

TTP 281, ITS-Davis Friday Seminar, Attendance Policy

October 2010

You are expected to register for and attend the TTP 281 Weekly ITS-Davis Seminar Series, a one unit S/U seminar course, each quarter for the first two years of your graduate study in transportation. To receive an S grade you must attend at least six of the (typically) eight seminars, and sign the attendance roster. TTP 281 units do not count toward the total units required for the degree.

Other courses always take precedence, however, and for any quarter in which you have a declared course conflict the seminar requirement is waived, while we expect you to "make up" the missed quarter by attending the seminars for an equal number of quarters beyond the two-year requirement (assuming you have not yet completed your degree, naturally). You should notify Annemarie Schaaf (aschaaf@ucdavis.edu) or Pat Mokhtarian (plmokhtarian@ucdavis.edu) at the beginning of any quarter for which you have a systematic conflict hindering your ability to attend six of the seminars, and you should not register for the seminar in that quarter.

Many (probably most) of our seminars are now webcast and archived for space- and time-shifted viewing (see <http://www.its.ucdavis.edu/events/seminarseries/>). Students have sometimes asked if they can view the seminars remotely on a regular basis, rather than attending in person. In consultation with the program faculty we have established the following principles and policies, behind which there is a strong consensus.

First, our emphatic default expectation is that you attend the seminars in person. When physical attendance at a seminar is light, it is a sign of disrespect to our guest speakers, diminishes a speaker's opinion of our program, contributes to a reduced sense of responsibility among other students, and deprives the onsite audience of the value of your questions and comments. And obviously, if viewing the seminars remotely means not viewing them at all, or viewing them less attentively than if you were onsite, then it is a rebuff to our efforts to offer you speakers involving a wide diversity of issues and perspectives, and a detriment to your own education.

Having said that, however, we recognize the value of having the remote viewing option, when the alternative is not physical attendance, but rather an inability to attend at all. Accordingly, we do allow you to take advantage of the online option when legitimate extenuating circumstances justify your physical absence from a seminar.

To receive credit for any seminar attended online, we now require that you write a 750-word essay on the seminar. There are no specific requirements for its content, other than the obvious ones that it be coherent, cogent, and pertinent. You could summarize key points, describe your reaction to them, discuss a broader context, or whatever. You must send the essay to Annemarie at least one week before the end of the quarter for which you need to receive the credit. On occasion seminar speakers will present confidential or copyrighted material in their presentations that causes them to not want to share the live and/or recorded links. To receive credit for those seminars, you must attend them in person and sign the attendance roster.