How do regional economies grow and develop? What are the metrics and indicators by which we can analyze their development? What factors shape their growth and development over time? Who are the important actors making decisions that shape regional fortunes? Over which factors do public-sector actors in general, and urban planning in particular, have influence?

This course introduces students to theories of regional economic development. We will survey theories on multiple analytical levels: macro-level theories, such as economic base theory, that understand regional economies in relation to broader capital and resource flows within open, market-based national and global economies; micro-level theories that model the economic decisions of individual actors (i.e., firms, workers) and how they shape - and are shaped by - regional outcomes; and meso-level theories that assess how technological dynamics and industrial change and restructuring generate shifts in the spatial configuration of economic activity. Each level of analysis gives us a different set of insights that help us understand the way in which regional economies grow and change over time.

Although we are fundamentally concerned about the “economic,” our review of the literature will expose us to a number of disciplinary perspectives – economics, geography, political science, and urban planning. Additionally, we will sample from both “mainstream” (neoclassical) and “heterodox” (institutionalist and Marxian) perspectives on regional economies, and call attention to how they offer differing diagnoses of similar processes and outcomes.

Much of the literature that we will be reviewing relates to the literature on regional economies in the United States and other advanced industrial nations; however, the underlying theories are intended to be relevant to a wide variety of contexts, including developing countries. Wherever possible, we will assess the comparative applications of these theories.

In addition to discussions about theories of regional development, we will discuss tools, methods, and data sources for analyzing regional economies. A companion course (USP 510, Regional Economic Development Lab, 1 credit) will provide a venue for working with
regional economic data sources and analytical tools that you will use as part of assignments for this course.

This course is designed for multiple audiences with different learning goals. For MURP and other professional students, this course is intended to provide a basic theoretical framework for understanding regional economies, and exposure to tools, methods and sources for applied regional analysis. For Urban Studies master’s and doctoral students, the course is intended to provide an entry into the scholarly debates around the regional economic development field in recent decades, and help build a foundation for comprehensive exams in the Economic Development field area. Because of this, for each week I have assigned a set of required readings for all students to complete, but have also identified a set of "supplemental" readings that I expect MUS/PhD students to read. For the purposes of our classroom discussions, however, we will focus on the readings assigned to all.

For both groups, the course is designed as a prerequisite for USP 517, Economic Development Policy (taught in the fall term). Although our conversations will regularly discuss policy efforts around regional economic development, it will not be our primary focus.

**TEXTS**

We will rely primarily on journal articles and book chapters for our readings in this course, which will be made available via D2L. In addition, we will draw heavily from the following (out-of-print) text, chapters of which will also be made available on D2L:


**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

The major assignments for the term, representing 70 percent of the course grade, will be broken down into two separate tracks: a professional track and an academic track. Each student must choose one of the two tracks within the first two weeks of class.

**Professional track:** The professional track is geared toward MURP students and other professional students, and will consist of three related analyses of a metropolitan region (other than Portland) of the student’s choosing:

- **Regional economic profile** (15% of course grade, due April 24, noon): This will consist of an 8-10 page (double-spaced) profile of “top-level” indicators about your region, including population and demographic trends, employment and unemployment, poverty and income, and output levels.

- **Regional industrial/occupational profile** (15%, due May 15, noon): This will consist of an 8-10 page profile of your region’s industrial and occupational structure, areas of specialization and competitive advantage, and recent trends.

- **Regional analysis** (40%, due June 8, 5pm): This report, of approximately 15-20 pages in length, will pull together the key findings from the previous two reports, along with
other data and qualitative information from other sources. The resulting analysis will discuss the key trends and drivers of the regional economy, and identify a set of strategic issues that a regional economic development strategy would want to address.

*All assignments will be submitted via D2L. Further guidance about each assignment will be posted on D2L.*

**Academic track:** The academic track is geared toward MUS and PhD students and intended to allow them to use the course to explore theoretical and empirical directions that reflect their particular scholarly interests. (Students in other degree programs may choose the academic track, but only after consultation with the instructor.)

- **Topical literature review** (15%, due date variable): Each student will identify one of the weekly topics and write a 10-15 page literature review on that topic, covering all of the assigned and supplemental readings for that week, plus any other relevant literature. The review is due no later than the date of the subject in class, and the student will be responsible for helping to lead the class discussion that day.

- **Empirical analysis** (15%, due May 15): Each student will identify a specific, empirically-oriented research question and produce a brief analysis using primary or secondary data sources and methods discussed in this class or other methods courses. The subject of the analysis may be related to the final paper (e.g., it can serve as a preliminary analysis), but students are not expected to provide a full literature review.

- **Final research paper** (40%, due June 8): The final paper may integrate theoretical and empirical material from the previous two assignments, but must go beyond them in a significant way. The paper must address a topic relevant to the course and reflect an original conceptual or empirical contribution on the student’s part – i.e., not just a literature review. The length may vary, but ideally, papers will approximate the length of a journal manuscript, or about 7,500-10,000 words. Final paper topic proposals are due by May 1.

The remaining 30 percent of the course grade will be applicable to all students:

- **Weekly Response Papers** (15%): Beginning with week 2, each student will be responsible for producing a 250-500 word response to each week's readings, to be posted on a D2L discussion board no later than noon on the day of class. Students are encouraged to read, rate (using the 1-5 star rating system on D2L) and respond to each other’s postings. A set of discussion questions will be posted to help inform your responses, but you may write about whatever you like (as long as it is related to the week’s readings).

- **Class Participation** (15%): I expect that each student will come to class prepared and ready to contribute to the conversation. I do not intend to take attendance, but repeated absences will be reflected in your participation grade. Participation can occur in a variety of ways, including through activity on the D2L site, such as posting articles or media reports that are relevant to class discussions, or engaging in thoughtful debate with students on the discussion board.
LATE SUBMISSION POLICY: Late submissions will be accepted with a 1 percent per hour penalty (based on 100-point scale). Students may request additional time without penalty to complete assignments, as long as the request is submitted at least 24 hours ahead of the deadline and accompanied by a reasonable justification (to be determined by the instructor). A good rule of thumb is: if the reason could not have anticipated more than a week away, then it is generally reasonable. Deadlines in other classes or at work generally do not meet this criterion. You will be given at least 2 weeks (usually more) to complete each assignment so plan ahead!

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS: If you have a verified disability and are in need of academic accommodations, please let me know and I will work with you to arrange appropriate supports through the Disability Resource Center.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: It should go without saying that plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated, but I will say it anyway. “Academic dishonesty,” according to Section 577-031-0136 of the PSU Student Code of Conduct, refers to as “the act of knowingly or intentionally seeking to claim credit for the work or effort of another person or participation in such acts.” [http://www.pdx.edu/dos/codeofconduct] This encompasses both egregious acts of cheating like copying the answer to someone else’s exam, but also more mundane acts like lifting reference material from websites without attribution. Per university policy, instances of academic dishonesty may result in a zero grade for those assignment(s).

COURSE OUTLINE

NOTE: Required and supplemental readings are subject to change. Check D2L for an updated list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 (Apr 3): Intro: What are regions? What is economic development?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supplemental readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2 (Apr 10): How do regional economies grow? (the macro view)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Tiebout-North debate”:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- North reply and Tiebout rejoinder.


Supplemental readings:


Week 3 (Apr 17): Firms, industrial location and regional economies (the micro view)

Readings:


Supplemental readings:


Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 29: 468-484.


### Week 4 (Apr 24): Regional growth, trade theory, uneven development

**Readings:**

M&F, ch. 5-7, “Regional Theories of Concentration and Diffusion,” “Regional Growth Theory” and “Trade Theory,” pp. 103-173.


**Supplemental Readings:**


### Week 5 (May 1): Industrial restructuring

**Readings:**


**Supplemental readings:**


**Week 6 (May 8): Industrial districts and clusters**

**Readings:**


**Supplemental readings:**


**Cluster analysis:**

**Development Quarterly 14 (1): 65-96.**


#### Week 7 (May 15): Innovation and entrepreneurship

**Readings:**


**Supplemental readings:**


## Week 8 (May 22): Human capital and the “creative class” debate

**Readings:**


**Supplemental readings:**


## Week 9 (May 29): Arts and Culture

**Readings:**


**Supplemental Readings:**


**Week 10 (June 5): Review**

**Readings:**
To taste ...