GEOG 311 Local Development in Global Context

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E-mail:  
Office hours: tbd

Class Time / Location: Wednesdays, 1:30-4:20pm  
EV3 3412

Course Objectives and Description

Our world is variegated, uneven and complex with many actors (e.g. firms, government agencies, unions, business associations, community organizations, citizens) operating across and between the local, regional, national and supranational scales to shape the geographies of contemporary economies. In other words, the impacts of globalization and development – economic and otherwise – are uneven. Economic, social, cultural and technological restructuring and changes are produced in specific places and the effects of these changes vary from place to place, within and between nation-states. Therefore, when examining questions of local development, it is important to consider both ‘the local’, ‘the global’, and the relationships between them. In this senior undergraduate class, we will try to understand these dynamics through the lens of theories in contemporary economic geography.

The class is designed to give students an opportunity to engage with the major themes in the international literature on industrial location and restructuring, economic geography, innovation systems and regional development. This course provides students with a critical examination of industrial and urban/local/regional economic development theory, practice and policy. During the course, we identify a number of different models of how economic development practitioners and policymakers have responded to the contemporary challenges of globalization, the restructuring of labour markets and workplaces, the changing composition of the workforce and technological change. We explore a number of economic development models, including innovation and cluster-based industrial strategies, the attraction of highly skilled workers, and arts-based strategies amongst others. Consideration is also given to how the objectives of these economic development planning strategies and initiatives can be reconciled with other development goals and distribution, equity, sustainability and social justice concerns. Empirical examples will primarily be drawn from Canada, the United States and Europe.

Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to think critically about the underlying theoretical assumptions that are used to justify specific policy interventions, as well as consider how these assumptions determine which economic and social issues become the object of regional economic development planning and policy.
The course will consist of a series of lectures, student presentations, a research methods workshop, and (where possible) guest lecturers. Prerequisite: GEOG 202 or ERS/GEOG 203.

**Required Text and Readings**

All of the required readings, additional readings, as well as other resources can be accessed via LEARN, Dana Porter Library or the Internet. Consult the course reading list posted on LEARN for details.

**Electronic Communication Policy**

**E-mail:** All electronic communication for GEOG 311 should be sent through LEARN. The instructor will try to reply to legitimate inquiries from students within 3 business days. Please ensure that you include the course number (GEOG 311) in the subject line, as well as a meaningful descriptor of the topic of your inquiry. Make sure you consult the course outline/syllabus, LEARN and other course materials before submitting inquiries through LEARN. The instructor will not respond to any requests or messages sent via Facebook or other social media.

**Laptop use in-class:** Students are expected to access course material only while in class. Anybody found accessing the internet for other purposes (e.g. checking email, chatting, Facebook, non-course sites, playing on-line games, etc.), or using laptops off-line for non-course purposes (e.g. games, movies, music), will be asked to leave the class.

**Cell phones and other mobile devices:** Please make sure that cell phones, iPhones, Blackberries, iPods or similar devices are turned off while in-class.

**Assessment and Evaluation: Summary, Weighting and Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Value (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1: Quantitative regional analysis</td>
<td>October 17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: Understanding the regional economy</td>
<td>November 30</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group seminar / presentation</td>
<td>see schedule</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>tbd</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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**Assessment and Evaluation: Details**

**Assignment 1 – Quantitative regional analysis (20%)** – You are required to produce a quantitative analysis of a city-region in Canada or the United States (note: you may discuss other options with the instructor). There will be a limit to the number of students who will be permitted to select any one city-region. This will be managed through LEARN. The analysis should be mainly descriptive in nature with the goals of providing an overall socio-economic picture of your region. It should be comparative in nature, meaning that it should tell a story as to what gives your region an identity in relation to other places. The analysis should also provide an indication of how your region is changing. Make sure to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of your region. Data on your region is available through the university data library website. Be sure to properly cite the data sources that you have used. More details will be provided in class.

You are required to produce a PowerPoint (or equivalent) presentation of approximately 20 slides (you will not be required to present, but you should approach the assignment as if you were going to). The slides should contain predominately graphics (graphs, charts, maps, etc.) with bullet point text. All graphics should be original work – some exceptions may apply (i.e. contextual maps). You will be graded
on how effectively you are able to communicate a comprehensive yet focused message using descriptive data analysis. Content is most important but formatting and style matter will matter too. Be sure to label all graphs and charts clearly. Consult examples such as *The Economist*, *New York Times*, and *Financial Times* as examples of excellence in this regard.

**Assignment 2 – Understanding the regional economy (30%)** – Building on the work you completed in Assignment 1, you are required to write an analytical paper / report on your region. This will included integrating, analyzing and discussing the quantitative research that you will have completed from Assignment 1, as well as further qualitative research and a review of the relevant literature. Key sources will include policy documents, consultants’ reports, press articles, and academic sources. Be sure to use your critical judgment when reading official policy documents and press articles and triangulate with the data analysis that you have performed. You should relate the current state of the region to the theories and literatures that we have covered in class. Your paper should conclude with a perspective on the future of the region and what public policy interventions (if any) should be considered to improve the economy and standard of living of citizens going forward. More details will be provided in class.

**Group seminar / presentation (20%)** – During Weeks 7 to 10, groups will give a 20-30 minute presentation on a topic related to the weekly theme (3 to 4 group presentations per day). Students will be asked indicate their interest in series of topics via a survey in LEARN. Students will be assigned to groups accordingly by the third week of class. Teams will consistent of four students (depending on class enrolment). Additional instruction will be provided in class and via LEARN. A PowerPoint presentation is mandatory. Your PowerPoint file must be sent to the instructor by noon one day before your presentation. If the team’s PowerPoint presentation is not uploaded by the specified time; all team members will face a 10% late penalty. All team members are expected to participate equally in the preparation of the presentation. All team members will fill out a self- and peer-evaluation grid which will be used in the overall assessment. Students’ marks will be adjusted on the basis of peer evaluation. A students’ mark will not increase or decrease by any more than 15% based on the peer evaluation.

**Final exam (35%)** – There will be a final exam that will be scheduled during the University exam period. The exam will cover material from the lectures, course readings, as well as presentations by students and guest speakers. Details regarding the format will be discussed in class and posted to LEARN.

**Grading and Late Policy**

**Handing in assignments:** All assignments should be submitted electronically in MS Word format (or as specified) by the *beginning of class* on the due date via the appropriate LEARN dropbox. If a student encounters a problem with LEARN, it is her/his responsibility to 1) email the instructor before the submission deadline, and 2) submit the paper in hard copy before the start of class. By submitting an assignment to LEARN, you are agreeing to the following:

- You have properly referenced and footnoted all ideas, words or other intellectual property from other sources used in the completion of this assignment.
- You have included a proper bibliography, which includes acknowledgement of all sources used to complete this assignment.
- The assignment was completed by your own efforts. You did not collaborate with any other person for ideas or answers (with the exception of any group project)
• This is the first time you have submitted this assignment or essay (either partially or entirely) for academic evaluation.

Your assignments (including marks and comments) will be returned to you via LEARN.

Late and/or missed assignments: Late submissions will be penalized 5% per day unless you have made arrangements with the instructor in advance of the deadline. Failure to make a submission or a submission that is five days late or more will receive a grade of zero. An assessment of lateness will be based on the time stamp produced through LEARN.

Returned assignments: Assignments for this course will be submitted and returned electronically via LEARN unless otherwise specified. However, unclaimed assignments (hardcopies) will be retained for one month after term grades become official in Quest. After that time, they will be destroyed in compliance with UW’s confidential shredding procedures.

Some Suggested Journals
Economic Development Quarterly; Economic Geography; Journal of Economic Geography; Environment and Planning A; Environment and Planning C; Regional Studies; Journal of the American Planning Association; European Planning Studies; Urban Affairs Quarterly; International Journal of Urban and Regional Research; Urban Affairs Review; Urban Studies

University Requirements

Academic Integrity: To create and promote a culture of academic integrity, the behaviour of all members of the University of Waterloo is based on honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information. Students who are unsure what constitutes an academic offence are requested to visit the on-line tutorial at: http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/ait/

Consequences of Academic Offences: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (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, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm

Within ENV, those committing academic offences (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) will be placed on disciplinary probation and will be subject to penalties which may include a grade of 0 on affected course elements, 0 on the course, suspension, and expulsion.

Students who believe that they have been wrongfully or unjustly penalized have the right to grieve; refer to Policy #70, Student Grievance, http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm

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, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm. When in doubt, please contact your Undergraduate Advisor for details.
Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (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. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for Assessment of Penalties, www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm

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) www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm

Research Ethics: Please also note that the University of Waterloo requires all research conducted by its students, staff, and faculty which involves humans as participants to undergo prior ethics review and clearance through the Director, Office of Human Research and Animal Care (Office). The ethics review and clearance processes are intended to ensure that projects comply with the Office’s Guidelines for Research with Human Participants (Guidelines) as well as those of provincial and federal agencies, and that the safety, rights and welfare of participants are adequately protected. The Guidelines inform researchers about ethical issues and procedures which are of concern when conducting research with humans (e.g. confidentiality, risks and benefits, informed consent process, etc.). If the development of your research proposal consists of research that involves humans as participants, please contact the course instructor for guidance and see http://iris.uwaterloo.ca/ethics/

Note for students with disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, 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 OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Religious Observances: Students need to inform the instructor at the beginning of term if special accommodation needs to be made for religious observances that are not otherwise accounted for in the scheduling of classes and assignments.

Turnitin.com: Plagiarism detection 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. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course. Students who do not wish to submit their assignments via Turnitin must indicate this to the instructor by the third week of class. These students will submit their material electronically via email directly to the instructor for evaluation and grading.
Topics and Schedule at a Glance

Part I  Local development through an economic geography lens
Sept 12  Introduction and course overview
Sept 19  The evolution of local development: Intellectual histories and traditions
Sept 26  Studying regions: Data, indicators, evaluation, measurement
Oct 3   The evolution of local development: Public policy in Canada and the United States
Oct 10  Iconic regions? Technology-based development and regional success stories
Oct 17  Less-favoured regions? Challenges and prospects
Assignment 1: Quantitative regional indicators

Part II  Policy, planning and practice in local economic development
Oct 24  Innovation, clusters and entrepreneurship
Cluster development and innovation in mature and emerging industries
Cluster development and innovation in rural and 'less-favoured' regions
Supporting and promoting entrepreneurship
The role of universities in economic development
Oct 31   Chasing talent: Human capital based strategies for economic development
Attracting the 'creative class'
Immigration and economic development
Skills upgrading and workforce development
Living wage campaigns
Nov 7  Understanding arts, culture and design-based economic development
Sport as economic development opportunity
Gambling with place: The entertainment economy
Lights, camera, action: Film and economic development
Art, design and culture as economic development strategy
Nov 14  Understanding sustainability and the ‘green’ economy
Renewable energy and local development
Sustainability, tourism and development
Strategies for low carbon local economies
Local currency, local food and other alternative local development strategies
Nov 21  Economic development in practice
Guest speaker: Rod Regier, Director, Economic Development, City of Kitchener
Nov 28  Social inclusion and the challenges of local development
Course wrap-up
Assignment 2: Understanding the regional economy