

## Catalog Description

Examines principal urban-regional economic and spatial theories for explaining economic, social and physical forces influencing location, growth and decline of cities and regions. Credit not allowed for both CP 8300 and COA 8540.

## Course Overview

This course explores the interactions between space, place, and economic behavior. It provides a framework for understanding the economic and social forces that lead to the existence of cities and regional agglomerations. The course material will provide a regional perspective, which has been an important theoretical contribution to planning and several other social science disciplines. We will explore the use and value of land in the context of competing demands for space and locational advantage in urban regions. It will also involve developing a solid understanding of the problems in measuring these urban and regional characteristics, exploring the methodologies to do it, and examining the design of optimal urban policy. The course attempts to strike a balance between the seminal theoretical propositions and the emerging problems and policy in urban areas. Emphasis is placed on the analysis of urban and regional spatial growth through economic theories. This course will rely substantially on student participation in enlightened debates and critical thinking.

## Prerequisites

1. This is a doctoral seminar course. Students with some training in intermediate microeconomics will benefit most from the readings and lectures. Others with some analytical thinking and mathematical modeling skills will find it a worthwhile challenge.

## Course Materials and Texts

2. Almost all the required readings will be made available on the T-Square site for the course. Students are also expected to be familiar with doing a literature review. Chris Hart's book "Doing a Literature Review" is highly recommended for this purpose (Sage: 1998). All class participants are also expected to post current articles and media reports (video, audio, blogs, etc.) to illuminate the theoretical discussions in class. Some of the material will, therefore, be "live", that is, posted and discussed as events unfold or as they are found.

## Course Objectives

The course will explore the following questions and issues:

1. What is different about land markets?
2. How do regions develop, grow, and specialize?
3. How are urban and regional networks formed?
4. What are the drivers of regional and urban growth?
5. Urbanization and urban growth trajectory in North America
6. Theories of spatial form within urban regions

7. Why do regions follow either convergent or divergent trajectories?
8. What are the different theoretical frameworks to explain regional development?
  - a. Neoclassical growth theories
  - b. Structuralist theories
  - c. Marxian theories
  - d. Evolutionary theories of growth stages and cycles
  - e. New Institutional Economic theories
9. What are the emerging theoretical developments and their impact on planning thought?

## **Course Evaluation**

Class participation in discussions and online contributions will account for 30% of the final grade. Another 30% of the grade will be based on individual research papers on a topic chosen by the student and approved by the instructor. The last three weeks of class will include in-class presentation of the individual research papers. The remaining 40% of the grades will be equally distributed between a midterm exam and a final exam (both out-of-class). Every student will be responsible for leading class discussions on the assigned readings at various points during the semester. Late submissions will be graded down by 5% of total points for each day of delay.

## **Ethics and in-class conduct**

Your involvement in class discussions is essential to the pedagogic element of this class. Everyone should feel comfortable and unrestrained from expressing differing points of view, if necessary, in a manner that is non-threatening and non-personal. I would expect you to challenge many of the ideas and theories that are brought to the class with logic and elegance (and maybe even humor). I certainly welcome your challenges – they would make this class more interesting. Regardless, I do reserve the right to close discussions if I see them deviating from the immediate topic, becoming unnecessarily adversarial, or in the interest of time.

All class participants should exercise utmost care in their use of others' ideas and ensure such ideas are duly acknowledged. Plagiarism is a serious offense at this Institute and if I detect any instance of plagiarism the perpetrator will be reported and given failing grades in the class.

Please make sure that you are familiar with the Student Conduct Code

<http://www.honor.gatech.edu/plugins/content/index.php?id=11>, as well as section XVI on “Cheating and Plagiarism” in your CRP Student Manual. If in doubt, please check with me.

## **ADA Accommodations**

If you require course adaptations or accommodations due to a disability, if you have emergency medical information that I should be aware of, or, if you need special arrangements in the event the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment to discuss within the first week of classes, or, as soon as possible after a change in your circumstances occurs which requires an accommodation.

## **Cellphones & Internet surfing**

This class has a zero-tolerance policy for cell phones, Internet surfing, and checking email in class. Laptops can be used for note taking. Cellphones should be out of sight and silenced.

**Recordings of Class Sessions and Required Permissions:**

Classes may not be recorded by students without the express consent of the instructor unless it is pursuant to an accommodation granted by the Office of Disability services. Class recordings, lectures, presentations, and other materials posted on Canvas are for the sole purpose of educating the students currently enrolled in the course.