URP 561: TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC POLICY

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Urban transportation is important for the efficient and equitable functioning of metropolitan regions. Planners and public officials can foster better transportation if they have an understanding of the wide array of rules and regulations that shape decisions about transportation infrastructure and services. This course focuses on the policy environment of passenger travel. It provides an overview of transportation policy to help students take on leadership roles in professional settings. It allows students to develop creative and informed approaches to transportation planning and the implementation of policies and regulations that serve broad values and goals. Whether or not you intend to work as a transportation planner, the course will help you make better decisions in an urban policy environment because transportation influences a range of urban dimensions such as land use, economic development, environmental quality, and social justice.

Learning Goals:

By the end of the term, students will be able to:

- Explain the effect of federal, regional, and local laws and regulations on urban development patterns.
- Collect, analyze, and interpret data from a variety of sources commonly used in the profession.
- Critically analyze strengths and weaknesses of real-world transportation plans using plan evaluation criteria.
- Apply social justice and environmental sustainability concepts in the formulation of transportation policies.
- Argue for a position on several of the most crucial transportation issues facing public officials today, including social equity, the Complete Streets movement, and climate change.
- Compare transportation policy approaches between various parts of the world.
- Demonstrate effective public speaking and visual and written communications about transportation issues.

Course Requirements:

Course assignments include a data exercise, written evaluation of transportation plans, a group field-based project with a written report and oral presentation, peer evaluation of presentations, and a case study report. Assignments may be modified depending on the size of the class and remote conditions.