

**University of Waterloo**  
**Department of Economics**  
**Econ 483 – Section 1**  
**Topics in Urban Economics**  
**Winter 2019**  
**Friday, 11:30-2:20 RCH 306**

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Ryan George

Office: HH 218

Office Phone: 519-888-4567 ext. 33169 (please do not leave voice mails)

Office Hours: scheduled,

Monday 10 – 11am,

Tuesday 11am – 12 noon,

Wednesday 10 – 11am,

Thursday 11am – 12 noon

or by appointment.

Email: r22georg@uwaterloo.ca

The instructor will only respond to emails that include “Econ 483” in the subject line of the message.

**Territorial Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes six miles on each side of the Grand River.

**Course Description**

The course examines the spatial distribution of economic activity by considering the location decisions of consumers and firms in relation to geography, cumulative investments and state structures. We will study how spatial relationships inform many economic behaviours and contribute to differences in urban development and welfare, and the reproduction of inequality.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

By following the course students should

- learn how economists have adapted conventional theory to study the economy of cities;
- gain an appreciation for interdisciplinary urban studies;
- develop their capacities to carry out research, write and speak publicly about theories, empirical work and policy questions.

## Required Texts

Edward Glaeser, *Triumph of Cities: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier and Happier*, (New York: Penguin, 2011).

Mario Polèse, *The Wealth and Poverty of Regions: Why Cities Matter*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009).

## Readings Available on LEARN

- Announcements, guidelines for coursework, seminar readings.

## Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation	Weighting
Seminar Participation	10 Friday meetings	20%
Reading Reflections	10 submissions	15%
Regional Case Study (Polèse)	Wednesday, February 6 <sup>th</sup>	15%
Chapter Review (Glaeser)	Wednesday, February 27 <sup>th</sup>	15%
Local Housing Market Study		
- Presentation	Friday, March 8 <sup>th</sup>	2.5%
- Essay Proposal	Wednesday, March 20 <sup>th</sup>	7.5%
- Essay	Friday, April 12 <sup>th</sup>	25%
Total		100%

### Seminar Participation (20% of final grade)

There will be ten scheduled seminar discussions. Students are expected to prepare for the discussion by doing the assigned reading and preparing a reading reflection (graded separately) on the arguments presented. During each meeting students will break into groups (of 4-5 students) and try to agree upon the main arguments in a reading. Each group will offer its statement to the entire class and our discussion will develop from that starting point. Students should be prepared to i) identify the argument of each author, and discuss how effective it is; ii) offer comments on the research questions, general approach taken and the practical and policy implications of the research.

Participation will be evaluated in terms of the quality of contributions, meaning the value of comments and questions offered in stimulating and developing discussion.

### **Weekly Reading Reflections (15% of final grade)**

By 9AM of each seminar discussion day, students will submit a reading reflection to the Learn Dropbox. In 350- 500 words, the reflection should state the main arguments of the articles/chapters and offer some commentary on them. You are encouraged to look for connections between the articles or chapters read in terms of themes, approach, evidence and argument.

### **Regional Case Study – based on Polèse (15% of final grade)**

Write an essay of 750-1000 words (3-4 double-spaced pages) on a specific region and its cities that critically engages with the Polèse’s discussion of the “Four Golden Rules of Regional Growth” as presented in his book *The Wealth and Poverty of Regions* (p.29). **Due** by submission to dropbox on Learn by **4:30pm on Wednesday, February 6<sup>th</sup>**.

### **Review Glaeser Chapter (15% of final grade)**

Write an essay of 750-1000 words (3-4 double-spaced pages) that evaluates the arguments of one *numbered* chapter of Edward Glaeser’s *The Triumph of Cities*. Sign-up for a chapter by joining a group on Learn. **Due** by submission to dropbox on Learn by **4:30pm on Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>**.

### **Presentation of One Chapter from *Global Housing Markets* (2.5% of final grade)**

On **March 8<sup>th</sup>** the class will discuss Ch.2 of *Global Housing Markets*, and each student will make a 5 minute presentation to the class that illuminates a particular aspect of the housing system of a country or city using a chapter selected from the same edited volume, *Global Housing Markets* (on reserve in Porter Library). Sign-up for a chapter by joining a group on Learn. Prepare a one-page point-form handout that includes the key steps of your presentation and possibly reproduces a particularly insightful graph or table from your chapter.

**Local Housing Market Essay (proposal 7.5% and essay 25% of final grade)** Students will use the analysis presented in particular chapters of *Global Housing Markets* as a starting point for ***investigating a question*** about the development and/or performance of *local* housing markets in a particular region.

A **research proposal** for the essay is due on **Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>** by 4:30pm (Learn dropbox). The proposal should be 250 words in length. It must clearly state the question you are investigating and outline how you will approach reaching an answer. An annotated bibliography with at least 4 sources must be attached to your statement.

The 2500-word (10 double-spaced pages) essay should be constructed around ***a clear thesis*** that responds to the research question. The **essay must be submitted** to the Learn dropbox by 4:30pm on **Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup>**.

## Course Outline

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
1	Jan 11	Introduction	
2	Jan 18	<b>Seminar #1:</b> Economic Geography	<i>Wealth and Poverty of Regions</i> , Ch. 1-3
3	Jan 25	<b>Seminar #2:</b> Economic Geography	<i>Wealth and Poverty of Regions</i> , Ch. 4-7
4	Feb 1	<b>Seminar #3:</b> Historical Cases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Yeh et al, "Economic transition and urban transformation of China"</li> <li>- Stewart, "African Urbanization"</li>   <li>- Bone, "Colonialism to Post-Colonialism in Canada's Western Interior"</li> <li>- Laliberte and Satzewich "Native Migrant Labour in the Southern Alberta Sugar-beet Industry"</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Economy Essay due - Wednesday, Feb 6</b>			
5	Feb 8	<b>Seminar #4:</b> Urban Economics	<i>Triumph of the City</i> , Introduction and Ch.1-4
6	Feb 15	<b>Seminar #5:</b> Urban Economics	<i>Triumph of the City</i> , Ch.5-9
7	Feb 22	No classes – Study Break Feb 18-22	
<b>Glaeser Chapter review – Wednesday, Feb 27</b>			
8	March 1	<b>Seminar #6:</b> Housing Markets and policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Galster "Comparing Demand-side and Supply-side",</li> <li>- Yates and Whitehead "In Defence of Greater Agnosticism"</li>   <li>Kadi, "Market-Based Housing Reforms", Harris and Wahba - Cairo</li>   <li>Berner, "Poverty Alleviation and the Eviction of the Poorest"</li> </ul>
9	Mar 8	<b>Presentations</b> – Housing Systems and Financial Crisis	Bardham, Edelstein and Knoll, "The US Housing Market and the Financial Crisis" <b>plus a chapter to present to class</b>

Week	Date	Topic	Readings Due
10	March 15	<b>Seminar # 7:</b> Local Public Goods and Sorting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tiebout, "A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures"</li> <li>- Hamilton, "Zoning and Property Taxation"</li> <li>- Heim "Who Pays, Who Benefits",</li> <li>- Nechyba and Walsh, "Urban Sprawl"</li> </ul>
Essay Proposal due on <b>Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup></b>			
11	March 22	<b>Seminar #8:</b> Spatial Segregation and Poverty in North America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Kain, "A Pioneer's Perspective on the Spatial Mismatch Literature"</li> <li>-Oreopolous, "Neighbourhood Effects"</li>   <li>- W.J. Wilson "Political and Economic Forces",</li> <li>- Wacquant, "Marginality, ethnicity and penalty in the neo-liberal city"</li> </ul>
12	March 29	<b>Seminar #9:</b> Informal and Social Economy Sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shenaz Hossein, "The Black Social Economy"</li>   <li>- Kuokkanen, "Indigenous Economies, Theories of Subsistence, and Women"</li>   <li>- Krishna, "Stuck in Place: Investigating Social Mobility"</li>   <li>- Bora, "Migrant Informal Workers"</li> </ul>
13	April 5	<b>Seminar #10:</b> Resilience and Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Turner and Spalding, "'We might go back to this'; Drawing on the past to meet the future"</li>   <li>- Lazrus, "Sea Change: Island Communities and Climate Change"</li>   <li>- Christmann et al. "Local constructions of vulnerability and resilience"</li> </ul>
<b>Local Housing Market Essay Due</b> (Learn Drop box Friday, April 12 <sup>th</sup> )			

## **Missed Seminars and Late Penalties**

If a student is unable to attend a seminar meeting for documented reasons her/his participation mark will be calculated on the basis of the remaining meetings. Late assignments and essays submitted without documented reasons will be penalized with a 2.5% *reduction* in the grade per day.

## **Electronic Device Policy**

To avoid disruptions to the learning environment handheld devices must be turned off during the lecture and laptops must be used strictly for lecture-related purposes. If a student's use of a laptop becomes a distraction for adjacent students that student will be asked to discontinue its use.

## **Attendance Policy**

Lectures are an important component of the learning process and should be attended regularly.

## **Economics Department Deferred Final Exam Policy**

Deferred Final Exam Policy found at <https://uwaterloo.ca/economics/current-undergraduates/policies-and-resources/deferred-final-exam-policy>.

## **Academic Integrity**

**Academic Integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A

student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

## Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

**Note for students with disabilities:** The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

## If you are using Turnitin® in your course

**Turnitin.com and alternatives:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all materials and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. See [Academic Integrity - Guidelines for Instructors](#) for more information.

## Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health support if they are needed.

### On Campus

- Counselling Services: [counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca) / 519-888-4567 ext. 32655
- **MATES:** one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

### Off campus, 24/7

- **Good2Talk:** Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-4300 ext. 6880
- **Here 24/7:** Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- **OK2BME:** set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online on the Faculty of Arts [website](#)

Download [UWaterloo and regional mental health resources \(PDF\)](#)

Download the [WatSafe app](#) to your phone to quickly access mental health support information