

URP 584: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

Winter 2021

Mondays & Wednesdays, 8:30 - 10:00 am

Instructor: Prof. Scott Campbell (sdcamp@umich.edu)

This is an introduction to urban & regional economic development and planning. The course has two main goals: understanding the dynamics of urban growth and decline, and examining planning interventions. The larger context is the contemporary restructuring of local and regional economies in the face of accelerated technological change, growing economic internationalization, the decline of manufacturing employment, the blurring of public and private planning, the inverted city-suburb-edge city relationships, and the conflicts between economic, social and ecological interests. We use case studies to contrast past and future models of local economies, such as high-tech innovation in Silicon Valley & Route 128, Detroit, booming fracking towns, tourist cities, stadium deals, and the Amazon HQ2 competition.

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or permission of instructor. As an introductory course, the emphasis is on major themes, political debates, urban economic history, the dynamics of local economies, and case studies. Though a basic course in micro-economics (such as URP509) would be useful as background, this course does not focus on quantitative economic methods. We welcome students from other disciplines. In past years, students from Public Policy, SEAS, Social Work, Public Health, Architecture, Business and Civil Engineering have taken the course.

Course syllabus: <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~sdcamp/urp584/> (google: sdcamp urp584)

Broader Themes of the Course:

causes of growth and decline in cities & regions
Comparing strategies for promoting economic development (tax subsidies, job training, infrastructure development, marketing, etc.).
the limits of planning intervention in a mixed capitalist setting
strategies to alleviate urban poverty
Sustainable Development: Can one balance the interests of economic growth, environmental protection and social justice?
Deindustrialization & restructuring
Is manufacturing still a viable economic base?
the rise of high-tech and the information city
the globalization of production, trade & finance
Should localities encourage/require firms to use locally responsible/loyal practices?
local vs. state vs. national development strategies
public-private partnerships

the varied economic foundations of cities
(government cities, industrial cities, trade cities, global cities, military cities)
top-down vs. bottom-up strategies to economic development (e.g., neighborhood vs. downtown).
tourism as economic development
economic demography and labor migration (e.g., do jobs follow people or vice versa?)
the product & profit cycles of technological change
How are the boundaries between the public and private sectors being blurred by public-private partnerships, public authorities, non-profits, etc.?
How does economic development complicate a simple vision of city planners working in the public interest?
Economic developers: intermediaries, advocates, entrepreneurs, planners or barkers?

Course Requirements:

Course assignments include several short essays, participation in several structured debates, and the preparation and presentation of a Local Economic Portrait (group project).