

PLA 4151  
Economics for Planners  
Moshe Adler

Cities are run by city-governments. These governments are providers of infrastructure and goods themselves and they also regulate the provision of goods by private firms; they promote health and welfare through land use and environmental regulation; and they are charged with ensuring that political power and economic resources will be distributed equitably. Yet governments operate in societies where resource allocation is governed primarily by markets. Economics provides tools, frequently controversial, to guide decisions about when and how government should be involved in providing or subsidizing services and in shaping market activity.

The first part of the course covers the fundamentals of economic analysis. The rest of the course applies these tools to urban issues. The articles that the course covers are posted on courseworks.

The books for this course are on reserve:

Moshe Adler, *Economics for the Rest of Us*, the New Press, 2010 (also in Chinese and Korean)

Heilbrun James, *Urban Economics and Public Policy*

Roger G. Noll and Andrew Zimbalist, Editors, *Sports, Jobs, and Taxes: The Economic Impact of Sports Teams and Stadiums*, Brookings Institute Press, Washington D.C., 1997

Hal Varian: *Intermediate Micro*

Peter Lindert, *Growing public: social spending and economic growth since the eighteenth century*, Cambridge, 2004.

Articles are in a reader available from Village Copier, 1181 Amsterdam Ave, New York, NY 10027 (212) 666-4777.

You will benefit from reading the first assignment before the first class.

Grade:

Weekly assignment --30% of grade

Midterm--30%

Final--40%

I. The Market and Pareto Efficiency

Adler, Chapters 2-4

II. Utilitarianism

Adler, Chapters 1-3

00. Bentham: "Propositions of Pathology on which the advantage of Equality is founded"  
<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/poltheory/bentham/pcc/pcc.pa01.c06.html>

The Voting Paradox

Class Discussion

III. Planning in whose interest?

Capture Theory

01. George J. Stigler, "The Theory of Economic Regulation," *The Bell Journal of Economics*, 1971, pp. 3-21.

Direct Democracy

02. John G. Matsusaka, Direct Democracy Works, *Journal of Economic Perspective*, Vol. 19, No. 2, Spring 2005

Planning In Practice

03. M. Alejandra Cattaneo a, Stefan C. Wolter "Are the elderly a threat to educational expenditures?" *European Journal of Political Economy*, 25 (2009) 225–236

IV. Fundamentals of Policy Evaluation

Marginal Cost Pricing

04. Class Presentation

Consumer and Producer Surpluses:

Class Presentation

Income levels and the demand for public goods

05. Laurie Bates and Rexford Santerre, "The Public Demand for Open Space," *Journal of Urban Economics*, 50, 97-111, 2001.

Policy Evaluation in practice

Sport Stadiums

06. Noll & Zimbalist, Ch. 3

07. Gerald Carlino and N. Edward Coulson, "Compensating differentials and the social benefits of the NFL," *Journal of Urban Economics*, 56, 2004, 25–50.

V. Public Goods

The Economics of Public Goods

Class Presentation (Lindhal taxation)

Revelation Mechanism

08. Class Presentation

Public Goods and Economic Efficiency

09. Bates, Laurie J. Laurie Bates and Rexford Santerre, "The impact of a state mandated expenditure floor on aggregate property values," *Journal of Urban Economics*, 53, 531-540, May, 2003

10. Zhiqiang Liu . "The external returns to education: Evidence from Chinese cities." *Journal of Urban Economics*, Volume 61, Number 3 (May 2007), pp. 542-564

11. Henrik Jacobsen Kleven, "How Can Scandinavians Tax So Much?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*—Volume 28, Number 4—Fall 2014—Pages 77–98

12. Gabriel Zucman, "Taxing across Borders: Tracking Personal Wealth and Corporate Profits," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*—Volume 28, Number 4—Fall 2014—Pages 121–148

VI. The Effect of Technology on Cities and Work

In Production

13. Edward Glaeser, "Are Cities Dying?" *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (Spring, 1998), 139-160

In Consumption

14. Joel Mokyr, Chris Vickers, and Nicolas L. Ziebarth, The History of Technological Anxiety and the Future of Economic Growth: Is This Time Different?, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*—Volume 29, Number 3—Summer 2015—Pages 31–50

When economies are insufficient

15. Spencer Banzhaf and Nathan Lavery, "Can the land tax help curb urban sprawl? Evidence from growth patterns in Pennsylvania," *Journal of Urban Economics*, 67, 2010, 169-179

VII. Transportation and Mass Transit:

General

16. [Todd Litman, Transit Price Elasticities \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

The value of time

17. Calfee, John and Winston, Clifford, "The value of automobile travel time: Implications for congestion policy," *Journal of Public Economics*, July 1998, 83-102

Roads and Traffic

18. S. Cairns, S. Atkins and P. Goodwin, "Disappearing traffic? The story so far." [http://www.onestreet.org/images/stories/Disappearing\\_traffic.pdf](http://www.onestreet.org/images/stories/Disappearing_traffic.pdf) (Links to an external site.)

#### VIII-IX. Externalities

19. Ronald Coase, "The Problem of Social Cost," *Journal of Law and Economics*, 1960.
20. Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, New Series, Vol. 162, No. 3859 (Dec. 13, 1968), 1243-1248.
21. Carl J. Dahlman, "The Tragedy of the Commons That Wasn't: On Technical Solutions to the Institutions Game," *Population and Environment*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Mar., 1991), pp. 285-296
22. Richard S. J. Tol, "The Economic Effects of Climate Change," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*—Volume 23, Number 2—Spring 2009 —Pages 29 –51

#### X-XI. Segregation and Intervention

23. Bo Zhao, Jan Ondrich and John Yinger "Why do real estate brokers continue to discriminate? Evidence from the 2000 Housing Discrimination Study," *Journal of Urban Economics*, May 2006 Pages 394-419.
24. Andrew Hanson, Zackary Hawley "Do landlords discriminate in the rental housing market? Evidence from an internet field experiment in US cities," *Journal of Urban Economics*, 70 (2011) 90-114
25. Justin McCrary, "The Effect of Court-Ordered Hiring Quotas on the Composition and Quality of Police," *The American Economic Review*, March 2007, 318-353
26. David M Cutler, Edward L Glaeser and Jacob L Vigdor "The rise and decline of the American ghetto," *The Journal of Political Economy*, June 1999.
27. Binyamin Applebaum, "Vouchers Help Families Move Far From Public Housing," July 7, 2015

#### XII. Subverting the Plan

28. John D Donahue, "Tiebout? Or not Tiebout? The market metaphor and America's devolution debate," *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Fall 1997, 73-82.
29. Dowding, Keith; John, Peter; Biggs, Stephen, "Tiebout: A survey of the empirical literature," *Urban Studies*, 767-790, May 1994.
30. Schmidt, Amy B., "Private School Enrollment in Metropolitan Areas," *Public Finance Quarterly*, July 1992, 398-321.

XIII. Welfare, Wages and Poverty

31. Hilary W. Hoynes, Marianne E. Page and Ann Huff Stevens, "Poverty in America: Trends and Explanations," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Volume 20, Number 1, Winter 2006, Pages 47-68

32. Timothy Smeeding, "Poor People in Rich Nations: The United States in Comparative Perspective," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*—Volume 20, Number 1, Winter 2006, Pages 69–90

33. Moshe Adler, "Why Did New York Workers Lose Ground in the 1990s?" --*Regional Labor Review*, Fall, 2003.

34 . Moshe Adler, "Theories of Wages," *Economics for the Rest of Us*, Chapters 9-12.

XIV. The Bottom Line

35. Lindert, *Growing Public*, chs. 1, 7, 10, 11