

Urban Economic Development Syllabus

POLS 5360 and 4360

Spring Semester, 2021

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-3:00 or by appointment. All meetings will be on Zoom this semester.

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Overview of Course:

Urban areas are still the chief engines of economic growth in the U.S despite the economic ravages of the Covid pandemic. This is particularly true for regions of the country that have experienced significant growth in recent years, for example, cities like Seattle, WA; Miami, FL; and Portland, OR; and Austin, TX. This begs the following questions:

1. What are the chief drivers of economic growth?
2. Can other cities emulate their high-growth peers?
3. What tools do cities have to help spur economic growth?

Declining cities have always faced enormous challenges in turning around their economic

provide an introduction to the key concepts, ideas, strategies and (often conflicting and contradictory) goals of urban economic development; 2) give you an understanding of the impacts that global, national, regional, and state economic forces and policies have on cities; 3) allow you to critically reflect on the goals, objectives, and outcomes of local economic development efforts, particularly in light of questions like who benefits, who loses, and how do such efforts increase or decrease social inequality? 4) provide the tools to examine the historical, economic, political, and social environments in which economic development policymaking occurs; 5) provide an opportunity to analyze the range of strategies, programs, and tools that are used to improve the economic prospects of neighborhoods, cities, and regions; and 6) give you an understanding the complex politics of urban economic development.

The case study we will be using this semester is St. Louis City, which has, Colin Gordon points out, the dubious distinction of being the poster child for modern urban decline in the United States. St. Louis' problems are the product of decades of bad policy choices and private disinvestment. In this course, we will examine what economic development efforts have been employed and what can be done that will finally help St. Louis turn its economy around.

There will be one or two guest speakers who will talk about economic development from the standpoint of their practitioner experience.

Textbooks:

Colin Gordon.

Nancy Green Leigh and Edward J. Blakely.
. 5th or 6th edition.

Outline of Assignments:

Definition

Why local economic development?

The global context

The national economy

Wealth and income inequality

Discussion board: Introduce yourself.

Different approaches to growth

Effects of different policies on local economies

- Monetary and fiscal policy
- Trade policy
- Social welfare policy
- Health-care policy
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Possible GUEST SPEAKER: City of Rock Hill City Administrator, Jennifer Yackley

Week 13: Organizational prerequisites of local economic development (April 26)

Organizational resources necessary to build an economic development strategy
Internal professional expertise (economic development specialist) and external resources (public-private partnerships)

Institutional approaches and typology of local development organizations

Local economic development in a global economy

The role of technology

Climate change and local economic development: sustainable economic growth

Other future challenges

The future of local economic development planning

St. Louis City of Blight

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap. 13 & 14; Gordon, pp. 187-228

Week 14: Class presentations (May 3)

Week 15: Wrap-up, Review and possible Presentations

Online Final Exam is due by May 14 by 11:59 PM

Assignments:

Two short policy memos. Between 8-10 pages each. Note: the actual text in these memos does not have to be 8-10 pages. This includes graphs, figures, etc.

1. Why does your city need economic development? (Due Feb. 22). In this memo, you will analyze important trends in your city affecting economic growth. What has been the trend in major economic indicators over the past 5 years? These include: Who are your city's largest employers? Is your city gaining or losing population? What is your city's demographic composition (percentage of black, whites, Hispanics, and others; fastest growing racial and ethnic group; children, adult and senior population; percent college-educated, etc.)? How does this composition affect the demand for city services? What are your city's revenue sources? Which one grew the fastest? The slowest? Based on this data, construct an argument for why your city needs an economic development strategy and who your strategy will help. Do you

think more attention should go to small businesses, minority-owned businesses, the unemployed? Be as specific as you can.

2. Describe who has benefitted most and least from the economy in your city since the Great Recession (Due April 5). The focus of this memo is to identify the local economy's big winners and losers. Use data from the same sources used in the first memo or find other sources if you need to. You will need to dig deeper into the data by looking at things like unemployment statistics, median household income (by race), the fastest growing neighborhoods and their demographic characteristics, trends in home ownership (average price of a home, etc.) to construct a profile of the groups who have experienced the most economic growth and those who have been left behind. Is there income inequality in your city? If so, how wide is the gap between the rich and the poor? You can probably find Gini coefficients for your city online. These will give you a sense of how big the inequality gap is. Make sure to make relevant comparisons including to the state and country. How does the strategy you came up with in the previous assignment address the issue of inequality? If you have to revise the strategy in light of the inequality gap then do so.

3. Final project: Develop an economic development plan (Due May 10). In this paper, the idea is for you to put everything together that you've learned during the course to design an effective economic development strategic plan for your city. In formulating your plan, pay close attention to the issues that you addressed in your policy memos. Why your city needs an economic development plan should be part of the Background section. If your city's economy has not benefited everyone, use your plan to describe, using specifics, how you intend to reverse this. If your city's economy has done a reasonably good job of helping people throughout the income spectrum then explain how your plan will continue to do this or even improve economic outcomes for everyone in the city. You also need to address feasibility issues in your plan by discussing how the current political leadership can sell to the pub.si.982(in)0(o)-5(m)6(e)4(u)3(d)3(in)5(g)4(t)-3(

a dry-run because presentation skills are critical in the profession. In the dry run, you will be presenting the main points from your first 2 policy memos.

4) Blackboard final (Due May 15 by 11:59 PM)

Grade Distribution for Assignments:

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|--|----------|
| Class attendance and discussion board..... | 20% |
| Economic Development Briefs 1&2..... | 10% each |
| Final Project..... | 20% |
| Midterm Exam..... | 20% |
| Final Exam..... | 20% |

Note: Accordingly, no consumption of any food will be allowed in class.

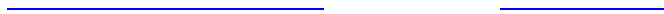
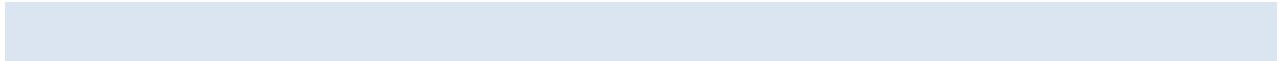
Interim Policy on Face Masks

Student Handbook

related services, is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331) and the School of Nursing (Suite, 114). Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, academic coaching, career services, and/or facets of curriculum planning) by visiting the Student Success Center or by going to www.slu.edu/success.



4.0 Development and Approvals