

## **Research-informed teaching report**

**Project title: Transport Geography**

**Project team: Prof. Jon Shaw**

### **Aims:**

- a) To involve a number of guest speakers in the course, representing a cross-section of those people and institutions involved in delivering transport across different areas of governance;
- b) To include a primary-research led investigation to form part of the assessment for students on the course. This would involve travelling to a location outside of Plymouth.

### **Methods used:**

Guest lectures / practical sessions were arranged (including from organisations such as South West of Scotland Transport Partnership, Business Travel Research Centre, Commission for Rural Communities, Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership) and a fieldtrip to Erfurt, Germany, in collaboration with the *Institut Verkehr und Raum* was undertaken. Project work in London, Birmingham and Devon was also completed by some students.

### **Number of students involved:**

All students in GGH3154 on 2007/08 and 2008/09 (c. 80) were involved in relation to aim 'a', and around 20 were involved in relation to aim 'b'.

### **Findings / outcomes / impacts:**

Students gained an insight into the issues and dilemmas confronting transport practitioners both through guest sessions and primary research work (including interviews) undertaken in the course of undertaking projects. As such they gained valuable experience as to the value of research in teaching – both their own research and that underpinning much of their lecture material. Practitioners also discussed and made suggestions regarding course content.

### **Continuation / dissemination plans:**

Contacts made during the course of the work are valuable with regard to the ongoing success of the module (and more broadly to the development of a new MSc Sustainable Transport, due to start in September 2010) because they enable frequent curriculum review and the incorporation of practical 'real world' elements in the course that would otherwise be missing. The fieldtrip to Germany was particularly successful – it was greatly enjoyed by the students who found it highly challenging but hugely rewarding – and funding to develop this as a permanent fixture in the course will be sought.