

Hofstra University
Department of Economics & Geography



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GEOG 80 – Transport Geography

Objectives

Without transportation there would be no geography and without geography there would be no transportation.

Transport geography investigates movements and distribution. Movements of people, goods and information have always been fundamental components of human societies. Contemporary economic processes have been accompanied by a significant increase in mobility and higher levels of accessibility. Although this trend can be traced back to the industrial revolution, it significantly accelerated in the second half of the 20th century as trade was liberalized, economic blocs emerged and the comparative advantages of global labor and resources were used more efficiently. However, these conditions are interdependent with the capacity to manage, support and expand movements of passengers and freight as well as their underlying information flows. Societies have become increasingly dependent on their transport systems to support a wide variety of activities ranging, among others, from commuting, supplying energy needs, to distributing parts between factories. Developing transport systems has been a continuous challenge to satisfy mobility needs, to support economic development and to participate in the global economy. The general goals of the course are:

- Students will be provided with an introduction to theoretical and practical concepts of transport geography.
- Students will understand the role of transport infrastructures, modes and policies in the organization of space at the international, regional and local scales.
- Students will be able to understand economic processes such as globalization, trade and transportation and their impacts on economic, cultural and social activities.
- Students will understand the fundamental concepts of spatial interaction and diffusion, which explain how human activities are influenced by the concept of distance.

Requirements

Geography 80 is part of Hofstra's distribution requirements. This means that as per the guidelines for core classes at Hofstra, this class requires a large amount of reading (at least 1,200 pages) and has a set of writing requirements (4,500 words). Students entering this class should thus be aware that they are expected to do all the readings and be able to write well-structured class projects. Poor written work will be penalized; any students who feel that their writing is not up to an acceptable standard should seek immediate help from the writing laboratory in Caulkins Hall.

Responsibilities

Respective responsibilities are as follows:

- The Professor’s responsibilities. Provide the most up to date and accurate information concerning the class topics. Create a challenging learning environment where the students are exposed to new concepts and ideas. Be available (virtually and physically) to answer questions and discuss issues. Provide a fair and transparent evaluation of the students’ work.
- The Student’s responsibilities. Class attendance is the basic student’s responsibility. Participation in class discussions constitutes an important dimension of the learning process in a subject where issues, rather than the mere learning of factual material, are the focus. Students are encouraged (and expected) to verbalize their ideas and views on the issues to be discussed. Students are also responsible for reading the required material before going to class and handing the assignments at the expected deadline.

Evaluations

Several means will be utilized for evaluating students’ performance in the course. Three examinations appear on the schedule of class activities. The examinations will emphasize written work and the extent the students understand the core concepts introduced. Class participation or its absence will also be assessed and factored in to the semester grade. In addition, each student will be responsible for developing two class projects.

You can accumulate in this class up to 225 points. Here is the breakdown of the point value of each item you will be evaluated on:

- Examination 1. 40 points.
- Examination 2. 40 points.
- Examination 3. 40 points.
- 2 class projects. 90 points (45 points each).
- Class attendance and participation. 15 points.

The 2 class projects, of about 6-8 pages each, are concerning the following:

- Media review. A review of current events related to transportation, as they appear in the press.
- Analysis. An analysis of the transportation activities of a company or of an economic sector (energy, tourism, steel, manufacturing, etc.).

Grades

To successfully complete this class, you need to accumulate 120 points:

(A) 200 points and above.	(C) Between 140 and 149 points.
(A-) Between 190 and 199 points.	(C-) Between 130 and 139 points.
(B+) Between 180 and 189 points.	(D+) Between 126 and 129 points.
(B) Between 170 and 179 points.	(D) Between 120 and 125 points.
(B-) Between 160 and 169 points.	(F) Below 120 points.
(C+) Between 150 and 159 points.	

Grades are non negotiable and the only way a grade will be revised is if an error was made in the evaluation process. An A is considered a reward for exceptional work, and as such will not be awarded lightly. Test material will be based on both the assigned readings and material covered during lectures.

In order to gain a firm grasp of the issues discussed in class, it is imperative that students complete the required readings before class. This amounts to about 80 pages per week, including course notes.

Penalties

Examination dates will not be changed and make-up exams will not be given except under the most compelling circumstances. A student who missed an exam is required to submit appropriate documentation before any special arrangement may be made. Without proper documentation, a student will receive a zero point for a “no-show” exam. No incomplete will be granted for this course.

Late assignments will be penalized as follows: 10% of the total points for the assignment will be deducted for each day the paper is handed in late (beginning immediately after 5 PM on due day). No assignment will be accepted 5 days after the due date. Failure to turn in assignments will adversely affect grades.

Academic Honesty

Integrity and honesty issues are taken very seriously in this class. Anyone caught cheating during an examination will be reported as an infraction to academic honesty to the provost in line with recognized university procedures. Plagiarism (see Hofstra Bulletin) in whatever form is considered a serious offence for disciplinary action. All handed material will be cross-verified on the Internet. Plagiarism will be assessed and penalties applied according to the following criteria:

- **Fraud.** Any assignment that has been written by somebody else (purchased or freely given) or recycled from another class is fraudulent. Fraud may also imply that almost all, if not the entire, contents of the assignment have been plagiarized and only a small part, such as the introduction and the conclusion, has been modified. A fraudulent assignment automatically implies a failing grade for the **WHOLE CLASS** and is reported to the Provost as a major infraction to academic honesty. No rewriting opportunities will be offered.
- **Substantial plagiarism.** A significant part of the assignment has been plagiarized with elements such as borrowed text without citations, rephrasing, inserted quotations and a failure to correctly acknowledge sources. An assignment with substantial plagiarism automatically receives a grade of zero and is reported to the Provost as a minor infraction to academic honesty. Rewriting may be permitted, at the professor’s discretion, if the student provides strong attenuating circumstances (such as admitting wrongdoing). A rewritten assignment cannot receive more than 75% of its full credit.
- **Incidental plagiarism.** A small part of the assignment has been plagiarized with omissions and some rephrasing for a few paragraphs. A penalty up to 50% can be applied and the student can rewrite the assignment at his/her request. A rewritten assignment will be given full credit.

If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism, you should seek guidance from me before you hand in your assignment.

If for any reason you are having problems following lectures, cannot cope with the readings, or have any other problems with the course, please bring this matter to my attention before the end of the semester. I will be more than willing to help you out if you come to me with any course related problems.

Outline

Topic 1 – Transportation and Geography

What is Transport Geography? Transportation and Space. Historical Evolution of Transportation (I and II). Readings: Geography of Transport Systems (GTS) Chapter 1.

Topic 2 – Transportation Systems and Networks

Transportation and Commercial Geography. Transport Costs. Transportation Networks, Transport Supply and Demand. Readings: GTS Chapter 2.

First Examination**Topic 3 – Economic and Spatial Structure of Transport Systems**

Transport and Economic Development. Transport and Spatial Organization. Transport and Location. Readings: GTS Chapter 3.

Topic 4 – Transportation Modes

Road Transport. Rail Transport. Maritime Transport. Air Transport. Intermodal Transportation. Readings: GTS Chapter 4.

Second Examination**Topic 5 – Transportation Terminals**

The Function of Transport Terminals. Terminals and Location. Port Terminals. Rail Terminals. Airport Terminals. Terminals and Security. Readings: GTS Chapter 5.

Topic 6 – International and Regional Transportation

The Strategic Space of International Transportation. Transportation, Globalization and International Trade. Commodity Chains and Freight Transport. Logistics. Readings: GTS Chapter 6.

Topic 7 – Urban Transportation

Transportation and Urban Form. Urban Land Use and Transportation. Urban Mobility. Urban Transport Problems. Readings: GTS Chapter 7.

Final Examination**Bibliography****Required Reading**

Jean-Paul Rodrigue, Claude Comtois and Brian Slack (2006) *The Geography of Transport Systems*, New York: Routledge, 284 pages. ISBN 0-415-35441-2

Companion Web Site

The Geography of Transport Systems: <http://people.hofstra.edu/geotrans>