

Urban Economic Development Syllabus  
POLS 5360 and 4360  
Spring Semester, 2018

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Urban areas are still the chief engines of economic growth in many states. This is particularly true for regions of the country that have experienced significant growth in recent years, for example: Seattle, WA; Miami, FL; and Austin, TX. This begs the following questions:

1. What are the reasons for economic growth?
2. Can other cities emulate their high-growth peers?
3. What tools do cities have to spur economic growth?

Declining cities have always faced enormous challenges in turning around their economic fortunes. These challenges have been worsened by a number of modern forces, particularly globalization. The forces of globalization have accelerated the normal “creative destruction” of modern capitalism (Schumpeter). Other current challenges that cities face include climate change and terrorism. These have been added to the typical urban problems of poverty, crime, deteriorating infrastructure, inadequate revenues, etc.

This course provides an introduction to the context, theory, process, and practice of local economic development policy with an emphasis on the economic revitalization of declining urban cores. We will investigate St. Louis as a classic example of a city that has been in long-term decline and what can be done to reverse this. The objectives of the course are 1) to provide an introduction to the key concepts, ideas, strategies and (often conflicting and contradictory) goals of urban economic development; 2) to understand the impacts that global, national, regional, and state economic forces and policies have on cities; 3) 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) To examine the historical, economic, political, and social environments in which economic development policymaking occurs; 5) to analyze the range of strategies, programs, and tools that are used to improve the economic prospects of neighborhoods, cities, and regions; and 6) to understand 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 might be one or two guest speakers who will talk about economic development from the standpoint of their practitioner experience.

Textbooks:

Amy Goldstein, *Janesville: An American Story*

Colin Gordon. *Mapping Decline*

Nancy Green Leigh and Edward J. Blakely. *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice*.

Week 1: What is local economic development? (Jan. 17)

- Definition
- Why local economic development?
- The global context
- The national economy
- Wealth and income inequality

Week 2: The Effect of National and State Economic Policy on Local Economic Development (Jan. 24)

- Different approaches to growth
- Effects of different policies on local economies
  - Monetary and fiscal policy
  - Trade policy
  - Social welfare policy
  - Health-care policy
  - Full-employment policy
- National development policy for local governments
- State economic development policy

Required Reading: Leigh and Blakely, chapters 1 & 2; Ginsburg pp.1-40.

Week 3: Theories of local economic development (Jan. 31)

- Theories promoting growth and development
- Why it is so difficult to move from theory to reality in economic development

- Evolution of economic development theory and practice to fit current political reality

Required Reading: Leigh and Blakely, chap. 3; Ginsburg, pp. 41-70.

Week 4: Local Economic Development as a Profession; Introduction to St. Louis: Case Study (Feb.7)

- What does a local economic development professional do?
- Tasks and responsibilities
- Constituents and clientele
- Local economic development as a profession and career
- Introducing the St. Louis Case study

Required Reading: Leigh and Blakely, chap. 4; Ginsburg, pp.71-108; Gordon, Preface, pp.1-38.

Week 5: Local Economic Development Planning Process; St. Louis Case Study (Feb.14)

- Important preliminary steps in the planning process
- The phases of the planning process
- Resource management for effective planning
- Local economic development roles
- Typology of planning approaches
- Creating an effective economic development strategy: Part I
- St. Louis Power and Politics, pt.1

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap.5; Ginsburg, chapters pp.109-142; Gordon, pp. 39-53

Week 6: Analytical tools for local economic development; St. Louis Case Study (Feb.21)

- Requirements for effective analysis in local economic development
- Economy strengths and weaknesses analysis
- Creating an economic profile
- Using data and building on comparisons
- Which analytical tool should you use?
- Economic projections, the ripple effect, and industrial clusters
- Creating an effective economic development strategy: Part II
- St. Louis Power and Politics, pt.2

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap. 6; Ginsburg, pp. 143-184; Gordon, pp. 53-68

Week 7: Effective local economic development strategy; St. Louis Case Study (Feb. 28)

- What an effective strategy should accomplish
- Important preliminary steps to formulating a strategy
- Choosing among alternative strategies
- Economic development planning and local comprehensive planning
- Traps and pitfalls in formulating an effective strategy
- Assembling the strategy
- Projects, plan financing and implementing the strategy

- St. Louis Race and Reality, Pt.1

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap. 7; Ginsburg, pp. 185-217; Gordon, pp.69-88

Week 8: Locality development; St. Louis Case Study (Mar.7)

- Urban design and effective local economic development
- Land acquisition strategy
- Infrastructure development and “shell” buildings
- The regulatory environment, BIDs, and other tools of effective locality development
- New approaches to community revitalization (townscaping, shopsteading, housing and neighborhood improvement, etc.)
- St. Louis Race and Reality, Pt.2

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap.8; Ginsburg, pp. 218-249; Gordon, pp.89-111

### **Spring Break (Week of March 12)**

Week 9: Business development; St. Louis Case Study (Mar.21)

- Importance of a good business climate
- Developing local entrepreneurship
- Effective business development strategies (business assistance centers, small business development centers, micro-enterprise, etc.)
- Tourism and effective locality promotion
- Financial incentives, enterprise zones, and other important approaches
- St. Louis Politics of Zoning pt.1

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap. 9; Ginsburg, pp. 250-271; Gordon, pp.112-129

Week 10: Local workforce development; St. Louis Case Study (Mar. 28)

- Importance of workforce development
- Necessity of effective workforce development for global competitiveness
- Goals of human resource strategies and programs
- Human resource strategies and local economic development goals
- Importance of good public education for workforce development
- St. Louis Politics of Zoning, pt.2

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap. 10; Ginsburg, pp. 272-298; Gordon, pp.129-152

Week 11: Community and neighborhood economic development; St. Louis Case Study (April 4)

- Community development corporations
- Community and neighborhood cooperatives
- Local enterprises, employee/worker ownership, and sustainable enterprises
- Marketing the community: promoting neighborhood/community assets
- St. Louis Politics of Urban Renewal and Fighting Blight, pt.1

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap.11; Gordon, pp.153-171

Week 12: Effective implementation; St. Louis Case Study (April 11)

- Using private-public partnerships to build an effective development strategy
- Marketing, financing, project viability, and sustainability analysis
- Other tools for effective implementation (feasibility analysis, cash flow analysis, project sustainability, project design, and monitoring)
- St. Louis Politics of Urban Renewal and Fighting Blight, pt.2

Required Readings: Leigh and Blakely, chap. 12; Gordon, pp.171-186

Week 13: Organizational prerequisites of local economic development; St. Louis Case Study (April 18)

- 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 (April 25)

Week 15: Presentations (May 2)

Assignments:

Three short policy memos. 5 pages each.

1. Why does your city need economic development? (Due week 4). In this memo, you will analyze trends in your city. What has been the trend in major economic indicators over the past 5 years? What 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.
2. Describe who has benefitted most and least from the economy in your city (Due week 7). 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. 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?

3. Community Development: Policy and Power. How effective has been the political leadership in pursuing a community development strategy? (Due week 10). Using newspaper and other information sources analyze the political leadership in your city. Which political party controls city hall? How long has it enjoyed political dominance? Are local elections competitive (by which is meant does political power change hands frequently or does one political party always win)? Describe the economic development policy of your city. This memo might require more than 5 pages but try to keep it below 10 pages.

Final project: Develop an economic development plan (Due finals week). 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, in 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 public, convince the city council or board of aldermen to adopt, and implement your plan.

In-class presentation of your economic development plan (April 25 & May 2). Using Power Point present your plan to the class. You must be succinct and focus on the main points you want your audience to take away. There will be an opportunity about mid-way through the semester for you to do 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) Take-home final (Due May 9)

### **Academic Integrity Syllabus Statement**

*Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors.* The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity."

Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy was adopted in Spring 2015, and can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at:

[http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic\\_affairs/University-wide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%206-26-15.pdf](http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic_affairs/University-wide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%206-26-15.pdf).

Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has adopted its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites. All SLU students are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions, and appeals. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Dean/Director of the College, School or Center in which your program is housed.

Specific College of Arts and Sciences Academic Honesty Policies and Procedures may be found at:

<http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>

### **Title IX Syllabus Statement**

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; [akratky@slu.edu](mailto:akratky@slu.edu); 314-977-3886) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/general-counsel-home/office-of-institutional-equity-and-diversity/sexual-misconduct-policy> [www.slu.edu/here4you](http://www.slu.edu/here4you) .

### **Student Success Center Syllabi Statements**

In an effort to be inclusive of students' learning styles and needs with regard to academic support, the following statement has been developed for use in course syllabi which identifies resources for student support in various areas of learning. As faculty members construct their syllabi for future courses, it is requested that they update materials to include new language regarding academic and career related support offered to students through the Student Success Center.

The syllabus statement will be available throughout the year by visiting the following websites, but we encourage you to place these resources on any departmental websites you feel necessary:

- Student Success Center: [www.slu.edu/success](http://www.slu.edu/success)

- Reinert Center for Transformative Teaching & Learning: [www.slu.edu/cttl](http://www.slu.edu/cttl)

**Student Success Center Syllabus Statement:**

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center, a one-stop shop, which assists students with academic and career 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](http://www.slu.edu/success).

**Disability Services Academic Accommodations Syllabus Statement**

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Please contact Disability Services, located within the Student Success Center, at [Disability\\_services@slu.edu](mailto:Disability_services@slu.edu) or 314.977.3484 to schedule an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services and viewed within Banner via the instructor's course roster.