

**Department of Political Science and Public Administration**

**ACP/POS 250-99: Transit in Transition (*Honors*)**

**Fall 2015**

**T 2-4:30**

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 4:30-6 p.m.

**Course Description**:

The transit landscape is commonly perceived as the functional outcome of objective needs. If there is an 18-lane superhighway running through the city, it must have been built because the 14-lane highway had become congested, because drivers wanted more space, and because we needed it. This course asks you instead to look at roads, trains, buses and bike lanes as the outcomes of long-term social and political struggles – struggles that have made the United States uniquely dependent on the automobile, and transformed many American cities into battlegrounds between pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders and drivers. Chicago happens to be one of the few metropolitan areas in the United States with a comprehensive public transit grid that includes a large subway system in addition to buses and commuter rail. Chicago also features The Circle, where multiple interstate highways meet in almost the precise center of the city, making Chicago into a kind of unfolding social experiment that pits the car against mass transit on a daily basis. In this course, we will ask how the United States ended up as the world’s most car-dependent civilization, who wins and loses when major highways get built, and why many cities have almost no public transportation at all. We will inquire about the relative economic and social costs of different transportation choices, about the cultural importance of the automobile in American public life, and about the new social movement that has brought us separated bike lines on Wabash Avenue. Most importantly, you will come to see the transportation environment is the result of conscious decisions, and by experiencing, researching and writing about multiple forms of movement, you will be encouraged to see how our very experience of the urban landscape is structured deeply by our chosen mode of transportation.

**Goals and Philosophy**

This class will be conducted partially in a classroom and partially across the city of Chicago, where we will explore together the transit landscape that we read about, to submerse you in the civic culture of Chicago and to see firsthand the **social justice** needs of the communities. Through these excursions and our class work, you will acquire **discourse fluency in the field of transit**. Writing and speaking assignments are designed to foster the transferable skills of **effective communication**.

**Required Texts**:

The following **required** texts are available for purchase in the university bookstore.

1. Jarrett Walker. *Human Transit: How Clearer Thinking About Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives*.
2. J. Harry Wray, *Pedal Power: The Quiet Rise of the Bicycle in American Public Life*.

Other readings will be posted to Blackboard well in advance of class and will be marked on the syllabus by the symbol **{BB}.** Readings can be found under “Syllabus and Readings,” alpha by author.

**Crisis Policy**

If you are experiencing difficulties with your health, personal life or any other crisis that is affecting your ability to come to class and complete the work, it is imperative that you alert me as soon as possible. The best path is to see someone at Roosevelt’s counseling center, who can then (with your permission) alert all your professors that you are having trouble. I can work together with the counseling center to find an appropriate course of action to help you make it through the class.

**Assignments**

*Participation:* Everyone will receive a participation grade based on a combination of your performance in collaborative groups, and your willingness to participate in class discussions and outside activities.

*Midterm Exam:* A midterm exam will take place during class on Tuesday, October 13th.

*Short Essays:*  Two short essays (out of three possible prompts) related to class material and activities will be due on September 19th, October 24th and November 21st, respectively.

*Final Project:* Students will be assigned to a small working group (depending on class size) to produce what is known as a “livemap” – a shareable, living application that uses GPS data and smartphone input to create new knowledge. This project will be executed through Crowdmap. Details to follow on Monday, July 13th.

*Final Exam*: A final exam will be administered during the assigned class period.

**You are responsible for sending the correct file in the correct format**. Emails without attachments, or emails containing files other than Word documents, will be regarded as not fulfilling the assignment. You may not under any circumstances:

* Claim that you saved the email in draft form but simply forgot to send it
* Claim that you sent the email to the wrong address
* Claim that you wrote the paper but simply forgot to send it to me
* Claim that you emailed me but forgot to attach the assignment
* Claim that the Internet is down where you live
* Claim that your document was lost in a catastrophic computer crash
* Claim that your document was lost, stolen or otherwise corrupted
* Email me days later with a different file claiming the file you sent me the first time was the wrong one. If you send the wrong file, you MUST realize and rectify the error within the timeframe of the due date.

**Exceptions to policies surrounding the turning in of assignments will only be granted in the case of severe illness or emergency occurring within 24 hours of the due date, which must be documented**

**Grading**

Midterm: 15%

Short Essay #1: 10%

Short Essay #2: 15%

Short Essay #3: 20%

Final Exam: 25%

Final Project: 10%

Participation: 5%

**The grading scale is as follows**. Grades will be rounded down below .5, and rounded up for .5-.9 – i.e. an 89.4 is an 89, but an 89.5 is a 90.

92.5 – 100% : A 86.5 – 89.4%: B+ 76.5 – 79.4%: C+ 66.5 – 69.4%: D+

89.5 – 92.4%: A- 82.5 – 86.4%: B 72.5 – 76.4%: C 59.5 – 66.4%: D

79.5 – 82.4%: B- 69.5 – 72.4%: C- 0 – 59.4%: F

**Participation Rubric:**

A: Student rarely misses class, contributes frequently with thoughtful comments clearly drawn from a careful consideration of class materials.

B: Student occasionally misses class, contributes occasionally with comments and questions that are clearly drawn from a consideration of class materials.

C: Student misses class frequently, and participates with comments that betray a lack of engagement with class materials. A C will also be assigned to students who attend class diligently but never contribute to class discussions.

D: Student misses class very often and makes contributions to the class environment that are an obvious distraction from the materials, ideas and issues under consideration OR contributes nothing at all to conversations.

F: Student rarely if ever shows up for class

**Title IX**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based and sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you should contact our office of Title IX compliance or visit the office in WB 1312. For more information about Title IX please visit <http://www.roosevelt.edu/About/Compliance/About.aspx>

**Academic** **dishonesty**: The university’s policies on issues such as plagiarism, recycling, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty can be found in the student handbook, which is available as a link here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/CurrentStudents.aspx> . Additional guidelines for avoiding plagiarism are available here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/Provost/Faculty/AcademicIntegrity.aspx>

**Disability**: Roosevelt University complies fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Details about ADA and Roosevelt’s policies and practices are found here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/StudentSuccess/Disability/Discrimination.aspx> If you have a condition or disability that requires special arrangements, please alert your instructor or the Academic Success Center as soon as possible, certainly before any assignment or classroom activity that requires accommodation**.** The Academic Success Center is located in AUD 128 in Chicago, and the phone number is 312-341-3818. In Schaumburg, the office is in room 125, and the phone number is 847-619-7978.

**Withdrawal** **date**: The final date for an official withdrawal from this class (meaning a “W” would appear on your transcript) is **Tuesday, Oct. 27**. After that, if you want to withdraw, you’ll need to petition the registrar. Petitions are granted only for non-academic reasons after the deadline**.** If you receive financial aid, it’s best to check with your counselor to assure that aid isn’t affected by withdrawing from a class. The complete withdrawal policy is here, along with a link to the withdrawal deadlines for classes offered in shortened or online terms: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/Registrar/Registration/Drop.aspx>

**Religious holidays**: Please let your instructor know as soon as possible if you will miss class because you are observing a religious holiday. Roosevelt University policy requires written notification to to the instructor within the first two weeks of the term. Any work you miss because of a religious holiday can be made up. You can see the full policy here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/Policies/ReligiousHolidays.aspx>

**Student Code of Conduct:** Students enrolled in the university are expected to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the university’s function as an educational institution. <http://www.roosevelt.edu/StudentSuccess/Conduct.aspx>

**Class Schedule**

**Note: Readings are to completed *before* the class period for which they are assigned.**

**Tuesday, August 25th: Introductions**

Read: Stephen Moss, “[End of the car age: How cities are outgrowing the automobile](http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/apr/28/end-of-the-car-age-how-cities-outgrew-the-automobile).” *The Guardian*, April 28th, 2015. **{BB}**

**Field Trip: Walking tour of Chicago Loop**

**Tuesday, September 1st: Seeing Like a Bike**

Read: Wray, Chapters 1&2. Ann Forsyth and Kevin Krizek, “Urban Design: Is There a Distinctive View From the Bicycle?” *Journal of Urban Design*, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 531-549 (November 2011).

**Field Trip**: **Cycling Excursion: Lakefront**

**Tuesday, September 8th: Cycle Advocacy and Politics**

**Read.** Wray, Chapters 5-6.Julia Thiel**,** “[Is the Bloomingdale Trail a Path to Displacement](http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/bloomingdale-trail-606-logan-square-humboldt-park-displacement/Content?oid=17899462)?” *Chicago Reader*, June 4th, 2015. **{BB}.** Ben McGrath, “[Holy Rollers](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2006/11/13/holy-rollers).” **{BB}.**

**Field Trip: Cycling Excursion to the 606**

**Tuesday, September 15th: Bike Shares and Bike Politics**

Read: Wray, Chapters 8-9. Paul DeMaio, “Bike Sharing: History, Impacts, Models of Provision and Future.” Journal of Public Transportation, 2009. **{BB}** Luke Turley, “The Mechanics.” *Loyola Longform*. **{BB}**

**Guest Speaker From the Active Transportation Alliance**

**Due Saturday, September 19th at midnight: Short essay #1**

**Tuesday, September 22nd: A Nation of Cars**

Read: Jay Young, “[Mass Transit in 19th and 20th Century Urban America](http://americanhistory.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.001.0001/acrefore-9780199329175-e-28).” *Oxford Research Encylopedias*. RA Mohl, “Stop the Road: Freeway Revolts in American Cities.” **{BB}** Robert Bruegmann, “[Hate Freeways? You Aren’t Doing Your City Any Favors.](http://www.bloombergview.com/articles/2012-04-11/hate-freeways-you-aren-t-doing-your-city-any-favors)” Bloomberg. **{BB}**

**Tuesday, September 29th: From Streetcars to the ‘El’**

Read: “History of the El” from Chicago-L.org. **{BB}** Walker pp. 1-97;

**Field Trip: Remnants of the El Tour**

**Tuesday, October 6th**

Read: Walker pp. 98-147. Stephanie Farmer, “Uneven public transportation development in neoliberalizing Chicago, USA.” **{BB}.** Andrew Stokols, “[America Just Doesn’t Get Airport Rail](http://andrewstokols.com/?p=1174).” **{BB}.** Ben Joravsky, “[All Aboard Mayor Rahm’s O’Hare Express Train to Bankruptcy.](http://www.chicagoreader.com/Bleader/archives/2015/06/19/all-aboard-mayor-rahms-ohare-express-train-to-bankruptcy)” *Chicago Reader*. **{BB}**

**Field Trip: CTA Commuting Simulation**

**Tuesday, October 13th**

In-class: Midterm

**Tuesday, October 20th**

Read: Walker, 148-228. Charter of the New Urbanism. **{BB}** Whet Moser, “[Why More Transit Oriented Development Could Mean Lower Rents](http://www.chicagomag.com/city-life/August-2015/Transit-Oriented-Development/).” *Chicago Magazine*, August 3rd, 2015. **{BB}**

**Field Trips: Congress For the New Urbanism, North Avenue**

**Due Saturday, October 24th: Short Essay #2**

**Tuesday, October 27th**

Read: Patrick Meier, “Crisis Mapping in Action.” **{BB}** Katie Peek, “The Dawn of the Data Age.” Popular Science. **{BB}**

In-class: Livemapping group organization, demo and initial work

**Tuesday, November 3rd: BRT**

Read: Taotao Deng and John D. Nelson, “Recent Developments in Bus Rapid Transit: A Review of the Literature.” *Transport Reviews*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 69-96 (January 2011). **{BB};** Eric Jaffe, “[The Cracks in Chicago’s Grand Plans For the Bus](http://www.citylab.com/commute/2015/02/the-cracks-in-chicagos-grand-plans-for-the-bus/386027/)” *The Atlantic Cities Lab*, February 26th, 2015. **{BB}**

**Field Trip: Walk through proposed BRT corridor/Ride BRT (depending on progress)**

**Tuesday, November 10th: BRT in Comparative Perspective**

Read: “Planning a Sustainable City: The Making of Curitiba, Brazil.” Something about BRT in China.

**Tuesday, November 17th: Walking: The Forgotten Mode of Transit**

Read: Reid Ewing, et. Al. “[Streetscape Features Related to Pedestrian Activity](http://jpe.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/06/29/0739456X15591585.full.pdf%2Bhtml?ijkey=rfK8Owkpf93PE&keytype=ref&siteid=spjpe).” Journal of Planning Education and Research, 2015. **{BB}.** Laura Bliss, “[How Urban Designers Can Get Smaller Cities Walking.](http://www.citylab.com/design/2015/07/how-urban-designers-can-get-smaller-cities-walking/399545/)” The Atlantic Cities Lab, July 29th, 2015. **{BB}.**

**Field Trip and Class Presentations: Imageability and Walkability**

**Due Saturday, November 21st: Short Essay #3**

**Tuesday, November 24th: No class, Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Tuesday, December 1st**

In-class: Final Livemapping presentations

**Tuesday, December 8th**

**Final Exam**