



Advancing Women in Transportation
FAU Owls Student Chapter



Institute of Transportation Engineers
at Florida Atlantic University

From Mobility to Accessibility: Transforming Urban Transportation and Land-Use Planning

Lecture presentation by Dr. Louis Merlin

Assistant Professor in the School of Urban and Regional Planning at FAU

Wednesday, January 22, 2020 - 12 PM, EE-96, Room 303, FAU Boca Raton Campus



What is the goal of transportation planning? We don't often stop to think about this larger question. Often we are motivated by improving specific performance measures that are accepted practice. It turns out that many, if not most, of the widely accepted performance measures in transportation planning practice are mobility based. That is, they are motivated by the goal of improving speeds and/or reducing delay for vehicles. The problem with this ubiquitous mobility orientation of our field is that the ultimate goal of transportation is not mobility but accessibility. Following the derived theory of transportation demand, success in transportation is not measured by travel speed but rather by the ability to reach destinations. This concept is generally referred to as accessibility and is not equivalent to the concern of equal access by disabled persons. In this presentation, Dr. Merlin contrast the concepts of accessibility and mobility, review basic accessibility measures, and then demonstrate how an accessibility-based analysis may yield different recommendations than a mobility-based analysis through a specific case study in the San Antonio region.

About the Presenter

Dr. Louis Merlin is an Assistant Professor in the School of Urban and Regional Planning at Florida Atlantic University. Dr. Merlin draws upon a strong background in Mathematics and Operations Research as well as experience as a professional urban planner in his teaching and research. He is particularly interested in developing mathematical models that shed insight into pressing urban policy questions. Current research concerns how to better integrate transportation and land use through the development of accessibility-based performance measures and tools, as well as the implications of self-driving cars for sustainability.



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