URBAN ECONOMICS
Tuesday and Thursday, 14:35-15:55, SADB 1/12

Instructor:
Prof. Nicolas Gendron-Carrier
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Prerequisites:
You should have completed a course in microeconomic theory (ECON 230D or 250D) and economic statistics (ECON 227D or 257D). A few lectures will use calculus, but math beyond algebra will not be used extensively. We will be looking at a lot of regression results, so you should have a basic understanding of what regression coefficients mean before taking this course.

Course Overview:
The goal of this course is to give students an understanding of how economists think about cities. We will explore why cities exist, their internal structure, and analyze a variety of policy issues related to cities.

Evaluation:
Problem sets (20%): There will be four problem sets. Each is worth 5%. Students are free to discuss the problem sets with one another. However, you must hand in your own original written work. Problem sets give you helpful practice with the kind of problems you will see on the exams. Late problem sets drop 1 mark out of 5 for each day they are late. Due dates will be announced in class.
Mid-term exam (30%): To be held in class on Thursday, February 27.

Final exam (50%): To be held in April during the final exam period. A review lecture will be offered during the last week of class.

Readings:
Jan K. Brueckner’s *Lectures on Urban Economics* will serve as a textbook for the course. This book is available at the bookstore and online. I also recommend reading Edward Glaeser’s *Triumph of the City* as we go along. Additional required readings will be posted online on *myCourses* and will be covered in class.

Online Course Materials:
Problem sets, lecture slides, and all required readings except the textbook will be posted on *myCourses*.

TA Information:
The TA will grade all problem sets and exams. She will hold office hours as needed. Her name is Alice Fan (*xiaodi.zhu@mail.mcgill.ca*).

Re-read Policy:
We do our very best to ensure fair grading and to minimize errors. Nevertheless, if you disagree with the grade you have received in your mid-term exam, you may opt to have your exam re-read. Before you do, please make sure you first carefully compare your answers to the solutions we provide you.

To request a re-read, you must submit to me (the instructor, not the TA) your exam with a written justification for the re-read, specifying the question which you felt was incorrectly graded. I will then re-read and reassess the answer. Please note that your grade may go up, down, or stay the same. I may review the entire exam. This written request for re-read must be submitted within 7 days of
receiving the exam. Policies on final exam re-reads are determined by the Faculty of Arts.

**Laptops and Cell Phones Policy:**
Mobile computing and communications devices are permitted in class insofar as their use does not disrupt the teaching and learning process. I ask that you please put your phone on silent mode when you enter the classroom. I encourage all students to be fully engaged and practice their ability to learn without distractions.

**Electronic Communications:**
In order to help me get to know you better, I encourage you to ask questions in class or during office hours. Questions that are personal in nature can be sent to me by email. Emails should be sent from your official McGill email address only. I will normally reply to emails within 48 hours, except on weekends. All class announcements will be posted on myCourses.
COURSE OUTLINE

Below is a tentative list of topics we will cover in this course. I maintain discretion regarding changes in this outline. Any changes will be discussed in class.

1. Introduction: Why Do Cities Exist?

   Required:
   - Brueckner: Chapter 1 (Skip 1.6)

   Recommended:
   - *Triumph of the City*: Introduction

2. Sources of Agglomeration Economies

   Required:

   Recommended:
   - *Triumph of the City*: Chapter 1

3. Firm and Residential Location Choice Across Cities: The Roback Model

   Required:
   - Brueckner: Chapter 11
4. Place-Based Policies

Required:

5. Internal City Structure: The Monocentric City Model

Required:
- Brueckner: Chapter 2 and 3

Recommended:
- *Triumph of the City*: Chapter 6
- Katerina Cizek, *A Short History of the Highrise, Part One: Mud*

6. Urban Land Use

Required:
- Brueckner: Chapter 4
Recommended:
- *Triumph of the City*: Chapter 7 and 8

7. Urban Transportation

Required:
- Brueckner: Chapter 5

Recommended:

8. Housing

Required:

9. Segregation and Neighbourhood Effects

Required:

Recommended:
- Katerina Cizek, *A Short History of the Highrise, Part Two: Concrete*
Language of Submission:
In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

Academic Integrity:
McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

TL;DR. If you plagiarize, you will likely fail the course.

Additional Statements:
As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the Office for Students with Disabilities, 514-398-6009.

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University’s control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.