

ECO333: Urban Economics

Instructor: Prof. Farhoodi
Sections: TAs: Posted on Quercus
Course email*: ECO333-farhoodi@utoronto.ca

Email: a.farhoodi@utoronto.ca
Tutorials: Posted on Quercus
*shared with the TAs

Important: please check your Quercus daily and make sure notifications is on. Read the syllabus thoroughly, mark your calendars with important dates, and familiarize yourself with course rules regularly.

1 Course Description

Urban economics is a field which adds space to economics and studies the location of economic activities. In this course, we address three types of questions: 1- topics related to the underlying reasons behind city formations and questions like why we see urbanization and agglomeration of economic activities. 2- questions related to internal urban structure and the forces that shape the location choices of firms and households, land prices, and size of cities. 3- questions related to the spatial aspect of a wide range of economic problems like the effects of digitization, inequality, crime, and climate change.

1.1 Required Text

- Urban Economics by O’Sullivan (9th edition)
Older editions are good substitutes
We will use this textbook more in the first part of the course.
- Lectures in Urban Economics by Jan K. Brueckner
You can access the e-books for free from the library
- (Optional but highly recommended): The triumph of the city by Ed Glaeser
A non-technical book. You will learn a lot while enjoy reading it.
- All posted slides, handouts, papers, and videos

2 Course Rules

2.1 Email Policy

Before you start writing an email to a member of the course staff:

- Please make sure your question is not already answered in the syllabus or announcements on Quercus
- Do not reply to announcement emails
- Email is mainly for private communications. For content-focused questions, please use office hours. An alternative way to get answers, show participation, and benefit your classmates is to use the discussion platform.

I try to answer your emails within three business days. We will check our discussion board platform regularly throughout the week.

3 Course Structure

3.1 Lectures

Lectures cover the course contents. I will post the slides but I will not post a recording of the lectures except for the first two weeks of the semester. However, I may find it helpful to record and post some lectures and have a shorter lecture to solve problems.

3.2 Tutorials

Tutorials will cover research papers related to the course contents. You should read the assigned part of the papers before each tutorial and participate in the class activities. You will submit your answers to these class activities during or after most of our tutorial sessions. I may add questions about the discussed papers in the midterm and the final.

Reading papers and getting familiar with the type of questions that urban economists ask and their approach to these questions are a fun and useful part of the course.

3.3 Office Hours

- Office hours will be held mostly online.
- Please check Quercus for updated details on office hours schedule and for the join links.

3.4 Assignments

Item	Weight	Due Dates
Tutorial Exercises	15%	Most Wednesdays
Midterm	35%	week 7 (Feb 28-Mar 4)
Final	50%	TBD

* The midterm probably will be during the lecture on March 2nd but the exact date will be posted closer to the midterm

Special Accommodation

In case you have to miss an exercise due to illness, technical difficulties, etc., you can use the special accommodation described below. You are strongly advised only to use them if necessary.

* If you have to miss two tutorial exercises, your **missed exercises** will be distributed between your other exercises. You do not need to provide any documents. If you miss more than two exercises it will be marked as zero.

* We do not offer a make-up test for the midterm. In case of an **emergency** if you miss the midterm, your grade will transfer to the final. If for no justified reason you miss the midterm it will be marked as zero.

3.4.1 Participation

You should consistently participate in the course. Your participation in the course is based on your presence and activity during office hours and the discussion platform.

4 Ongoing Learning Disability or Accommodation Requirement

If you have an ongoing disability issue or you need accommodation, please register with Accessibility Services (AS) (accessibility.utoronto.ca) at the beginning of the academic year. After AS processes your request, we will coordinate to provide the required accommodations for you.

5 Academic Integrity

The University of Toronto is deeply committed to the free and open exchange of ideas, and to the values of independent inquiry. As such, academic integrity is also fundamental to the University's intellectual life. What does it mean to act with academic integrity? U of T supports the International Center for Academic Integrity's definition of academic integrity as acting in all academic matters with honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. Please visit academicintegrity.utoronto.ca for smart strategies and information on academic integrity processes and procedures at the University of Toronto. The website includes a link to decisions of the University Tribunal in student cases involving academic integrity. You can review the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters in its entirety [here](#).

Common forms of academic misconduct with code references include:

- Possession or use of unauthorized aids (B.I.1.b)
- Impersonation (B.I.1.c)
- Plagiarism (B.I.1.d)

Plagiarism is a serious instance of academic misconduct, and university policy explicitly stipulates that ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism is not an acceptable defense.

- Submission of work for which credit has previously been obtained (B.I.1.e)
- Submission of work containing purported statement(s) of fact or reference(s) to concocted sources (B.I.1.f)
- Assisting another student in committing an offence (B.II.1.a)

6 Schedule and Weekly Learning Goals

The schedule is tentative and subject to change. We will try to cover as much of the material as time allows. I may change the topic in each week depending on how the discussion goes.

Week 1: Introduction and Key Concepts of Urban Economics

Week 2: Why cities exist?

Week 3: Agglomeration and Consumer cities

Week 4: What limits the size of a city?

Week 5: Internal urban structure

Week 6: Internal urban structure

Week 7: Midterm/Internal urban structure

Week 8: Cities and quality of life

Week 9: House price and residential land use

Week 10: Sorting and causal effect of neighborhoods

Week 11-12: TBD

Other topics that we may cover

Urban economics and big-data

Working with spatial data

Climate change and location choices

Urban economics and digitization (Airbnb, Uber, Work from home, etc)

Cities in developing countries

7 Online Etiquette

- Do not use your personal email for any course-related activity, registration, or communication.
- Be respectful in your emails with the TAs and the instructor.

- When sending any communication or participating in discussions (Piazza, email), remember that there are real people with feelings on the receiving end. Be kind and treat people the way you would like to be treated.
- Respect the opinion of your classmates. If you respond to or disagree with your classmates' arguments, do it respectfully and acknowledge the valid points of their arguments.
- In an online meeting (Tutorial, office hours), mute your microphone when you are not speaking.