Transportation Studies

**Director, School of Planning and Public Affairs**
- Lucie Laurian

**Coordinator, Transportation Studies**
- Steven Spears (Planning and Public Affairs)

**Graduate certificate:** transportation studies

**Faculty:** [https://sppa.uiowa.edu/faculty-staff](https://sppa.uiowa.edu/faculty-staff)

**Website:** [https://sppa.uiowa.edu/](https://sppa.uiowa.edu/)

Transportation is vital to modern society. The United States, like other nations, faces many critical transportation problems and issues. The highway system is reaching an advanced stage of its life cycle, transportation finance is unsustainable, public transit operating deficits are growing, the quality of transportation available to many citizens is unacceptably low, serious inequities exist between transportation modes, and extensive changes are called for in traditional transportation institutions. New approaches to financing the nation’s road system are badly needed.

Transportation engineers and planners draw on a number of skills to respond to the challenges they face. They must analyze and forecast the movement of people and goods within and between cities; identify effective and efficient means for providing desired transportation services; price these services properly; and evaluate the impact that transportation changes have on land use, environmental quality, economic activity, the local or regional economy, and various subgroups within society.

No single academic discipline can supply all of the theories, principles, or methods needed to address the varied and complex problems in transportation. Recognizing this, the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and the School of Planning and Public Affairs participate in the interdisciplinary Transportation Studies Program, through which students in the participating units can earn the Certificate in Transportation Studies along with their graduate degrees.

The Departments of Industrial and Systems Engineering and Mechanical Engineering also participate in the transportation certificate program, offering courses in human factors and safety issues in transportation. The Certificate in Transportation Studies is coordinated by the School of Planning and Public Affairs.