GE 541
The Economic Geography of Transport
Fall 2008

Class Schedule: TR 11:00 – 12:30, CAS 453
Instructor: Prof. T.R. Lakshmanan, laksh@bu.edu, CAS439E
Office Hours: TBD

Grading: Class participation is important and accounts for 15% of your grade; the midterm for 35%, and the term paper for 50% of the course grade.

Course Readings: Reading packets are available for purchase in the Department Office (Room 457). Additional readings may be handed out in class.

Course Outline

I. September 2, 2008
Introduction to the Course

II. September 4 - 16, 2008
Transport and Information Innovations, New Logistics and Economic Effects
What have been the effects of recent Innovations in Transportation technology and the complementary Information Technologies in terms of (a) expanding the supply of mobility and access, (b) of influencing the demand for transport access, (c) explosive growth of freight industries, (d) the innovations in freight services and logistical systems and (e) changes in the nature of economic activities in a globalizing economy?
-- Key Transport Innovations: Interstate, Container and Jet Aircraft
-- Information Technologies and Globalization
-- Rise of Knowledge Economy and Intelligent Transport
-- Technical Change and the Evolution of the Freight Services Sector
-- Logistical Innovations and Intermodal Freight
  (Case Studies of US Postal Service and Skyway Logistics)
-- Transformation of Production by Transport IT


III. September 18 - October 9, 2008
Economic Assessment of Transport Investments
A. Transport - Economy Linkages
B. Microeconomic Analysis & Project Appraisal
C. Macroeconomic Models of Transport effects
D. General Equilibrium Effects
E. Equity Issues


IV. October 16 - 23, 2008
Traffic Congestion and Pollution: Analysis and Policy
How should we deal with the congestion and environmental problems auto and truck users impose? Do road users pay ‘their way’?

October 28, 2008 - Mid Term

V. October 30 - November 4, 2008
Public Transport in Cities


Week of November 10 – 15
Individual meetings will be scheduled with the Professor to discuss to final papers.

VI. November 6-18, 2008
Competition, Deregulation and Privatization
What have we learned from the recent deregulation of the transportation service industries? As we move towards opening transport infrastructure to the private enterprises and markets, how to serve public interest via competition, service levels, etc.?

VII. November 20 - December 4, 2008

Urban Transportation Issues in Developing Countries

In many of these countries with rapid economic growth and high rates of urbanization, there is high premium on increasing mobility and promoting access to global economic networks. What appears to emerge, however, are transportation trends (such as explosive rates of motorization, a proliferation of formal and informal systems of public transit and very stressed infrastructures) which raise issues of financial, environmental and social unsustainability of transport futures.


December 9, 2008 - Review Session

Important Dates:

Midterm: October 28, 2008

Review Session: December 9, 2008

Term Paper Presentations: December 11, 2008

Students are expected to know and understand the provisions of the CAS Academic Conduct Code. Copies are available from room CAS 105. All cases of academic misconduct will be referred to the CAS Dean’s office. (This includes signing other people’s names to attendance sheets.)