Practicum in Transportation Policy, Operations & Logistics

PUBP 722-001 (CRN 10243) and CEIE 690-002 (CRN 23469)

SYLLABUS – Spring 2020 (Last update: January 11, 2020)

Basic Course Information

| Time/Places | Wednesday, 7:20 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. (eastern time)  
Arlington Van Metre Hall rm 720  
Fairfax Innovation Hall rm 211 |
| Instructor | Jonathan L. Gifford |
| Telephone | 703-993-2275 |
| E-mail | jgifford@gmu.edu |
| Office location | 527 Founders Hall |
| Office hours | Wednesday, 5-6 p.m. An appointment is strongly recommended if you're making a special trip to campus. I will be available in the office, by phone, or via Skype or WebEx. |
| Teaching Assistant | Lauren McCarthy, lmccart5@gmu.edu |

For week 1 please read “Part I: The Eightfold Path” in Bardach. This will provide a roadmap for the project for the semester. We will also meet with the project client.

Course Summary

This course is the capstone of the Schar School of Policy and Government’s Master’s in Transportation Policy, Operations and Logistics (TPOL). The objective of the course is to engage students in an in-depth field study of ongoing transportation policy, operations, and/or logistics situations, and the design and delivery of actions to manage or resolve problems and opportunities. Copies of the reports of previous semesters are available at https://schar.gmu.edu/prospective-students/programs/masters-programs/tpol/practicum-reports.

This year's TPOL Practicum will partner with Bird Scooters to examine the potential benefits and limitations of harmonized scooter regulations across cities, states and other jurisdictions. Cars and bikes travel seamlessly between cities, counties and states, with
generally uniform regulations. Locally, scooter riders are crossing multiple jurisdictions to commute to work, between Rosslyn, Virginia, and DC, for example. Scooters are also operating between Fairfax City and Fairfax County. It's not uncommon for travelers to encounter different scooter rules in different cities, which can lead to confusion and potentially to safety issues. Are scooters allowed on sidewalks, for example, or in bike lanes? This Practicum will begin by researching current scooter policies nationally and locally to gain a baseline of how cities are regulating scooters, with a focus on commonalities and differences. Additionally, the course will examine how much variation exists, how much it matters, and whether and how harmonization might be beneficial.

Textbooks

Class Requirements and Grading
The primary requirement of the course is to produce a report and recommendations to the external client. The student’s grade will be based 50% on the overall quality of the formal reports and presentations for which he or she is responsible (that is, on the performance of group products), and 50% on the instructor’s assessment of the individual student’s contribution to the overall effort. To inform that assessment, each student should submit a self-assessment, peer review and program review to the instructor not later than the date of the scheduled final exam for the course. The self-assessment should provide a description of the student’s contribution to the overall project, as well as what he or she learned. The peer review should provide an assessment of your peers on the project, particularly those who made exemplary contributions to the project, and those who could have contributed more. Finally, the program review should contain an assessment of the course PUBP 722 and of the TPOL program, and suggestions for improving them.

Disabilities
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.

Course Organization and Logistics
A project course is different from a normal course in that there is not a set schedule of lectures and discussions. Rather, much of the work of the course takes place outside the classroom, working individually or in teams. Organizing this work and maintaining project control and quality is itself a major task, and requires effort. The following are possible project roles:

- Project leader/coordinator
• Project webmaster
• Project librarian (documents, e-documents, data)
• Project report coordinator
• Project presentation coordinator
• Project communications coordinator (liaison with outside parties to avoid multiple repeated requests to the same sources).
• Task leaders

In addition, the project itself will involve a number of tasks. The initial work of the course will be to define tasks and assign responsibilities.

**Schedule**

Classroom and video teleconference (VTC) time have been reserved according to a normal weekly schedule, and the instructor is available to meet with the class at this time. Subgroups of the class may wish to use the VTC facilities for a portion of the meeting time on weeks where status meetings are scheduled, or at other times as available.

For **week 1** please read “Part I: The Eightfold Path” in Bardach. This will provide a roadmap for the project for the semester. We will also meet with the project client.

**Instructor**

Dr. Jonathan L. Gifford is a Professor in the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University, and the director of the **Center for Transportation Public-Private Partnership Policy**. The Center promotes the objective consideration of public-private partnerships in transportation system renewal and development through research, education and public service.

Professor Gifford’s primary area of expertise is transportation and public policy, with a particular focus on transportation and infrastructure finance. His recent research investigates transportation finance and the role of public-private partnerships (P3s). Topics include the development of Virginia’s P3 policy, P3 renegotiations and bankruptcies and protecting government and public interest, and developing evidence for the impacts of P3s.

His book *Flexible Urban Transportation* (Pergamon 2003) examines policies to improve the flexibility of urban transportation systems. He has also studied the role of standards in the development and adoption of technological systems, and the development of the Interstate highway system. Professor Gifford teaches in the Master’s in Transportation Policy, Operations and Logistics program and the Ph.D. in Public Policy program.

He received a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Carnegie Mellon University, and an M.S. and Ph.D. (1983) in Civil Engineering (Transportation) at the University of California, Berkeley.