

**The City University of New York
Baruch College, Marxe School of Public & International Affairs**

**Urban Transportation Policy PAF 9134
Alexis Perrotta, PhD**

Spring 2024

Email: alexis.perrotta@baruch.cuny.edu.

Expect quick email replies Monday-Friday 9-4.

Class Meetings:

Wednesdays 6:05 pm to 9:00pm

Half the classes are on Zoom and half are in the classroom, schedule on page 5.

Classroom: 17 Lexington Avenue 12th floor **room 1222**

Zoom: **link posted on Blackboard** in Course Documents

Let's meet! Come to Drop-In Hours, Tuesdays 11am-12pm. No appointment necessary, join the Zoom at Meeting ID 816 3564 8024, passcode 097045. To meet at a different time, ask or email the instructor and type "9134" somewhere in the email. Same-day and short-notice appointments can be accommodated.

Course Description & Learning Goals:

Transportation policy shapes our cities. Different modes of transportation provide varying levels of speed, connectivity and access with incumbent costs and benefits. Every transportation policy has environmental, financial, spatial, and social implications.

This is a graduate level survey course designed to introduce students to urban transportation policy. The focus is on urban settings, private mobility (e.g., cars, bicycles), and local public and collective transportation of all types (e.g., buses, subways). The class will cover policies in three broad areas: (1) capital planning and construction, (2) operations, with a focus on demand management (e.g., parking policy, congestion charging) and (3) expanding access and improving equity.

The class uses contemporary and historical case studies from U.S. and international cities to illustrate each lesson, however US urban policy, including federal funding arrangements, establish the framework for most of the semester's material. There is a special focus on transit in the New York City region.

Specifically, the class covers the following topics:

- Transportation financing
- Institutional dilemmas inherent to transportation planning, routing, and scheduling

- Land use requirements and implications
- Environmental sustainability
- Social equity and inclusion
- New technologies
- Cost benefit evaluation principles
- Congestion and demand management
- Active transportation policies (e.g., car-free zones)

This class gives students the opportunity to learn how to assess costs and benefits for a variety of transportation projects, and evaluate the environmental, social, and political tradeoffs among transportation policy choices. This class teaches how federal, state, local and metropolitan levels of government interact to plan and finance transportation projects. Students will become familiar with travel, ridership, and commuting data, and how they are used by policy makers. Students will practice comparing how different transportation modes accommodate and drive growth. Students will have the opportunity to debate current transportation and urban policy issues.

Course Materials:

Blackboard: All required and other readings and media listed in the syllabus, plus additional materials organized by topic, are available on Blackboard in the Course Documents section. This syllabus is on Blackboard in the Syllabus section.

Required Reading: All readings are posted on Blackboard.

Vocat for Lecture Annotations: Baruch students have access to Vocat through baruch.vocat.io. We will review the tool during class 1. Complete instructions are on Blackboard, including what to do if you cannot access Vocat.

Academic Integrity: Each student should hand in only their own, original work, produced without aid from AI or similar technology, paid writers, spouses, etc. If it is discovered that students did not read material but wrote about it as if they did, their grade will be penalized. Likewise if it is clear the student has not listened to a lecture but has annotated as if they did, this is a breach of academic integrity. By participating in this course students agree to fully support Baruch College's Academic Honesty policy. Evidence of academic dishonesty will incur a grade penalty and may result in a referral to the Office of the Dean of Students. If two students deliver identical and obviously copied work, both students will be penalized. Students presenting atypical work may be asked for explanation or additional demonstration of knowledge. Students may be asked to prove they read required material during the semester (pop quizzes, oral quizzes, etc.).

Grading

Reading Responses	60%
Lecture Annotations	20%
Class Discussions	10%
Presentation	10%

This class uses the Baruch grade cut-offs for graduate instruction shown here.

A	92.5–100.0	B-	80.0–82.4
A-	90.0–92.4	C+	77.5–79.9
B+	87.5–89.9	C	73.0–77.4
B	82.5–87.4	C-	70.0–72.9

Graded Components

There is a pdf on Blackboard with instructions for each assignment.

Reading Responses: There are **four** reading responses. Due dates are on page 5.

Summarize and reflect on the readings to provide evidence of comprehension and to practice critical thinking. Deliver reading responses by uploading a Word or PDF file to Blackboard. To encourage students to read feedback, numeric and letter grades will not be given for Reading Responses. Instead, click through the “5555” to read the instructor feedback to learn whether the assignment was complete, on time, and/or if it would benefit from revision. Uploading revisions strengthens the semester grade. Can’t find the instructor’s feedback? Try https://youtu.be/qFTq_bKpQX8 or ask alexis.perrotta@baruch.cuny.edu.

Lecture Annotations on Vocat: There are **two** recorded lectures. Annotate the lectures to provide evidence of active listening. Complete instructions are on Blackboard. Due dates are on page 5.

Class Discussions: There are **fourteen** class sessions. Speak up, think aloud, and help co-produce 14 lively class sessions. Classroom sessions include lecture and discussion; Zoom class sessions have shorter discussions, breakout groups, and presentations.

Presentations: Students will research and present an assigned topic that corresponds to their transportation-related interests. Presentations are held on Zoom; dates are on page 5.

Extra Credit: Students who miss a reading response, insufficiently participate in class discussions, including due to absences, or otherwise expect a low semester grade are encouraged to complete an additional Reading Response. See assignment instructions for readings. Due date is on page 5. This assignment can add up to 8 percentage points to the student’s semester grade.

Lateness and Revision Policies

All materials are available well in advance of the due dates so you can work ahead.

This class will enforce due dates because it facilitates class discussion. When all students have read the same material, they can better participate in debate. The ideas that emerge from student assignments are often incorporated into class lectures.

Reading Responses and **Lecture Annotations** may be completed or uploaded up to one week late without penalty. If handed in later, they will be penalized 50% so the maximum grade is 50%, and will be accepted until the last day of classes. See above regarding Extra Credit.

Presentations will be scheduled in advance (see page 5). The schedule will be on Blackboard. Students unable to present on the scheduled day should contact the instructor to reschedule.

Class Meeting Attendance and Lateness: Class meeting discussions are essential to this course. Students will incur grading penalties if they miss multiple class sessions, do not regularly speak during class, and/or often arrive late or leave early. The instructor will assess student participation and notify students at risk of grading penalties via a Blackboard 'grade' once during the semester, around March 15.

Extra Credit assignments may not be late because they are due on the last of the semester.

If you miss a **reading response**, complete the extra credit assignment.

Please do not send doctors' notes, accident reports, etc. to the instructor.

If bereavement, hospitalization, emergency travel, or similar circumstances prevent you from uploading an assignment on time, then upload it late. **Please do not contact the instructor about late assignments.** The grading policy noted above will be applied regardless of circumstances.

If you need to miss class, just miss class. The reason for missing class will not change the consequences, which are noted above. **You do not need to contact the instructor to miss a class session** unless it is during presentations.

If unfortunate circumstances prevent you from *completing the class*, contact the instructor to discuss.

Class Schedule & Due Dates

1. Jan 31 **Zoom** Access, Mobility, Modes, Density

Vocat Annotation due Feb 5: History, Governance, Financing; Elasticities

2. Feb 7 Classroom Tri-State Transport; Federal spending bill

3. Feb 14 Classroom MTA Funding and Operations

Reading Response 1 Due Feb 19

4. Feb 21 Classroom Fleets, Logistics

5. Mar 6 Classroom Inter-city Travel

Reading Response 2 Due Mar 11

6. Mar 13 **Zoom** Travel Demand Management

7. Mar 20 **Zoom** Equity; Review

Vocat Annotation due Mar 25: Climate

8. Mar 27 **Zoom** Cost Benefit using BRT; Presentations Preparation

9. Apr 3 **Zoom** Presentations

10. Apr 10 **Zoom** Presentations

11. Apr 17 Classroom Overbuilt and Under-maintained

Reading Response 3 Due Apr 22

12. May 1 Classroom Guest Speaker – Daniel Randall, MTA

Reading Response 4 due May 6

13. May 8 Classroom Semester Review

14. May 15 **Zoom** Presentations

Optional Extra Credit Due May 15

No assignments accepted after May 15.

Required Readings

Reading Response 1

New York City Independent Budget Office. (Nov 2022). On Track for Recovery? An Examination of the MTA's Pandemic Ridership & User-Revenues.

Gelinas, N. (2019). Who should run the MTA? City Journal.

Video. Rosenthal, Fitzimmons and Laforgia. (Nov 2017). Your Train Is Delayed. Why? The New York Times. Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/video/nyregion/100000005550602/subway-status-emergency.html>

Reading Response 2

Luberoff, D. (2019). "Coalition Politics and the Expansion of the Transit System in Los Angeles." Transforming Urban Transport, Diane Davis and Alan Altshuler editors. Oxford University Press.

Dewey, O.F. and L. Rayle. (2019). "Commercial Ride-Sharing: From Rogue to Mainstream in San Francisco." Transforming Urban Transport, Diane Davis and Alan Altshuler editors. Oxford University Press.

Reading Response 3

Sadik-Khan, J., & Solomonow, S. (2017). Streetfight: Handbook for an urban revolution. Penguin. Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, and 13.

Video. Strong Towns. (2018). What is a Stroad? Link: <https://youtu.be/OZ1HhLq-Huo>

Video. Fred Mills, B1M. (2022). Why America Is Tearing Down Its Highways. Link: <https://youtu.be/IXp4rVZFTVs>

Reading Response 4 – Choose only one

Caro, R. A. (2015). The power broker: Robert Moses and the fall of New York. Random House. Chapter 39 "The Highwayman".

Or

Brennan, G. (2021). Park on the Highway: Building a Cap Park as a Solution to Decades of Devastation Caused by the Construction of the Cross-Bronx Expressway. Fordham Urb. LJ, 49, 825.

Many additional readings are on Blackboard in the folder "Library". These include articles, books and institutional resources that are referenced during class lectures; resources that should be used to prepare for student presentations; and readings for the optional Extra Credit assignment.

Baruch Policies & Resources

Non-Discrimination:

All complaints under CUNY's [Policy On Equal Opportunity And Non-Discrimination](#) should be reported to Baruch's Office of Diversity, Compliance & Equity Initiatives at: Diversity@baruch.cuny.edu.

Privacy in Zoom Sessions: Students who participate in this class with their camera on or who un-mute are agreeing to being recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to being recorded, keep your camera off and/or keep your mute button activated; you can use the 'chat' box.

The Baruch **Academic Calendar** is available at:

<https://www.baruch.cuny.edu/registrar/registration/academic-calendar.html>

Students with Disabilities:

It is college policy to provide accommodations and academic adjustments for students with disabilities. Any student with a disability who may need accommodations in this class is requested to speak directly to Student Disability Services as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential.¹

Please note, the need for accommodations and the process for arranging them have been altered by COVID-19 and the safety protocols currently in place. Students with disabilities who may need some accommodation in order to fully participate in this class should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible at disability.services@baruch.cuny.edu.

For additional information, please visit:

https://provost.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/disabilities_provostsmemo/

The Writing Center:

The Writing Center offers free, professional writing support for all undergraduate and graduate students at Baruch, through one-to-one consultations, workshops, peer review groups, written feedback, online resources, and a journal of outstanding student writing. We support faculty through classroom visits, in-class workshops, referral forms, and workshop lesson plans, and we're always available for conversations about teaching and writing. More information is available at <http://writingcenter.baruch.cuny.edu/>, by calling (646-312-4012), or by emailing the Center at writing.center@baruch.cuny.edu.²

¹ McCarthy, Jim. (2019, November 21). *Memo from Provost regarding services for students with disabilities*. Retrieved from https://provost.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/disabilities_provostsmemo/

² Baruch College. (2017, July 30). *Academic Support Services for Baruch Students*. Retrieved from <https://provost.baruch.cuny.edu/facultyhandbook/academicsupportservices/>

Campus Intervention Team:

The Campus Intervention Team (CIT) works together as a support system to provide assistance to students in crisis. Any member of the college community can reach out to the CIT to report a concern about a student. Additional information is available at:

<https://studentaffairs.baruch.cuny.edu/campus-intervention-team/>, or by contacting them at: cit@baruch.cuny.edu or 646-312-4570.

Marxe Advisement:

A full range of academic advisement services are provided to Marxe students to ensure the successful completion of their degree programs. Visit their website at:

<https://marxe.baruch.cuny.edu/academics/marxe-advisement/> or email them at: mopia.advisement@baruch.cuny.edu.

Career Services:

Launching a career or transitioning into a new one is a journey—and the Marxe Career Services office is here to guide you. From career consultations to on-campus recruiting, the Marxe community gets access to individualized services to help land a dream job in the public sector. Career counselors are here to support you through every stage of your career, as you evaluate your professional goals, develop a plan, and pursue opportunities.

Visit their website at: <https://marxe.baruch.cuny.edu/student-opportunities/career-services/> or email them at: mopia.careerservices@baruch.cuny.edu.

The following learning goals are addressed in this class:

- Students will learn to distinguish and employ the steps in the policy process: problem/goal identification; stakeholder identification and analysis; financing; approval; implementation and evaluation.
- Students will learn to identify alternative policy options; assess their potential feasibility and effectiveness; describe how the policy options are expected to affect outcomes (mechanisms).
- Students will practice analyzing and drawing conclusions from social science research.
- Students will apply research findings to public policy questions and decision-making situations.
- Students will practice identifying varied and conflicting values or needs within the public sphere and understanding the implications they have on management and/or policy decisions.
- Students will practice preparing clear, concise, well-organized, and accurate written materials and oral presentations.