Bruce Podwal Seminar Series

Tangled Decisions: Supplying the Infrastructure We Ride On

Tuesday, February 23, 2016
12pm in the Civil Engineering Conference Room (ST-105)

Professor Joseph Berechman, PhD
Department of Economics, City College of New York

Abstract
There is a rapidly growing disparity between the amount of resources needed to maintain and upgrade the current transportation infrastructure and between what actually is being invested. Against this reality it is expected that only the best worthy projects, from a transportation-economic perspective, will be implemented. Yet, review of the germane literature, coupled with data analysis, reveals that a significant number of projects, especially the so called, “mega projects” are, in fact, unworthy relative to their costs, output and returns on alternative investments. What is the magnitude of this highly disturbing phenomenon, why is it occurring and how to explicate it? This seminar explores, analytically and empirically, these questions by highlighting key underlying factors, which affect infrastructure projects decision-making and choices.

Biography
Dr. Joseph Berechman is the Marvin Kristein Professor in the Department of Economics and Business at the Colin Powell School at CCNY. Between 2007 and 2014 he was the Department’s Chairman. Before coming to CCNY he was the CN Chair Professor in Transportation and International Logistics at the Sauder School of Business, the University of British Columbia, Canada. Dr. Berechman has received his Bachelor degree from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel, his MBA from the Wharton School and PhD degree from the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Subsequently, he was on the faculty of SUNY Buffalo, Tel-Aviv University and the University of California, Irvine. He also was a Fellow at The Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies.

Dr. Berechman has consulted on a variety of transportation and urban projects in different countries and has been a principal investigator in several major studies done for the European Union. For the past several years he is engaged in major cost and investment studies of transportation infrastructure projects in New York and elsewhere. He has published numerous journal papers and five books. Dr. Berechman’s current research interests focus on transportation infrastructure investment evaluation and decision-making; and the relationships between transportation development and regional and national economic growth.

Light refreshments will be served.