluation Framework</b>                                                               | <b>Task #2 due<br/>Thursday,<br/>November 5th at<br/>8:00 pm</b>                                                                        |
| Week 7:<br>Nov 9, 2026      | Bicycle Planning Fundamentals<br>Safe Routes to School & Neighborhood Greenways<br>Trails and Pathways<br>*Guest Lecture: Roger Geller, PBOT                                                                                           | None                                                                                                                                    |
| Week 8:<br>Nov 16, 2026     | "Playing by the rules" – MUTCD, ADA/ PROWAG, NEPA, state laws<br>Tying project and program recommendations to goals<br>Evaluating, prioritizing and phasing projects<br>*Guest Lecture: TBD<br><b>Assign Task #4-Final Plan Report</b> | None                                                                                                                                    |
| Week 9:<br>Nov 23, 2026     | Vision Zero & Safety<br>Network Planning & Integrating Transit<br>Micromobility & Shared Mobility Systems                                                                                                                              | <b>Task #3 due<br/>Wednesday,<br/>November 23rd at<br/>8:00 pm</b>                                                                      |
| Week 10:<br>Nov 30, 2026    | Closing Lecture<br><br>Workshop Session: Integrating feedback and assemble final presentation and plan document                                                                                                                        | None                                                                                                                                    |
| Finals week:<br>Dec 7, 2026 | Final Group Presentations:<br>6 Presentations x 30 minutes each (20 minutes + 10 minutes Q&A)                                                                                                                                          | <b>Final Report (group)<br/>due Thursday, Dec<br/>10th at 8:00 pm</b><br><br><b>Self/Peer<br/>Assessment Due<br/>Thursday, Dec 10th</b> |

## PSU Policies and Resources

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### Academic Integrity & Grading Policies

- [PSU Academic Calendar](#)
- [PSU Grading System](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)
- [Incomplete Grades Policy](#)

### Student Support Resources

- [How to Find Help at PSU](#)
- [Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities](#)

PSU values diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our goal is to create a learning environment that is accessible, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. I am committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, the Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides accommodations 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 DRC to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC works with students who have physical, learning, cognitive, mental health, sensory, chronic illness, and all other disabilities.

If you already have accommodations: Please contact me to make sure that I have received your Faculty Notification Email, and to discuss your accommodations.

The DRC is located in Smith Memorial Student Union, Suite 116. You can also contact the DRC at 503-725-4150, [drc@pdx.edu](mailto:drc@pdx.edu), or visit the DRC website (<https://www.pdx.edu/disability-resource-center>).

- [Understanding Sexual Misconduct](#)
- [Title IX Reporting](#)

Portland State is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment (sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, gender or sex-based harassment and stalking). If you have experienced any form of sexual harassment, know that help and support are available. PSU has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, providing academic support and more. Information about PSU's support services on campus, including [confidential services](#) and [reporting options](#), can be found on PSU's [Sexual Misconduct Response](#) website or you may call a Confidential Advocate at 503.894.7982 or by scheduling [online](#). You may also report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to the Title IX Coordinator, [Office of Equity and Compliance](#), or the [Office of the Dean of Student Life](#).

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 and relationship violence. This means that if you tell me about a situation of sexual harassment or discrimination, I have to share the information with the University's Title IX Coordinator or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. However, the information will be kept private and only those with a need to know will be provided with what you disclose.

Please complete the required student module [Understanding Sexual Misconduct and Resources](#) in Canvas, which provides information about PSU policy and resources.

You may also report sexual and relationship violence to law enforcement on campus with [Campus Public Safety Office \(CPSO\)](#).

Or you may file an [anonymous report with Campus Public Safety Office](#) or a [Bias Incident report](#) with the [Bias Review Team \(BRT\)](#). PSU does not typically investigate the reports that are made through these two avenues. These reports help PSU understand what students and employees are experiencing on and around campus and provide support where needed.

- [Religious Accommodations](#)

## Accessibility Statement

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We are committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment for all of our students. If you encounter any accessibility barriers or challenges in this course, please reach out to us via email. We will work with you and our campus partners to evaluate the issue and find solutions.

## Technology Usage

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### AI Usage

If “planning is a human activity representing a synthesis of ideas, visions, and goals,” then “a computer must never make a planning decision” (Bates 2024, 457). In this class, artificial intelligence-generated deliverables are not acceptable. Students may use AI for information retrieval, such as internet searching, and for editing text for grammar. Most succinctly, this policy is in place to:

- ensure students strengthen ethical and intellectual abilities through reflective engagement with individual and collective human values, and
- build truly creative planning solutions.

Bates, L. K. (2024). A Computer Must Never Make a Planning Decision. *Planning Theory & Practice*, 25(4), 457–460. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649357.2024.2423570>

### Recording Technology Notice

We will use technology for virtual meetings and recordings in this course. Our use of such technology is governed by FERPA, the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) and PSU’s [Student Code of Conduct](#). A record of all meetings and recordings is kept and stored by PSU, in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy and FERPA. I will not share recordings of your class activities outside of course participants, which include your fellow students, TAs/GAs/Mentors, and any guest faculty or community-based learning partners that we may engage with. You may not share recordings outside this course. Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

### Turnitin

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission review for textual similarity for the purpose of detection of unoriginal writing, including plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the [Turnitin.com](#) reference database solely for the purpose of detecting unoriginal writing, including plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Turnitin Acceptable Use posted on the Turnitin.com website.

## In Case of Emergency

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- **Call 9-1-1 for Emergencies:** Immediate threat to life and safety  
For issues such as a medical emergency, urgent violent incident, fire, etc., you can also call 503-725-5911
- **Call 503-725-4407 for Non-Emergencies:** [Campus Public Safety Office \(CPSO\)](#) – Non-Emergency  
For non-emergency issues such as vandalism, disturbance, suspicious person, theft, suspicious packages, access control, etc.