

Roads and Road Publics

ANG 6930 - 21E5 / ANT 4930 - 21E4

Spring 2017



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Tuesdays 5-7 (11:45a-2:45p)
MAT 0012
Office Hours:
Wed. 1:00-3:30pm or by appt.

Description: What communities emerge through the material and figural construction of roads as *public works*? What kinds of events and encounters do such works make possible? This course examines roads and related transit infrastructure for the ways in which they bring the tensions between physical terrains, state governance and political subjectivities to the fore, all the while underscoring the predicaments entailed by representing public interest as shared and general.

In this class we weigh the distinctive features and traits of different kinds of roads, focusing on experiences of speed and temporal dislocation, as they intersect with the dense historicities of specific locales. We privilege highways and transit mega-projects in the Americas for their profound connections to territorial administration, regimes of property and political belonging. In particular, we will explore the multiple uses and effects of *new roads*: how they have reconfigured urban, peri-urban and rural landscapes, impacted indigenous populations, shaped settler ideologies, and bolstered state claims to radical title over frontiers. By asking what binds transit infrastructures to assertions of eminent domain we will stress the political character of roads and their potential for becoming charged spaces of encounter—as nodal points of governmentality (checkpoints with their various forms of profiling); as sites for popular contentions (demonstrations, strikes, blockages) and for the insistence of counter-publics; or as zones of “everyday insecurity” (crime and traffic accidents). Ultimately, we will seek to understand how roads articulate distinct kinds of circulations by examining the variable modes of sociality (intimacy, remove, anonymity, etc.) they produce.

Overview of Requirements: This class is run as a seminar with active participation in all discussions expected. At least once during the semester each student will be asked to prepare and present a seminar report on one or more of the assigned readings. There is a final paper—the first draft of which is due by mid-semester.

Required texts:

Harvey & Knox, *Roads: an Anthropology of Infrastructure & Expertise* (Cornell UP, 2015)

Recommended:

Augé, *In the Metro* (University of Minnesota Press, 2002)

Bennet, *Vibrant Matter* (Duke University Press, 2010)

Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey*. (University of California Press, 1987)

Warner, *Publics and Counter Publics* (Zone Books, 2005)

The above books have been placed on reserve at Library West. All remaining assigned and supplemental readings can be downloaded from the Canvas course page.

Partial Filmography:

Kôhî jikô / Café Lumière (Hsiao Hsien, 2003)

En el hoyo / In the Pit (Rulfo, 2006)

Iracema, Uma Transa Amazônica (Bodansky & Senna, 1974)

Le salaire de la peur / Wages of Fear (Clouzot, 1953)

Trans Europ Express (dir. Robbe-Grillet)

Lu bian ye can / Kaili Blues (dir. Gan Bi)

Attendance: Please arrive punctually and remain until the end of class. An attendance sign-up sheet will be circulated each session. If you must miss class, please inform me ahead of time (or as soon as possible) and provide appropriate documentation. Don't forget to contact a classmate and obtain notes on materials covered while away.

Absences for reasons of religious holiday, illness, and official university business are excused; however, proper notification must still be provided. **Please note:** *More than one unexcused absence will undermine performance in the course. After the second unexcused absence the final grade will be reduced a full letter. Students with four or more unexcused absences risk failing. Bonus credit will, however, be granted for perfect (or near perfect) attendance.*

For official UF Policy on attendance and absences please consult:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Evaluations – Final course grades will be calculated according to a combination of four criteria:

Participation (20%): A grade for participation will be assessed at the end of the semester based on the degree to which you play an active, informed role in class discussions, and in so doing contribute to the course's overall success. Please be prepared at each session to share your impressions, questions and interpretations of all assigned materials. You are also highly encouraged to meet with me in office hours two or three times during the semester to talk about your progress in the course and your on-going work on the final project.

Seminar Report/Presentation (25%): You will be responsible for the preparation and presentation of one seminar report (length: 5-6 double spaced pages) on the topic of your assigned week. The seminar report should not merely summarize but offer a well-crafted, spirited interpretation that situates the required readings within the ideas and concepts of the course. It should also outline specific concerns and hone questions. Student(s) in charge of the presentation must circulate a list of discussion points and questions *at least 24 hours* prior to class (that is, no later than 11:30am on Monday) via Canvas.

Mid-semester paper (25%): This assignment is a first draft of the final paper. The required length for undergraduate students is 2000 words; for graduate students 4000 words. *A concise 250-word abstract that clearly outlines the objectives of the project is due on February 7.*

Term project paper (30%):

For undergraduate students – The final paper is a “road ethnography” broadly defined, based on a research project of your own design and with a length of approximately 3300 words. The paper should critically examine one of the class themes through the exploration of a specific topic elaborated in consultation with me (the instructor).

For graduate students – The final paper should be an original, persuasive and creative engagement with one or more of the class concepts. Of approximately 5500-7000 words in length, it should contribute directly towards the development of a conference paper, journal article or dissertation chapter.

The term project paper must be handed in no later than the last day of class.

All papers, exams and reports must be typed and double-spaced with one-inch margins and pages numbered. *Please staple and number the pages.* In addition to submitting a hard copy, you must also upload an electronic version via the Canvas assignment prompt.

Written assignments will be judged on content (the extent to which they succeed in explicating course material and themes) but also in terms of style (coherence, persuasiveness and creativity).

Assignment Deadlines:

- 1) seminar paper: TBA
- 2) final project abstract: February 7
- 3) mid-semester paper: February 28
- 4) final paper: April 18

Late policy: Assignments are due at the beginning of class of the calendar deadline. Mid-term papers and seminar reports handed in late but still within one week of the original due date will be docked the equivalent of a full letter grade. After that they will no longer be accepted. No extensions will be granted for the final term paper.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. All work submitted for a grade must be free from unauthorized assistance or deliberate misrepresentations of one's own efforts. The penalty for plagiarism or cheating is a grade of zero points on the assignment in question. In such cases an incident form will also be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students.

If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please consult the UF Honor Code as well as the UF Policies on Academic Honesty, Student Rights and Responsibilities. See: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>, also <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/seminars-modules/academic-integrity-module>

ADA Statement: "Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students will be asked to supply a letter from the Disability Resource Center to assist in planning accommodations."

Grading: The following scale will be used for grades on all assignments and exams: 94-100=A; 90-93=A-; 87-89=B+; 83-86=B; 79-82=B-; 76-78=C+; 72-75=C; 69-71=C-; 66-68=D+; 62-65=D; 59-61=D-; 58 and below=E (failing).

Regarding university grading policies, be advised that a grade of C- is not valid for major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule, or for college basic distribution credit. For questions about minus grades, please see <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>.

You may consult current UF policy on how grade point averages are calculated at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#calculating>.

Course feedback: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times

when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Additional UF Resources:

Health & Wellness

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student
- University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road (392-1575) <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>
- University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
- Student Health Care Center (392-1161) <http://shcc.ufl.edu/>

Academic

- Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>
- The Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall (864-1138) <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/for-students/>
- Career Resource Center, Reitz Union (392-1601) <http://www.crc.ufl.edu/>
- Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Please note: I may make minor adjustments to class readings or assignment requirements during the course of the semester. Any and all modifications will be announced ahead of time.

Course Schedule

week 1 **introductions: on the vitality of roads**

1/10 Dalakoglou, "Towards an anthropology of roads"
Larkin, "The politics & poetics of infrastructure"
Kafka, "The Great Wall of China"

film: In the Pit (dir. Rulfo)

week 2 **ethnographies of terrain**

1/17 Harvey & Knox, *Roads*: Introduction, Part I & Part II

film: Iracema: Uma Transa Amazônica (dir. Bodanzky & Gauer)

supplementary: Fox, "From Montreal to Minnesota, by Inland Sea"

week 3 **road events 1: landscapes shift**

1/24 Bergson, "The perception of change"
Kosok, "Transport in Peru"
Kernaghan, "Asphalt Furrows"
Reeves, "Infrastructural Hope"

film: The decade of destruction. Episode one (dir. Cowell)

supplementary:

Schivelbusch, *Railway Journey*

Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, Chapter 12

week 4 **rhythm**

1/31 Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis* (selected chapters)
Vannini, "In time, out of time: Rhythmanalyzing ferry mobilities"

Messiaen, "Conversation 3"

Deleuze, "Boulez, Proust and Time"

Stewart, "Road Registers"

film: Café Lumière (dir. Hou Hsiao-Hsien)

supplementary:

Benveniste, "The Notion of 'Rhythm'"

Henriques et. al., "Rhythm Returns"

Thrift, "Movement-Space"

week 5

from things to their publics

2/7

Augé, *In the Metro*: "Memories"

Kharkhordin, "Things as *res publicae*"

Warner, "Publics & Counterpublics (abbreviated version)"

Canetti, "The Fifteenth of July"

film: Trans Europ Express (dir. Robbe-Grillet)

project abstract due

supplementary:

Arendt, "The Public Realm: the commons"

Tarde, "The Public and The Crowd"

week 6

sense and surface

2/14

Ficek, "Calle Principal"

Mrazek, "Asphalt as Language"

Bennet, *Vibrant Matter*: chapter 5

Graham & Thrift, "Out of Order: Understanding Repair and Maintenance"

film: The Wages of Fear (dir. Henri-Georges Clouzot)

supplementary:

Schapp, "Three Pieces of Asphalt"

Bennet, *Vibrant Matter*: chapter 2

week 7

image trance, image world

2/21

Durkheim, "Origin of the Notion of Emblem"

Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*: 1. "The Culmination of Separation"

Salvatore, "Imperial Mechanics"

Starostina, "Engineering the empire of images"

Larkin, "Making equivalence happen"

film: Kaili Blues (dir. Gan Bi)

supplementary:

Heidegger, "Origin of the Work of Art"

Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*

week 8 **road events 2: history, legibility, expression**

2/28 Uribe, "The Trampoline of Death"
Bakhtin, "Forms of time and of the chronotope in the novel"
Serres (in conversation with Latour), "A Different Theory of Time"

film: Mr. Pig (dir. Luna)

term paper draft due

week 9 **Spring Break**

3/7 no class

week 10 **final projects workshop**

3/14 peer evaluation activity

week 11 **unsettled ties**

3/21 Berlant, "The commons: Infrastructures for troubling times"
Serres, "Theory of the Quasi-Object"
Harvey & Knox, *Roads* (Part III)

film: TBA

supplementary:

Kockelman, "Enemies, Parasites, and Noise"

week 12 **infrastructural power, or the work of nets**

3/28 Mann, "The autonomous power of the state"
Kittler, "City is a medium"
Kittler, "Gramophone, Film, Typewriter"

Konopinski, "Borderline Temporalities & Security Anticipations"
Rose, "Stopping the Greater Cairo Ring Road"

film: TBA

supplementary:

US Army Field Manual: "Urban Terrain Analysis"
Lefebvre, "Space and the State"
Kittler, "Media Wars"

week 13 **crash, blockage, repair**

4/4 Benjamin, "The Railway Disaster at the Firth of Toy"

Khan, "Flaws in the flow"
Klaeger, "Dwelling on the road"
Lombard, "Navigational Tools for Central African Roadblocks"

film: Kumiko, The Treasure Hunter (dir. Zellner)

supplementary:

Serres, "The Best Definition: The parasite is a thermal exciter"

week 14 **presentations**

4/11 reports on individual research

week 15 **presentations**

4/18 reports on individual research

term paper due