



JONES COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Course Syllabus

ECON 4500/5500 – Urban and Regional Economics

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| Professor: | E. Anthon Eff |
| Class: | BAS S324 • Monday 6:00pm – 9:00pm |
| Office and Hours: | BAS N308 • MW 4:00-5:00 (or by appointment) |
| Phone: | 615.898.2520 (ECFN main office); 615.898.2387 (my office phone) |
| Email: | Anthon.Eff@mtsu.edu |
| Course Website: | http://capone.mtsu.edu/eaeff/450/regional.htm |
| D2L link: | https://elearn.mtsu.edu/d2l/home/9106239 |

Information specific to this course

Course Description and Objectives

Urban and Regional Economics examines the spatial aspect of economics. The course focuses on *local* economies, usually consisting of cities and their hinterlands, though sometimes we will consider larger areas, such as states or multi-state regions (e.g., the southeastern United States). This way of looking at an economy is applicable to any country, and can help us understand why some regions grow and others do not. We can apply what we learn to public policy, as well as to guide business location decisions and investments in real estate markets.

The objectives of this course are to learn basic spatial analysis, using the most appropriate and powerful computational tools, and to acquire an understanding of the spatial patterning of the US economy.

This course contains some lectures and presentations, but is primarily a lab/paper course. It provides numerous opportunities for working in teams and requires students to present their findings to the class.

All students will be asked to use *ArcGIS* and *Excel* to analyze and display spatial data. It is not necessary that any student begin the course knowing anything about *ArcGIS* or any other Geographical Information System (GIS) software. It is expected, however, that the student be able to perform any of the class exercises by semester's end.

All graduate students will, in addition, be required to use *R* for spatial data analysis. It is highly recommended, though not required, that graduate students have some familiarity with *R* and with regression analysis before taking the course, a recommendation that is most easily fulfilled by taking ECON 6060 (Econometrics I) or ECON 4620 (Econometrics and Forecasting) prior to ECON 5500.

Grading: Consists of the following:

- *Presentations, computer assignments, and class participation* jointly make up 25% of your grade. Computer assignments require that you use *Excel* and *ArcGIS* (students enrolled for 5500 will, in addition, use *R*). Many of the presentations and all computer assignments will be done by groups. A peer evaluation, conducted on May 1 (see page 5 of this syllabus), will establish your class participation grade.
- *One book report* worth 25% of your total grade. This should be from 6 to 12 pages in length (double-spaced, 11 point scalable font), and should contain your synthesis of the material, **not** a simple summary. Book reports will be presented to the class on March 13. These reports give you a chance to choose a topic that interests you; try to find a book that would also make an interesting presentation to the rest of the class. You must show me a book, and receive my approval, by February 20.
- *The final exam* accounts for 25% of the course grade. The exam consists both of hands-on computational exercises and written questions. It will be given *early*, on Monday, April 24, from 6:00-8:00 in the regular classroom. The exam covers everything discussed in class over the entire semester. Graduate students (enrolled in 5500) will have different exam questions from undergraduate students (enrolled in 4500).
- *The term paper* is worth 25% of your total grade. Term papers should be on a topic having to do with urban or regional economics. A list of sample topics is appended, though the list is far from exhaustive. You must clear your topic with me by Monday, March 20. Typical length for these papers is 6-12 pages for 4500 students and 16-20 pages for 5500 students (double-spaced, 11 point scalable font). Papers will be presented to the class on May 1.

Plagiarism warning: It's become temptingly easy to copy material off the web, paste it into a paper, and turn it in as ones own work. Beware. The web has made it equally easy for faculty to check a suspicious paper for plagiarism. The penalties for plagiarism are harsh. Protect yourself by learning what constitutes plagiarism (see the course webpage).

Schedule of Topics

| week | Date | Tentative topic |
|------|---------|--|
| 1 | Jan. 23 | Population I |
| 2 | Jan. 30 | Population II |
| 3 | Feb. 6 | Crime I |
| 4 | Feb. 13 | Crime II |
| 5 | Feb. 20 | Housing I (<i>book selection due</i>) |
| 6 | Feb. 27 | Housing II |
| | Mar. 6 | <i>Spring break</i> |
| 7 | Mar. 13 | Book Report Presentations |
| 8 | Mar. 20 | Spatial Division of Labor I (<i>paper-topic selection due</i>) |
| 9 | Mar. 27 | Spatial Division of Labor II |
| 10 | Apr. 3 | Spatial Division of Labor III |
| 11 | Apr. 10 | Business location I |
| 12 | Apr. 17 | Business location II |
| 13 | Apr. 24 | ----- <i>Final Exam</i> ----- |
| 14 | May 1 | <i>Paper Presentations & Peer Evaluation</i> |

- Weeks 1-6 and 8-11 involve analysis of data using *ArcGIS*, *Excel*, and (for graduate students) *R*. All work, including presentations, is done in groups.
- Weeks 7, 12, and 14 consist of individual presentations.
- Week 13 is the final exam.

Books for Book Report.

Pick a book you would really like to read, either because it might help you in your chosen career, or because it interests you. A very wide range of books are suitable for this assignment. Here are a few examples. Many, many more are possible. It would be a good idea to spend an hour examining the library's selection. You might also take a look at what is on [Amazon](#) or [LibGen](#).

Books on Planning, the Built Environment, and Urban Design.

Alexander, Christopher. 1977. *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction*.

Garreau, Joel. 1992. *Edge City: Life on the New Frontier*.

Gratz, Roberta Brandes. 1989. *The Living City*.

Jackson, Kenneth T. 1985. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*.

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*.

Kunstler, James Howard. 1997. *Home from Nowhere*.

Kunstler, James Howard. 1993. *The Geography of Nowhere*.

Books on the Political Economy of Places.

Bishop Bill. 2009. *The Big Sort*.

Katz, Alyssa. 2009. *Our Lot: How Real Estate Came to Own Us*.

Wright, Gavin. 1986. *Old South, New South: Revolutions in the Southern Economy since the Civil War*.

Books with General Theoretical Insights into Local Economies.

Florida, Richard. 2002. *The Rise of the Creative Class*.

Glaeser, Edward. 2011. *Triumph of the City*.

Hoover, Edgar M. and Raymond Vernon. 1959. *Anatomy of a Metropolis*.

Jacobs, Jane. 1984. *Cities and the Wealth of Nations: Principles of Economic Life*.

Jacobs, Jane. 1969. *The Economy of Cities*.

Moretti, Enrico. 2012. *The New Geography of Jobs*.

Books Providing a Glimpse into Economic Life in a Past Local Economy.

Fite, Gilbert C. 1966. *The Farmers' Frontier 1865-1900*.

Hohenberg, Paul M. and Lynn Hollen Lees. 1985. *The Making of Urban Europe 1000-1950*.

Linklater, Andro. 2002. *Measuring America: How the United States Was Shaped by the Greatest Land Sale in History*.

Miller, Donald L. 1996. *City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America*.

Olmsted, Frederick Law. 1861. *The Cotton Kingdom*.

Smith, Duane A. 1967. *Rocky Mountain Mining Camps: The Urban Frontier*.

Twain, Mark. 1884. *Life on the Mississippi*.

Wallace, Anthony F. C. 1978. *Rockdale: The Growth of an American Village in the Early Industrial Revolution*

Warner, Sam Bass, Jr. 1968. *The Private City: Philadelphia in Three Periods of Its Growth*.

Books Analyzing Local Economies to Guide Real Estate Investment.

Kahr, Joshua and Michael C. Thomsett. 2005. *Real Estate Market Valuation and Analysis*.

Kelly, Hugh F. 2016. *24-Hour Cities*.

Guidelines for Term Paper:

You should keep in mind several important considerations as you write.

- 1) The topic should have something to do with the *spatial* aspect of economic activity. Perhaps the easiest way to ensure this is to center the discussion on a *sub-national* region (such as a city); another way is to discuss why certain economic activities occur in a certain *location* or how they differ in one location from activities in another location.
- 2) Any material quoted, paraphrased, or ultimately derived from another author must be referenced. I prefer the following format: (author, date: page number). I expect about 10 items in your bibliography, and at least two should be journal articles. Paraphrasing is usually [plagiarism](#), and must be avoided.
- 3) A good paper is accurate, interesting, and easy to read.

Term Paper Topics: This list of potential topics is suggestive, not exhaustive.

- The nursery business (the winery business) in middle Tennessee.
- The spatial distribution of auto manufacturing.
- Hub economies (airlines, Wal-Mart, etc.)
- Overbuilding in commercial real estate: cause and effect.
- Hip neighborhoods—what makes them so?
- Regions facing environmental collapse (e.g. the Aral Sea).
- Urban renewal: good idea or bad?
- The rise and decline of Detroit (Camden, Gary, Schenectady, etc.).
- Where retirees like to live: how retirement stimulates some local economies.
- Technological spin-offs from universities to local economies.
- The geography of innovation (e.g., regions with high patent counts).
- The effect of canals on the spatial distribution of manufacturing (17th-18th century US or Britain).
- Planned communities (e.g., Brazilia): good idea or bad?
- The rise and fall of the Natchez Trace.
- Land banks and development rights—market solutions to loss of greenspace.
- The new urbanism: Seaside, Florida; Celebration, Florida; etc. (pick one).
- Stadiums, arenas, and convention centers: who benefits?
- Drug wars and their effect (on central cities, on the rural US, on rural Colombia, etc.).
- Comparing City Structure: North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East (pick any two).
- Impact fees: a good idea?
- Is “Green growth” “Smart growth”?
- The streetcar era in American cities: the effect on residential development.
- The spatial aspect of the electric power (cable television, telephone, water, sewerage, etc.) industry (pick one).
- City structure in Medieval Italy, Renaissance Germany, Ancient Mesopotamia, Ancient Mesoamerica, etc. (pick one).
- Mixed-use neighborhoods: their advantages, disadvantages, and prospects in US cities.
- Retail shopping destinations (e.g., Pigeon Forge, Boaz, Opry Mill)—how they started, and prospects for continued success.
- The spatial structure of the returned goods industry.
- The effects of subprime mortgages on residential neighborhoods.
- The spatial structure of the software industry (call centers, other services).
- The spatial structure of tourism (eco-tourism, sex tourism, time-share resort tourism, cruise tourism, backpacker tourism, etc.). (pick one).
- The economy of Cannon County (Dyer County, Maury County, etc.—pick one).
- The “resource curse” in an oil-rich region (a county or cluster of counties in North Dakota, Wyoming, etc.).
- Section 8 housing—good intentions and unintended consequences.

The peer evaluation, filled out at the end of the last class (May 1), will look like this.

Your name: _____ Please rank yourself and your fellow students. Ranks run from 1 to 16: 1 would be the appropriate rank for the student that *helped you learn the most* in this class; 16 would be appropriate for the student whose presentations, assistance as group member, or discussion were *least* helpful. **No ties are allowed.** Please also put a letter grade next to the rank (pluses and minuses allowed). For details on the methodology, please refer to my [published paper](http://www.economics-finance.org/jefe/econ/Effpaper.pdf) (<http://www.economics-finance.org/jefe/econ/Effpaper.pdf>).

| Name | Rank | Letter Grade | Comments |
|--------------------|------|--------------|----------|
| Hector Guel | | | |
| Brandon Felder | | | |
| Richelle Pettigrew | | | |
| Glen Forest | | | |
| Bryant Crane | | | |
| Refugia Mendoza | | | |
| Chanda Barrick | | | |
| Sadie Torres | | | |
| Jennifer Gonzalez | | | |
| Randall Bedunah | | | |
| Francisco Cole | | | |
| Wendy Alwine | | | |
| Fabian Barnett | | | |
| Chastidy Edwards | | | |
| Kamran Tran | | | |
| Maria Esquivel | | | |

Basic information common to all Business courses.

Mission of the Jones College of Business:

- Set our students' foundation for life-long learning through high quality learning experiences resulting from quality teaching, classroom interactions, student professional organizations, service learning, and interactions with faculty outside the classroom.
- Further the scope and dissemination of the body of business knowledge through scholarly research that advances our disciplines, enhances teaching/learning, and improves outcomes of for-profit, not-for-profit, and governmental organizations.
- Contribute to the economic development of the region through our outreach programs.

We will produce career-ready undergraduate students, MBA, MA, MS, and PhD graduates prepared for career challenges and advancements, significant applied research, and consulting consistent with the expertise of our disciplines.

Jones College of Business Student Learning Goals

- Students will be effective communicators.
 - Students will be able to identify and understand the internal factors affecting businesses and their operations.
 - Students will be able to identify and understand the external factors affecting businesses and their environment.
 - Students will be skilled in the use of appropriate analytical and quantitative techniques in problem solving and decision making.
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Professionalism

The Jones College of Business is a professional school. In the Jones College of Business, students will demonstrate Professionalism, which includes these behaviors:

- A solid work ethic demonstrated by preparation, punctuality, participation, and productivity;
- Respectful and courteous interaction with others;
- Ethical conduct; and
- Professional deportment highlighted by business-appropriate dress, diction, and demeanor.

As a Jones College student, part of your preparation for your future career includes the ability to adapt to the expectations of your supervisors and to manage your own expectations relative to your position within the organization. All Jones College faculty expect students to take this aspect of their preparation seriously. Following are my specific expectations of students related to Professionalism:

- You should attend every class. If you miss a class, you must obtain notes from another class member.
 - You should spend at least as many hours on this course outside of class as you spend in class.
 - You should contribute to group assignments. Do not free ride!
 - You should turn in assignments on time.
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Tutoring:

Free tutoring is available in study skills, learning strategies and several courses such as biology, physics, history, computer information systems, math, psychology, economics, recording industry, and many more. The central location for tutoring is the Tutoring Spot, located in Walker Library. For available tutoring opportunities, including days, times, and location, visit [the tutoring website](#). You are encouraged to take advantage of this free service.

Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Middle Tennessee State University is committed to campus access in accordance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Any student interested in reasonable accommodations can consult the [Disability & Access Center \(DAC\) website](#) and/or contact the DAC for assistance at 615-898-2783 or dacemail@mtsu.edu

Lottery Scholarship:

To retain the Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship eligibility, you must earn a cumulative TELS GPA of 2.75 after 24 and 48 attempted hours and a cumulative TELS GPA of 3.0 thereafter. A grade of C, D, F, FA, or I in this class may negatively impact TELS eligibility. If you drop this class, withdraw, or if you stop attending this class you may lose eligibility for your lottery scholarship, and you will not be able to regain eligibility at a later time. For additional Lottery rules, please refer to your [Lottery Statement of Understanding form](#) or contact your [MT One Stop Enrollment Counselor](#).

Lauren's Promise

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. We must all take actions to ensure that this never happens again.

I will listen and believe you if someone is threatening you.

If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

If you are experiencing sexual assault, domestic violence, and/or stalking, I hope you will feel comfortable contacting me and letting me help you get connected to campus resources.

If you prefer to reach out to these resources directly, you may contact these supports and services:

- MTSU Campus Police: 615-898-2424
- Murfreesboro Police: 615-893-1311
- MTSU Counseling Services: 615-898-2670
- After-hours mobile crisis: 800-704-2651 or go to the nearest emergency room
- MTSU Student Health: 615-898-2988

Any form of sexual harassment or violence will not be excused or tolerated and will be reported to MTSU's Title IX coordinators <https://www.mtsu.edu/titleix/> to assist you. For more information: <https://www.mtsu.edu/sexual-violence/>

COVID-19 considerations

Students should not attend an on-ground, in-person class if they are ill, have any symptoms listed in the Pre-Class COVID-19 Self-Assessment, have tested positive for COVID-19, or have been in close contact with others who have tested positive. If they have tested positive or have been in close contact with someone who has, they should self-quarantine. Students are expected to keep their instructors informed regarding their status when they are absent from class and act with good faith and honesty when determining whether they attend class. For more information, see <https://www.mtsu.edu/coronavirus/index.php>.