

Urban Economics

Introduction to Class

Hussain Hadah (he/him)
18 August 2025



Tulane
University

About Me



- My name is **Hussain Hadah**
- Email: **hhadah@tulane.edu**
- I am a labor economist
 - I study topics on discrimination, racial and ethnic identities, mental health, and immigration
- I love to run
 - You can find me running in Audubon Park with my dog Bill



- Student hours/office hours are by appointment using **<https://hussainhadah.youcanbook.me/>**



Overview





Introducing Urban Economics



What is Urban Economics?

Urban economics

- Introduces space into economics models and studies the location of economic activity

What is Urban Economics?

Urban economics

- Introduces space into economics models and studies the location of economic activity
- A lot of fields in economics overlap with urban economics
 - For example, economics of crime overlaps with labor economics and urban economics

What is Urban Economics?

- Given how broad **urban economics** is, I will focus on the following topics
 - Geographical data
 - Agglomeration economies and the economics of cities
 - Economic development and tax incentives
 - Crime
 - Gender-based violence
 - Housing and housing policy
 - Zoning laws (maybe?)
 - Neighborhood effects
 - Transportation

What is Urban Economics?

- This class will be a mix of **theory** and **empirical** research on urban economics
 - **Theory**: Applications of mathematical models
 - **Empirical**: Applications of statistical analysis



Going Over the Syllabus



Prerequisites

- This class assumes that you have taken:
 1. Introductory microeconomics (ECON 1010)
 2. High school algebra (solve for X, graph a line, etc.)
 3. High school statistics (calculating medians and means, ideally remembering the basics of hypothesis testing, etc.)
- It is helpful if you are familiar with statistics and econometrics, but it is not required
 - Knowing what a standard error and confidence interval are is helpful
 - The basics of linear regression

Readings

The required book is Brueckner, Jan. 2011. Lectures on Urban Economics. Cambridge: MIT University Press

- Half of the readings are from the textbook
- The other half are from other sources or my lectures
- Some of the readings are technical pieces from economics journals
- The degree to which you to be familiar with the details of a paper will be clear from the emphasis given to the paper in lecture or will be clear based on instructions I give you

Readings

The required book is Brueckner, Jan. 2011. Lectures on Urban Economics. Cambridge: MIT University Press

- Half of the readings are from the textbook
- The other half are from other sources or my lectures
- Some of the readings are technical pieces from economics journals
- The degree to which you to be familiar with the details of a paper will be clear from the emphasis given to the paper in lecture or will be clear based on instructions I give you
- I will either send emails about the readings or announce in class
- It is your responsibility to keep up with the announcements, not doing so will affect your grade
 - Many in-class activities may require that you have read the readings before class
- I like to have students interact in class, this could only happen if many of you have done the readings beforehand

Grading

- Quizzes(Best 3 out of 4 $\times 20\% = 60\%$)
- Group Briefing Notes (Best 2 out of 3 $\times 10\% = 20\%$)
- Other Activities 20% (Three activities dropped)
- Extra credit 3%
 - 1% if 70% of class submitted the class evaluation, 2% if 80% of class submitted the class evaluation, 3% if 90% of class submitted the class evaluation
 - 4% if a 100% of class submitted the class evaluation
- **Total** 103%

Grade	Percentage Range
A	93% to 100%
A-	90% to 92.99%
B+	87% to 89.99%
B	83% to 86.99%
B-	80% to 82.99%
C+	77% to 79.99%
C	73% to 76.99%
C-	70% to 72.99%
D+	67% to 69.99%
D	63% to 66.99%
D-	60% to 62.99%
F	0% to 59.99%

Quizzes

- There will be four quizzes
- During class time
- Tentative schedule is September 19, October 17, November 14, and December 5---tentative and subject to change
- Quiz are open book, you can bring notes, documents, etc.
- You cannot talk or work with other students
- Lockdown browser will be used

Quizzes

- There will be four quizzes
 - During class time
 - Tentative schedule is September 19, October 17, November 14, and December 5---tentative and subject to change
 - Quiz are open book, you can bring notes, documents, etc.
 - You cannot talk or work with other students
 - Lockdown browser will be used
- There will be two or three short answer questions
 - Zero to two multiple choice questions

Group Briefing Notes

- There will be three group briefing notes
- The goal is to practice:
 - Concise writing
 - Citing sources, and creating a references section in APA format or Chicago Author-Year format
 - Doing a literature review using Google Scholar
 - Reading and summarizing published economics journal articles
 - Coming to reasonable conclusions based on your assessment of the research
- You will form groups of 3-5 students beforehand, or I will create groups for you randomly through a jigsaw activity
- The group will work during class time to write a one-page briefing note, single-spaced, in a Google Doc or OneDrive
- Guidance for the content will be given through handouts that are on Canvas beforehand
- The note will quickly introduce the reader to the topic and summarize the main findings of the research

Group Briefing Notes Topics

1. To what extent do tax incentives encourage economic development?
 2. Is there racial bias in policing and in the criminal justice system?
 3. What are the impacts of rent control on housing markets?
- You will work on first draft in-class
 - You can finish on your own time if you did not finish
 - The first draft is due on Canvas before the next class
 - Then you will have a week to revise the note, after which I will grade whatever is submitted on Canvas as the final version
 - I will then grade your first draft as if it is a final document, so your grade will be lower
 - First round is only temporary
 - If you submit the draft before the next class (deadline), you will have chance to make revisions

Other Activities

- Lots of research shows that students learn better when they are actively engaged in the learning process
- I will use a variety of activities to engage you in the learning process
- Weight of activity will depend on complexity
- Lowest three will be dropped
- These activities are always due the next Sunday

The Use of AI and Large Language Models

Prohibited

- Briefing notes
- Quizzes
- In-class work
- Data/research analysis
- Citations & references

Rationale

- Build critical thinking
- Interpret research
- Practice clear writing

Violations

- Count as dishonesty
- Reported to university
- Ask if unsure

Allowed

- Only if stated in instructions
- Ex: brainstorming, prelim research

ADA, Accessibility, Title IX, and Inclusivity Statements and Supports



Making this Class an Inclusive Environment

- I am committed to making this class an inclusive environment for all students
- If you require accommodations, please do the following:
 - Contact me immediately
 - Contact the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility
 - goldman@tulane.edu
 - (504) 862-8433
 - <https://accessibility.tulane.edu/>
- I **DO NOT** need to know the details of your accommodations
- I will **NOT** ask you for a proof of your accommodations
- Register with the Goldman Center for Student Accessibility as soon as possible
- More details on the syllabus

Children in Class

- I believe that more women and parents should be in academia
- I am happy to have children in class
- More details on the syllabus
- I ask of you to create a welcoming environment for parents and children

Preferred Pronouns

- My preferred pronouns are he/him/his
- Thanks to those that already have it on their accounts
- I recommend everyone to add their preferred pronouns to their accounts

Title IX

- Respect for all people is a core value of Tulane University
- Tulane is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, and stalking
- If you (or someone you know) has experienced or is experiencing these types of behaviors, know that you are not alone:
 - Resources and support are available: you can learn more at <https://allin.tulane.edu/>
- Please know that if you choose to confide in me I am required by the university to share your disclosure with Care Connection to the Office of Case Management and Victim Support Services
- You can also make a disclosure yourself, including an anonymous report
 - The form is available at tulane.edu/concerns

Lauren's Promise

- **I will listen and believe you if someone is threatening or harassing you**
- Lauren McCluskey, a 21-year-old honors student athlete, was murdered on Oct. 22, 2018, by a man she briefly dated on the University of Utah campus
- Lauren's mother, Jill McCluskey, has made it her mission to ensure that no other parent experiences the loss of a child to violence
- We must all do our part to keep our community safe so that this would never happen again
- Learn more at <https://laurenmccluskey.org/laurens-promise/>

Title IX

Confidential	Private
<p><i>Except in extreme circumstances, involving imminent danger to oneself or others, nothing will be shared without your explicit permission.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) (504) 314-2277▪ The Line (24/7) (504) 264-6074▪ Student Health Center (504) 865-5255▪ Sexual Aggression Peer Hotline and Education (SAPHE) (504) 654-9543	<p><i>Conversations are kept as confidential as possible, but information is shared with key staff members so the University can offer resources and accommodations and take action if necessary for safety reasons.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Case Management & Victim Support Services (504) 314-2160 or srss@tulane.edu▪ Tulane University Police (TUPD) Uptown - (504) 865-5911 Downtown – (504) 988-5531▪ Office of University Sexual Misconduct Response and Title IX Administration (504) 865-5611 or msmith76@tulane.edu▪ Student Affairs Professional On-Call (24/7) (504) 920-9900

Any questions?

✉ hhadah@tulane.edu





This Week

1. Introduction to the course
2. Geographical data
3. Agglomeration part I

Readings

- Syllabus
- OSullivan - Census Definitions (pdf posted on Canvas)
- Textbook Ch. 1 to 1.3 (pdf posted on Canvas)
- Glaeser, Kolko, Saiz - 2001
- Kerr, Robert-Nicoud - 2020

What's due? !

- Scavenger Hunt—no due date and you can redo to improve your grade