# USP 578 IMPACT ASSESSMENT – FALL 2026

**Professor:** Jenny H. Liu, Ph.D.
**Office:** URB 370F
**Email:** jenny.liu@pdx.edu
**OH:** Tu 4:20pm – 5:20pm and by appointment

**Class Time:** Tu 5:30pm – 8:50pm @ URB220 (or Zoom when necessary)
**Course Website:** http://canvas.pdx.edu

## Expected Course Outcomes

This course will focus on economic impact assessment methods and techniques as they apply in policy contexts. You will gain hands on experience with conducting RIMS II multiplier economic impact assessments, IMPLAN-based input-output economic impact assessments, hedonic pricing analysis, fiscal impact analysis and cost-benefit analysis. Although the course will provide an introduction into the theoretical background of these methods, the emphasis will be placed on case studies and the application of these tools. Students will work progressively towards projects that apply these tools in a practical setting.

## Readings

Readings are taken from multiple sources, and may be posted on the course website, found in the library or distributed in class. Some sources may include:

- Regional Impact Models by Schaffer (1999; updated 2020), available at https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/rri-web-book/7/
- Transportation Research Board (TRB) Transportation Economics Committee Benefit-Cost Analysis Guide (http://bca.transportationeconomics.org/)
- *Cost-Benefit Analysis: Concepts and Practice* by Boardman et al. (3rd to 5th edition)

**Grading**

| | Percentage of Grade |
|---|---|
| Class participation and attendance | 10% |
| Case Study Group Presentation<br>Case study reflections (non-presenting students) | 15%<br>15% |
| Final Policy Memo | 30% |
| Assignments<br>Economic profile assignment<br>EIA using RIMS II assignment<br>Cost-benefit analysis assignment | 30% |

Your grade will be based on your performance in your case study presentation, class participation and attendance, assignments and final policy memo. The assignments will typically start as classroom exercises and should be turned in as a **policy memo** on due dates listed in the calendar below. They will be graded on effort, completeness, methodology chosen and interpretation of results. You may work with your classmates, but you **must** write your own assignments (please note all group member names). The final policy memo will be the culmination of the methodologies and techniques learned throughout the course as applied to the analysis of a regional policy or development issue. Due date extensions will **NOT** be given unless there are extenuating circumstances and arranged well in advance with the instructor. Submitting late work will be penalized 20% per day.

**Class Participation and Attendance**

Each student is required to participate in class through listening, adequately preparing for class, providing quality contributions and actively participating in discussions. Not attending class, arriving late or leaving early, or not participating in class activities will affect your grade. Lab sessions may be scheduled during regular class hours as well.

**Case Study Presentation**

You will be required to analyze and present one assigned impact assessment case study. During the presentation, you will lead the class in **understanding** the case (10-15 minutes) and **facilitating** a critical discussion (10 minutes). You will be graded on content, organization and communication. Non-presenting students must read the assigned case study before class and submit a 2 paragraph written reflection on Canvas by noon on the day of class; following the presentation, a peer review will also be submitted. Additional guidance for the case study group presentations and reflections will be posted to Canvas.

**USP 578 Course Calendar v1**

| **Module I. Introduction & Economic Base Theory - Week 1 (09/29) & Week 2 (10/06) & Week 3 (10/13)** | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Schaffer (updated 2020. 1999). *Regional Impact Models*. Chap 1-3<br>☐ Krikelas, A. (1992). Why Regions Grow: A Review of Research on the Economic Base Model. *Economic Review,* 16-29.<br>☐ Froeschle, R. (2005). What to do with all this data? The role of economic base analysis in Regional Economic Development.<br><br>Case Studies<br>☐ Rickman, D., & Wang, H. (2022). Industry Aggregation and Assessment of State Economic Development from Motion Picture and Television Production Incentives. *Journal of Regional Analysis & Policys*, *52*(1), 82-104.<br>☐ Liu, Jenny H., Marotta, Steve, Brophy, Emma, Khanvilkar, Rohan and Kim, Hyeoncheol. (2023) The Power of Music – An Economic Analysis of Oregon's Emerging Commercial Music Industry. Northwest Economic Research Center (NERC) Report.<br>☐ Christensen, L. O., Jablonski, B. B. R., Stephens, L., & Joshi, A. (2017). Economic impacts of farm to school: Case studies and assessment tools. *National Farm to School Network*.<br>☐ Liu, Jenny H. and Kim, Hyeoncheol. (2024) Portland State University Economic and Social Impact Study 2024. Northwest Economic Research Center (NERC) Report. | |
| **Module II. Economic Impact Analysis – ~~Week 4 (10/20)~~ & Week 5 (10/27) & Week 6 (11/03) & Week 7 (11/10)** | |
| **No class in Week 4 (10/20)**<br><br>☐ Introduction to Economic Impact Analysis<br>☐ Using RIMS II and IMPLAN for economic impact analysis<br>☐ Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) – RIMS II An essential tool for regional developers and planners. Chap 1-3<br>☐ Day, F. *Principles of Impact Analysis & IMPLAN Applications*. Chap 1.<br>☐ Garrett and Leatherman (updated 2020). *An Introduction to State and Local Public Finance.* Chap 6 – Fiscal Impact Analysis | ☐ Week 4 (10/23) – Economic profile assignment due<br>☐ Week 5 (10/27) – Case Study Presentation #1<br>☐ Week 6 (11/03) – Case Study Presentation #2<br>☐ Week 7 (11/10) – EIA using RIMS II assignment due |

| Module III. Cost-Benefit Analysis – Week 8 (11/17) & Week 9 (11/24) | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Boardman. *Cost-Benefit Analysis: Concepts and Practice.* Chap 1-2<br>☐ Portney, P.R. (2008) "Benefit-Cost Analysis." *The Concise Encyclopedia of Economics*. 2008. Library of Economics and Liberty.<br>☐ Arrow, K. J et al. (1996). Is there a role for benefit-cost analysis in environmental, health, and safety regulation?. *Science*, *272*(5259), 221.<br>☐ Net present value (NPV), discounting and adjusting for inflation | ☐ Week 8 (11/17) – Case Study Presentation #3<br>☐ Week 9 (11/24) – Cost benefit analysis assignment due; Case Study Presentation #4 |
| **Module IV. Hedonic Analysis – Week 10 (12/01)** | |
| ☐ Introduction to hedonic analysis – environmental amenities, risk and human lives<br>☐ Liu and Shi (2017). Impact of Bike Facilities on Residential Property Prices. *Transportation Research Record,* 2662, 50-58. | ☐ Week 10 (12/01) – Case Study Presentation (alternate date) |
| **Finals Week** | |
| **Due: Final Policy Memo (12/08 before 8pm)** | |

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas as we get closer to the modules.

The course calendar is tentative and is subject to change as the instructor deems appropriate. Please check online for any updates. The instructor reserves the right to modify course content and/or substitute assignments and learning activities in response to institutional, weather, or class situations.

**COURSE POLICIES**

Building an inclusive learning environment requires us to work together to listen (reading carefully and reflecting in the online environment), and make room for all to have a say (asking questions and interacting in an encouraging way); to support each other to find our voice; and to recognize and anticipate a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds, experiences, identities, and ways of being in the world.

I hope that we can begin from a place of mutual respect and gentle personalism – taking each other where we are at each day, offering the benefit of the doubt, and being aware that the workings of power and privilege impact different communities and individuals in different ways. These are complex and challenging times - please be gentle with one another and do not make assumptions about what anyone is going through. We can all promote safe and inclusive learning by listening deeply (including reading carefully and reflecting) and being ready to learn from those around us. In any learning environment, it is important to work to write or express yourself clearly, thoughtfully, and respectfully (take your time and consider the impact of your words). Please learn and use the correct pronouns for your classmates, please do not make assumptions. I will work to support you in learning how to engage in respectful and encouraging ways.

**Academic Misconduct Policy**

You are expected to display academic integrity and honesty. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. The PSU Student Code of Conduct defines academic dishonesty as follows:

> (1) Academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is the act of knowingly or intentionally seeking to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or participation in such acts. This includes, but is not limited to: (a) cheating, (b) fraud, (c) plagiarism, such as word for word copying, using borrowed words or phrases from original text into new patterns without attribution, or paraphrasing another writer's ideas; (d) The buying or selling of all or any portion of course assignments and research papers; (e) Performing academic assignments (including tests and examinations) for other persons; (f) Unauthorized disclosure or receipt of academic information; (g) Falsification of research data; and (h) Unauthorized collaboration. (http://www.pdx.edu/dos/psu-student-code-conduct)

Students are responsible for knowing both in-class behavior and rules governing use of materials in academic work. Any student found plagiarizing work or violating any part of PSU's academic integrity policy will receive a failing grade for the course.

Intellectual integrity forms the bedrock of academic communities and serves as the cornerstone for impartial evaluation of your work. All coursework completed and/or submitted for this course must represent your original work and adhere to the University's Academic Integrity Guidelines. Unauthorized collaboration or the use of ChatGPT or any other generative AI applications is strictly prohibited.

**Recording Technology Notice**

We will use technology such as Zoom AI 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 make recordings of any part of this course without prior consent or share any recordings outside this course. Doing so may result in disciplinary action.

**Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities**

PSU values diversity, equity, and inclusion. My 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, or visit the DRC website (https://www.pdx.edu/disability-resource-center).

**Title IX Support and Resources**
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.

**Discrimination and Bias Incidents**
The Office of Equity and Compliance (OEC) addresses complaints of discrimination, discriminatory Harassment, and sexual harassment against employees (faculty and staff). If you or someone you know believes they have been discriminated against, you may file a complaint. Someone from the OEC will contact you to discuss how to best address your complaint.

The Bias Review Team (BRT) gathers information on bias incidents that happen on and around campus, and gives resources and support to individuals who experience them. You can report a bias incident you experienced or learned about. A member of the BRT will contact you if you indicate you would like to be contacted.

**TSUSP Conduct and Community Standards Reporting -** Students who have concerns about incidents happening within USP classes or in other PSU-sanctioned spaces related to TSUSP programs may submit confidential reports to the TSUSP School Director in person or by email at tsusp_director@pdx.edu. All reports received are logged, and depending on the nature of the incident, follow-up with the impacted student(s) takes place.

**Generative AI (artificial intelligence) Policy**
Since writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are part of the learning outcomes of this course, all assignments should be prepared by the student. Developing strong competencies in this area will prepare you for a competitive workplace. Therefore, AI-generated or AI-assisted submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

**Calendar/Schedule**
Course calendar is tentative and is subject to change as the instructor deems appropriate. Please check online for any updates.