

ECON 325: Urban Economics (Spring 2021)

College of William & Mary

Department of Economics

Professor: Tate Twinam
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Office: Tyler Hall 250

Course Meetings: TR 12:30-1:50pm
Room: Integrated Science Center 1221
Office Hours: W 2:30-3:30pm (virtual)

Course Description:

This course explores the origins and development of cities from an economic perspective. We will utilize economic theory to study the location choices of individuals and firms. We will also discuss how physical, social, and economic forces affect the growth of cities and the welfare of their inhabitants, and how government policy can mitigate or magnify these effects. We will also study how different actors influence urban policymaking for their own gain. As we will see, the present-day circumstances of a city are inextricably tied to its past. For this reason, we will take both contemporary and historical perspectives as appropriate. This course is highly recommended for anyone with an interest in public policy at the local, state, or federal level.

Prerequisites:

ECON 101.

Topic List:

- Introduction to the course
- Why do cities exist?
- Urban spatial structure: The Alonso-Muth-Mills model
- Sorting across cities: The Tiebout model
- Urban location
- Persistence in urban location and theories of growth
- Zoning and urban spatial structure
- Long-run impacts of zoning
- Housing supply
- Urban sprawl
- Racial segregation
- Neighborhood effects
- Gentrification and displacement
- Urban crime
- Political economy of local government
- Urban policy
 - Minimum wages
 - Rent control
 - Public transit
- Water and the urban mortality transition
- Cities and the environment
- Immigration and local labor markets
- Ancient cities

Important Dates:

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| Friday, February 5 | Add/Drop Period ends |
| Saturday, February 6 | Withdrawal Period begins |
| Thursday, March 4 | Spring Break Day - No class |
| Thursday, March 25 | Midterm exam |
| Monday, March 29 | Withdrawal Period ends |
| Tuesday, April 6 | Spring Break Day - No class |
| Friday, May 14 | Final exam - 9am-12pm |

Evaluation Policy:

You are responsible for attending lectures, taking notes, and reviewing your notes after each class. If you miss class, you are responsible for obtaining notes from another student. Evaluations will be based on two exams and six assignments. Each exam will be worth 20% of your grade. Exams will be monitored and any student caught cheating will receive a failing grade. Each assignment will be worth 10% of your grade. Collaboration with your peers on assignments is permitted and encouraged. However, each student must turn in their own copy (including their own code and results, when required).

Assignments will be due in class (in hard copy form) on the date specified on the assignment. A 20% grade penalty will apply to assignments not turned in before the following Monday. Assignments will not be accepted by email.

If you cannot attend an exam due to documented college business or religious observance, you must notify me and schedule a make-up exam at least two weeks in advance. All other make-up exams required for any reason will incur an automatic 20% grade penalty.

Syllabus Revisions:

You are responsible for all materials, updates, and announcements covered during class sessions. The course schedule may change over time due to unforeseen circumstances. I expect you to monitor your William & Mary e-mail account regularly so that I can communicate with each of you electronically between classes.

Electronic Device Policy:

Use of cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices during class is prohibited unless otherwise stated. Use of such devices during class inhibits the learning experience. It can also be quite distracting for classmates. If you have a pressing need to use such a device, please have SAS contact me.

Academic Integrity:

William & Mary has had an honor code since at least 1779. Academic integrity is at the heart of the university, and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. The student-led honor system is responsible for resolving any suspected violations of the Honor Code, and I will report all suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the honor system. The Student Handbook (www.wm.edu/studenthandbook) includes your responsibilities as a student. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected. To read the Honor Code, see www.wm.edu/honor.

Student Accessibility Services:

Your experience in this class is important to me, and it is the policy and practice of William & Mary to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. Any student who

feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2512 or at sas@wm.edu to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see www.wm.edu/sas.

Respect for Diversity:

Diverse backgrounds, embodiments, and experiences are essential to the critical thinking endeavor at the heart of university education. In this classroom, students are expected to:

- Respect individual differences which may include, but are not limited to: age, cultural background, disability, ethnicity, family status, gender identity/presentation, immigration status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and veteran status.
- Engage respectfully in discussion of diverse worldviews and ideologies embedded in course readings, presentations, and artifacts, including those course materials that are at odds with personal beliefs and values.

Parenting Student Resources:

Pregnant and parenting students are encouraged to take advantage of the resources provided on campus; information about these resources can be found at https://www.wm.edu/offices/compliance/title_ix_coord/pregnancy/index.php. You are also welcome to confidentially discuss your pregnancy/parenting status with me if you feel it would help me to help you make the most of your time here.

For Our Veterans:

If you are a student who has served in our nation's military forces, welcome home, and thank you for your service. I hope that you feel comfortable enough to confidentially self-identify yourself to me so that I can help you make a successful transition from the military to higher education. We at William & Mary understand that the transition into civilian life can be challenging for our veteran students, and we provide resources for any who may want to reach out for guidance or assistance in these matters. Please contact Veteran Services at vabenefits@wm.edu.

Mandatory Reporting:

William & Mary faculty are required by law to report any information they receive pertaining to sexual misconduct or assault. As a mandatory reporter, any disclosures to me of this nature will have to be further disclosed to the Title IX coordinator on campus. This is not to discourage you from discussing these issues with me; you are welcome to do so. However, if you have issues or concerns regarding yourself or someone else, and would like to share them confidentially, you are strongly encouraged to contact The Haven, a peer-based confidential resource center for those impacted by sexual violence and harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and other gender-based discrimination. They are located at Campus Center 166 and can be reached by email (thehaven@wm.edu) or phone (757-221-2449). You can find more information at <https://www.wm.edu/offices/thehaven/index.php>.

Care Support Services:

The Dean of Students Office provides Care Support Services to students in need. If you are facing challenges to your mental, physical, and/or social health, you are strongly encouraged to contact them by email (care@wm.edu) or phone (757-221-2511). If you are concerned that a fellow student may be facing physical, emotional, or academic difficulties, you can also contact CSS on their behalf (confidentially and anony-

mously if you wish). You can find more information at <https://www.wm.edu/offices/deanofstudents/services/caresupportservices/index.php>.

Inclement Weather:

Note that the campus may be closed due to weather. Information on suspension of operations will be made public and available through the media. Students can learn of campus operations status from the website. You may also sign up with an alert system through Banner that will contact you via email or text message if classes are canceled. Class activities will be rescheduled as needed.

Additional Support Services:

- Campus Libraries: <https://www.wm.edu/academics/libraries/>.
- Tribe TutorZone: <https://www.wm.edu/offices/deanofstudents/services/academicenrichment/tutors/>.
- Cohen Career Center: <https://www.wm.edu/offices/career/>, 757-221-3231.
- Student Counseling Services: <https://www.wm.edu/offices/wellness/counselingcenter/index.php>, 757-221-3620.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8258.