Seminar (M.Sc.)

Urban Economics

Fachbereich Wirtschaftswissenschaften
Economic Policy, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Group (Professor Dr. Guido Bünstorf)

Winter Term 2020-21

Time and Location

Tuesday, 8:30-12:00 (online via Zoom; check Moodle course page for login information and details)
First session on November 03, 2020; tentative subsequent schedule: Dec 01, Dec 15, Jan 11, Jan 25, Feb 09, Feb 16.

Overview

Urban economics uses concepts and tools from economics to study the structure and evolution of cities. Around the world, economic activity is concentrated in cities, and urbanization is a pervasive feature of economic development. In this seminar, we will discuss selected theories and empirical findings from urban economics. Topics include the distribution of city sizes, models of urban structure and housing markets, location choices of households and firms, findings on city growth, resilience and decline, as well as the links between urbanization, innovation and economic development.

The course has seminar format, which requires active participation of all enrolled students. In addition to a presentation on one of the seminar topics, participants are expected to contribute to the classroom discussion throughout the course. There will be required readings in individual sessions, and participation in the discussion will be graded.

Requirements (6 ECTS Credits):
- Seminar paper (55% of final grade; about 15 pages; due Feb. 28, 2021) and presentation (30%; about 15 minutes)
- Completion of mandatory reading assignment before the respective seminar session
- Attendance throughout the course and active participation in the seminar discussion (15% of final grade).
- All individual requirements have to be fulfilled to obtain credits.
- In the M.Sc. program Economic Behaviour and Governance, 6 ECTS can be earned for Modules 3B and 6.

Registration and choice of seminar topics (listed below as Topics 1-18; max 2 students per topic) by e-mail to buenstorf@uni-kassel.de (open immediately; please name three preferred topics). Max. number of participants: 36
Topics and reading assignments

Session 1 (November 03, 2020): Introduction and overview

Session 2 (December 01, 2020): City size and city structure

Topic 1: The distribution of city sizes


Topic 2: The basic model of city structure


Topic 3: City shape and economic development


Session 3 (December 15, 2020): The evolution of city structure

Topic 4: Housing renovation and gentrification


Topic 5: Regulation and the costs of housing


Topic 6: Pollution and the structure of cities


Session 4 (January 11, 2021): Center and periphery

Topic 7: Centrality


Topic 8: Transportation infrastructure and agglomeration

Topic 9: Long-term effects of place-based policy


Session 5 (January 25, 2021): Agglomeration and Proximity


Topic 10: Agglomeration and entrepreneurship


Topic 11: Small-scale effects of proximity


Topic 12: How cost-sensitive is economic interaction across space?


Session 6 (February 09, 2021): Evolution of Cities

Topic 13: Entrepreneurship and urban growth


Topic 14: Diversification of regions


Topic 15: Labor mobility and regional branching

Session 7 (February 16, 2021): Resilience, Decline and Renewal

Topic 16: How resilient is long-term city size?


Topic 17: From economic disaster to urban renewal?


Topic 18: University research, large firms and regional development