NOTE: A FULL COURSE OUTLINE WILL BE AVAILABLE BY THE END OF NOVEMBER

POGO 750 - D10

Syllabus
US Transportation Policy in the 20th Century

Spring 2021
Monday 7.20 pm – 10.00 pm

On-line Course
(I find a 2.5-hour class at this time of the day is not productive. I will pre-record some of my “lecture” material and reduce some classes to 1.25 hours. I would expect people to have viewed this material in advance. I will list the dates this applies to at the outset of the course.)

Contacts Information:
Professor: Kenneth Button
Office: Founders Hall 539
Tel: 703-993-4647
E-mail: kbutton@gmu.edu

Office Hours:
Office Hours: I am normally available in my “office” at between 5.00 pm and 7.00 pm on Monday before class and between 2.30 pm and 4.00 pm on Tuesday. Additional times for meetings can be easily arranged. I am always ready to help with anything by e-mail and other Zoom meetings can be organized by appointment via email.

Important: make sure that you read and conform with GMU policies regarding the outbreak of Covid-19.

PLEASE inform me at once of any change in your GMU e-mail address since I will use that extensively for communications.

Course Learning Goals:
The objective of the course is to provide a foundation allowing students to gain an understanding of the way transportation in the US has developed since 1990. The aim is not to be doctrinaire in terms of specific theories or philosophies but to indicate to students the various ways this history has been looked at and to discuss these. It considers how transportation policies have been developed, assessed and implemented. Many of the issues will be domestic concerns of the US but some will be more international in their orientation to reflect the increasing ties the US has with the rest of the world.

Course Content:
The course is concerned with various aspects of the history of US transportation policy in the 20th and early 21st Century. It is not a linear, chronological run-through of how transportation policy
and has evolved. Rather it looks at specific periods when for a variety of factors – political, economic, technological – national attitudes towards transportation policy changed. The course, therefore, provides considerable background material, in the form of case studies, that highlight the relevance of these differing situations in way societal changes and policy-makers viewed and developed transportation policies.

Texts:
There is no textbook for this course. It is article based. A full listing of the weekly “Themes” to be covered, resources to be used, and other material will be provided in the full course outline that will be available by the end of November.

Pedagogy:
Instruction will be in part by the case method, which requires everyone to come to each class frilly prepared to discuss the issues raised by the assigned reading material. The quality of learning depends in large measure on everyone’s preparation for and participation in the case discussions. Examinations: There will be one mid-term and one final examination.

Grading:
Grades will depend on contributions to class discussion and the development of a “research” paper (to be mutually decided upon (40%), on the mid-term (20%) and the final (40%) examinations.

Some provisional “themes” (in no specific order)

THEME 1 Prequal to 20th century transportation policy.

THEME 2 The emergence of a US road network

THEME 3 Urban transit growth (and decline)

THEME 4 The early challenges of motorized transportation

THEME 5 Jitneys, taxicabs, and Uber

THEME 6 The regulated growth of inter-urban transportation

THEME 7 Combatting traffic congestion

THEME 8 The role of shipping in the US economy

THEME 9 ‘The Age of Regulatory Reform’
• Button, K.J. (2015) A book, the application and the outcomes; how right was Alfred Kahn in The Economics of Regulation about the effects of the deregulation of the US domestic airline market?” *History of Political Economy*, 47, 1-39.

THEME 10 The emergence of land-use/transportation planning

THEME 11 Local micro-mobility – “bikes, e-bikes, e-scooters, rollerblades, hoverboards, and segways”