Course Description: This is a class in urban economics. Topics covered include: formation of cities, land markets, housing markets, economics of transportation and commuting, cities as engines of growth and issues affecting cities such as crime, poverty and migration. Both empirical evidence and theoretical models are presented. Prerequisite: Econ 3251 or Econ 4351.

Time and Place: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8am-9:15am, Middlebush 133

Instructor:
Saku Aura
Office: Professional Building 232
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1pm-2pm.

Phone: 882 6073
Email: auras@missouri.edu
Webpage: http://faculty.missouri.edu/~auras/
Course webpage: http://faculty.missouri.edu/~auras/Urban

This course will not use BlackBoard

Textbook: John F. McDonald & Daniel P. McMillen: Urban Economics and Real Estate – Theory and Policy, 2nd edition, Wiley. The lectures will cover some material beyond the material covered in the textbook. Note that this additional material is required for the exams.

Sections: This class has two sections: a writing-intensive (WI) section and a regular section. The requirements and grading will be different for the two sections.

Grading: The grading on this course is based on the exams (midterm and a final), writing assignments and problem sets.

Writing-Intensive Section

The relative weights of these for the final grade are:
Final exam 35%
Midterm 20%
Term Paper 20% (First draft 5%, Final Version 15%)
Short Writing Assignment 1 10%
Short Writing Assignment 2 10%
Problem sets 5%

Regular Section
Final exam 40%
Midterm 25%
Term Paper 30% (First draft 10%, Final Version 20%)
Problem sets 5%

Note that + and – modifiers will be used for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Graduate Credit (Econ 7315): The expectations for the quality of the required writing assignments are higher for Graduate Students. Graduate students will follow the assignments for the regular (non writing-intensive) section.

Exams:

Midterm Exam 3/10/16 in class and Final Exam 5/12/16 7:30am-9:30am. The final exam is comprehensive.

Problem Sets:

I will occasionally assign problem sets based on the material we have learned (most likely 3 problem sets). While satisfactory completion of the problem sets can have a marginal effect on the grade (5%), the main purpose of the problem sets is to provide practice material for the exams and to improve your understanding of the material.

Please return an original (handwritten or typed up) problem set solution on the due date. You may cooperate with your classmates on the problem sets (work in groups, discuss the solutions), but each student should return their own individual answers to problems (do individual write-ups).

Statement regarding extra credit

There will be no extra credit assignments in this class.

Attendance and Participation Policy

Attendance in class is purely voluntary but strongly recommended. I believe University students should be treated as adults. Past experience tells me that getting a passing grade without a stellar attendance record is very unlikely. If you miss a class for a non-emergency
reason it will be solely your responsibility to find out what was covered during that class. Please do not contact me for notes or assignments if you missed a class for a non-emergency reason. For the purpose of this policy participation in a university-sanctioned event such as an intercollegiate athletic event will be treated as an excused emergency.

**Preliminary Lecture Plan:**

Reading relevant chapters from the textbook before the lecture will make the classroom discussion more interesting. The following is a rough guide on how the course will proceed. All the dates are still subject to change.

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Writing Intensive Requirements

There will be three major writing assignments in this class:

1. Two short Short reaction papers
2. Term Paper

Please refer to the preliminary lecture plan above for deadlines for these assignments. All written assignments must be double-spaced 12-point font format, and with 1-inch margins and they must be submitted electronically. They must be in PDF or Word format and emailed to the instructor. The final versions of papers must use a consistent and formal style for acknowledging all sources. Late work will be penalized in grading.

1. Short Reaction Paper (3 pages): You will be asked to write a short essay discussing the economics of a potentially controversial topic assigned by the instructor.
2. Term Paper/Background Memo (9-11 pages): Your goal is to write an informative background memo on a policy topic or a theoretical topic. You are free to choose your topic as long as it falls broadly into the field of public economics as construed in this class. We will discuss potential topics in class. Your paper will be graded for the clarity exposition, argumentation and the use of sources. The goal of this paper is not necessarily to argue a point, but to provide a balanced presentation of a debate. You will be required to submit your topic for approval, as well as submit a (approximately 50% finished) first draft in addition to the final paper. Note that the first draft is worth 5% of the course grade.

NOTE: If you are planning to write a paper on a topic that you have already written a paper for another class or are concurrently writing for another class, please talk to me about it before starting. Sometimes situation like this could be accommodated if the papers are independent enough, however as a general rule this is not recommended. Writing paper on a
same topic for two classes concurrently or reusing an old paper without these arrangements will be treated as academic dishonesty.

You are welcome to use as sources academic journals, working papers, newspapers/magazines, policy papers by think-thanks/governmental agencies/international agencies and other sources (such as books). Most sources are available online. Do not rely solely on newspaper/magazine commentary as sources; the goal is to write about the economics of the question, so it is important to relate to some of the economic analysis underlying the question. When citing information from a source, please try to keep in mind the underlying policy stand taken by the author/the publishing entity and try to present a balanced view on the topic. This does not mean that you are not allowed to take a particular point-of-view on the topic, but your paper should not present only one side of the argument.

Writing Requirements for the Regular Section

If you are not pursuing writing-intensive credit you will only have to complete the third writing assignment (term paper/background memo).

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult the course instructor.

Academic Dishonesty includes but is not necessarily limited to the following:

1. Cheating or knowingly assisting another student in committing an act of cheating or other academic dishonesty.

2. Plagiarism which includes but is not necessarily limited to submitting examinations, themes, reports, drawings, laboratory notes, or other material as one's own work when such work has been prepared by another person or copied from another person.

3. Unauthorized possession of examinations or reserve library materials, or laboratory materials or experiments, or any other similar actions.

4. Unauthorized changing of grades or markings on an examination or in an instructor's grade book or such change of any grade report.

Academic Integrity Pledge: "I strive to uphold the University values of respect, responsibility, discovery, and excellence. On my honor, I pledge that I have neither given nor received unauthorized assistance on this work." Students are expected to adhere to this pledge on all graded work whether or not they are explicitly asked in advance to do so.
The University has specific academic dishonesty administrative procedures. Although policy states that cases of academic dishonesty must be reported to the Office of the Provost for possible action, the instructor may assign a failing grade for the assignment or a failing grade for the course, or may adjust the grade as deemed appropriate. The instructor also may require the student to repeat the assignment or to perform additional assignments. In instances where academic integrity is in question, faculty, staff and students should refer to Article VI of the Faculty Handbook. Article VI is also available in the M-Book. Article VI provides further information regarding the process by which violations are handled and sets forth a standard of excellence in our community.

Students with Disabilities:

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Disability Center, S5 Memorial Union, 882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for students with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

Intellectual Pluralism Statement (from Office of the Provost)

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions concerning the quality of instruction in this class may address concerns to either the Departmental Chair or Divisional leader or Director of the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities (http://osrr.missouri.edu/). All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor(s) at the end of the course.

University of Missouri-Columbia Notice of Nondiscrimination

The University of Missouri System is an Equal Opportunity/ Affirmative Action institution and is nondiscriminatory relative to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or status as a Vietnam-era veteran. Any person having inquiries concerning the University of Missouri-Columbia's compliance with implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, or other civil rights laws should contact the Assistant Vice Chancellor, Human Resource Services, University of Missouri-Columbia, 130 Heinkel Building, Columbia, Mo. 65211, (573) 882-4256, or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education.

Grievance Policy
Information concerning student grade appeal procedures and non-academic grievances and appeals may be found in the Student Handbook.

**Statement on Recording Classroom Interactions**

University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in Section 200.015 of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may make audio or video recordings of course activity unless specifically prohibited by the faculty member. However, the redistribution of audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course is prohibited without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of Section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.