

**PLAN 590.001**  
**Roadways for a safer future**  
**Spring 2020**

**Time:** 2:30 – 3:30 *alternate* Wednesdays (see detailed schedule below)

**Location:** Chapin Reading Room, New East (unless otherwise announced)

**Office hours:** by appointment only

**Instructors**

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**Course Description**

Ensuring our future transportation system is safe, equitable, and sustainable will require leadership from scholars and professionals with a wide range of expertise. This one-credit course aims to develop such future leaders by fostering discussion, collaboration, and shared understanding across disciplines about critical and emerging challenges in transportation. Using a combination of seminars, workshops, and local field trips, we will explore the role roadway infrastructure plays in shaping day-to-day life and long-term planning decisions from multiple perspectives.

There are no prerequisites for this course. Any student with an interest in roadway safety, transportation, planning, public health, engineering, sustainability, and/or equity is welcome, regardless of school, department, or academic background.

The course meets biweekly (alternate Wednesdays during Spring 2020). Enrollment in the course for both fall and spring semesters is encouraged but not required. Course sessions include a mix of lectures, discussions, workshops, and field trips.

The course is loosely designed around a local case study: the northern half of Chapel Hill's North-South Corridor, slated to receive Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service by the end of 2022. While not all of our course sessions will focus explicitly on the corridor, we will use it as a backdrop for

discussions and reflections. Course participants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the N-S BRT project (<https://nsbrt.org/>).

### **Course Objectives**

Active participants in this course will become familiar with:

- The language and applications of systems science tools for exploring complex challenges
- Methods for assessing public health, safety, social, economic, and environmental impacts of transportation infrastructure and services
- Interactions among roadway design, transportation services, and land use
- Contradictions and challenges in balancing roadway design objectives (e.g., safety, efficiency, access, multimodality, pollution, aesthetics, vibrancy; local vs. regional impacts)
- Means of discussing and communicating the impacts of roadway design to a range of audiences
- The roles played by different disciplines (including but not limited to planning, engineering, law, journalism, health, psychology, history) and perspectives in shaping our collective understanding of roadway design, use, and culture.

### **Materials**

All required materials will be available on Sakai or handed out in class. There are no textbooks for this course.

### **Course meeting schedule**

This course meets on alternate Wednesdays. Sessions will take the form of either a lecture and discussion or an interactive workshop. Meetings dates are shown below. Please be aware that some meeting dates and topics may change according to speaker availability, but will always take place during our assigned Wednesday 2:30 – 3:30 course slot.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Session Topic</b>
JAN 8	Semester Precap: Looking backwards and forwards
JAN 22	Making the sausage: getting NCDOT's support for safe streets
FEB 5	How language influences thinking about traffic, design, and safety
FEB 19	Conflicts between capacity and safety
MAR 4	Mid-semester check-in
MAR 18	Local applications of VZ/RTZ approaches to planning & design
APR 1	Field study of air and noise pollution along the North-South corridor
APR 15	Tying the system together

### **Deliverables & Assessment**

Enrolled participants must submit brief reflections (150-250 words) via Sakai by 5pm on the Friday following each session. Reflection prompts will be posted within two hours of the completion of each session. Reflections are expected to show that you have thought about the topic presented, and how it relates (or does not relate) to your own experiences and perspectives. Reflections that stray from the topic, dwell on minutia, focus on the speaker rather than the topic, or demonstrate a lack of respect for or serious thought about the topic will be

discounted. If you have questions about the expectations for reflections, or concerns you will struggle to meet them, please speak with the instructors.

Course grades will be determined based on post-session reflections (70%) and in-class participation (30%).

### **Readings/preparations for class**

Recommending readings, if available, will be posted on Sakai at least one week before each session.

### **Policies and Expectations**

The instructors reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus during the course of the semester. These changes, should they be required, will be announced via Sakai as early as possible.

#### Honor code

"The Honor Code represents UNC-Chapel Hill students' commitment to maintaining an environment in which students respect one another and are able to attain their educational goals. As a student at Carolina, you are entering a community in which integrity matters-- integrity in the work you submit, and integrity in the manner in which you treat your fellow Carolina community members."

#### Cellphones and laptops

Please turn off or silence your cellphones before entering class. The use of laptops and tablets is permitted for note-taking and course-related work only. Other uses of electronic devices in class are not permitted. Violations of this policy will be reflected in your course grade.

#### Late assignments

The expected workload for this course is appropriate for a one-credit course. The only assignments are brief reflections (150 to 250 words), to be submitted no later than 5pm on the Wednesday following each course session. Because these reflections are intended to capture your thoughts during each session, and not your recollection of those thoughts, penalties will be imposed for late submissions. Late assignments are subject to a penalty equal to 10% of the points available for the assignment for every day (or portion thereof) beyond the submission deadline. Extensions may be granted under exceptional circumstances. If you are experiencing a hardship and cannot submit an assignment on time and would like to negotiate an extension, you must contact the instructor via email \*before 2pm\* on the day the assignment is due.

#### Attendance, participation, & facilitation

This course is built in part around in-class discussion and debate. A high level of meaningful in-class participation is mandatory. Every student is expected to come to class prepared to engage with each other and the lecturer in a thoughtful, relevant, and respectful manner. Attendance and meaningful contributions to in-class discussions and workshops are critical to your experience and your performance in this course. Behavior that is disruptive, disrespectful, or otherwise hinders the ability of other students to participate and learn will not be tolerated.

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

- Authorized University activities
- Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
- Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

Please communicate with us early about potential absences. Please be aware that you are bound by the Honor Code when making a request for a University approved absence.

### Guest Instructors

Guest instructors are essential to this course. You are expected to afford our guest instructors at least the same courtesy and attention you would to any other professor. In many cases, these experts are volunteering their time to enhance your experience in this course. Disrespect toward guest instructors, including but not limited to lack of participation, texting, checking email, surfing the web, or engaging in disruptive or distracting behavior, will not be tolerated; penalties will be applied to your overall course grade.

### Accessibility Resources

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in difficulties with accessing learning opportunities.

All accommodations are coordinated through the Accessibility Resources and Service Office. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email [ars@unc.edu](mailto:ars@unc.edu).

### **Grading Schedule**

A	93 – 100	H	95 - 100
A-	90 – 92.99	P	75 – 94.99
B+	87 – 89.99	L	65 – 74.99
B	83 – 86.99	F	< 65
B-	80 – 82.99		
C+	77 – 79.99		
C	73 – 76.99		
C-	70 – 72.99		
D+	65 – 69.99		
D	60 – 64.99		
F	< 60		