University of Washington
Department of Urban Design and Planning/Evans School of Public Policy & Governance
Spring 2018

PUBPOL 561/URBDP 561
Urban Economics and Public Policy

INSTRUCTOR: Professor Qing Shen
Office: 410 Gould Hall; Phone: 206-685-3937; Email: qs@uw.edu

TA: Luming Shang (PhD candidate in Built Environment)
Office: 402 Gould Hall; Phone: 347-803-9886; Email: ls3053@uw.edu

LECTURES: Monday 6:00—8:50 PM; Classroom: 435 Gould Hall

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 10:00—Noon or by appointment
Office: 410E Gould Hall

TA OFFICE HOURS: Thursday 2:00—4:00 PM or by appointment
Office: 402 Gould Hall

Course Description

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of urban economics and offers students an opportunity to explore current urban planning and policy issues by applying the concepts and tools of urban economics. The first half of the course consists of theoretical and empirical examinations of: (1) the location decisions of firms and households and how these decisions cause the development of cities, (2) land rent and the spatial distribution of economic activities and population groups within cities, and (3) the spatial aspects of urban poverty. These topics are essential for understanding the role of market forces in the formation and evolution of cities. They also provide an intellectual basis for defining the role of planning and policy in shaping the urban future. The second half of the course explores approaches to selected urban planning and policy problems. It addresses issues related to urban transportation, smart growth, and smart cities. In addition, it explores emerging challenges and opportunities for urban planning and policy.

Requirements and Grading

Students will be required to complete two problem sets, a mid-term exam, and a term paper. Final grades will be weighted as follows:

- Problem Sets: 20%
- Mid-term Exam: 35%
- Term Paper: 35%
- Class Participation: 10%

Assignments and term paper must be submitted by their due dates (Digital copy only, submitted to Canvas).

Mid-term exam will be closed book.
**Prerequisite**
Successful completion of an introductory microeconomics course, or permission of the instructor.

**Required Text**

A large portion of the required readings for the course will be from this textbook. Copies of this book are available in the University Bookstore.

**Books and Readings on Reserve (in the Built Environments Library)**


**Course Outline**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignment (due in class)</th>
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<tr>
<td>M, 3/26</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Course Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Concepts of City, Urban Area, and Metropolitan Area</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Why Do Cities Exist?</td>
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<td>M, 4/2</td>
<td><strong>Firm Location Decisions</strong></td>
<td>Assignment #1 distributed</td>
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<td>▪ Where Do Cities Develop?</td>
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<td>▪ Why Do Firms Cluster?</td>
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<tr>
<td>M, 4/9</td>
<td><strong>Urban Growth</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ The System of Cities</td>
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<td>▪ Urban Economic Growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>M, 4/16</td>
<td><strong>Land Rent and Urban Land Use</strong></td>
<td>Assignment #1 due Assignment #2 distributed</td>
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<td>▪ Land Rent and Land Use</td>
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<td>▪ Land Use in the Monocentric City</td>
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<td>M, 4/23</td>
<td><strong>Spatial Aspects of Urban Poverty</strong></td>
<td>Term paper assigned</td>
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<td></td>
<td>▪ Neighborhood Choice, Sorting, and Segregation</td>
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<td>▪ Suburbanization and Industrial Transformation</td>
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<td>▪ Spatial Mismatch?</td>
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<td>M, 4/30</td>
<td><strong>Urban Transportation</strong></td>
<td>Assignment #2 due</td>
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<td>▪ Autos</td>
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<td>▪ Public Transit</td>
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<td>M, 5/7</td>
<td><strong>Mid-term Exam</strong> (closed book, in class)</td>
<td>Please do not miss it!</td>
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**Readings**

Readings that are journal articles can be located through the University’s E-journals. Other required readings will be available in the course pages on Canvas. Supplementary readings may be provided later in the spring quarter.

(Note: Readings marked by ** are required.)

### 3/26 Introduction

** O’Sullivan, chapter 1  
** O’Sullivan, chapter 2  
** O’Sullivan, chapter 3  
** O’Sullivan, appendix (for students who need to review microeconomics)  


### 4/2 Firm Location Decisions

** O’Sullivan, 5th edition, chapter 4  


**4/9 Urban Growth**

** O’Sullivan, chapter 4  
** O’Sullivan, chapter 5


**4/16 Land Rent and Urban Land Use**

** O’Sullivan, chapter 6  
** O’Sullivan, chapter 7


** 4/23  ** Spatial Aspects of Urban Poverty

** O’Sullivan, chapter 8


** 4/30 ** Urban Transportation

** O’Sullivan, chapter 10

** O’Sullivan, chapter 11


5/7  **Mid-term Exam**

Review previous readings to prepare for the exam

5/14  **Integrating Transportation and Land Use**


**5/21 Shaping Urban Futures**


**Academic Integrity**


**Student Safety**

Students should follow University of Washington guidelines to ensure safety on campus. For more information, go to [http://www.washington.edu/safecampus/](http://www.washington.edu/safecampus/)