

Columbia GSAPP Course Syllabus

Course title:

PLA6269: Urban Economic Development Practicum: Achieving Outcomes for Inclusive Growth
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Description:

The practice of economic development in the American city has traditionally focused on promotion of growth, usually defined in terms of business attraction and retention, gross economic output and city branding, and has been conducted through investment attraction, infrastructure investment, and deployment of public assets including land and real estate. This practice remains crucial to the functioning of urban environments; yet, it is increasingly clear that these approaches fall short in certain critical areas that determine the life and health of a city: quality job attraction and retention, revitalization of neighborhoods without displacement of businesses or people, and the availability of affordable housing for all city residents. While they benefit some, these approaches can also exacerbate social and economic inequalities.

The limitations of traditional economic development approaches to address the challenges facing many cities have led to a growing call for “inclusive growth.” For actors who represent communities, who typically have less power than private sector interests, more inclusive growth has meant obtaining resources from traditional economic development for affordable housing, community wealth-building, workforce development, etc. Increasingly city agencies themselves have begun thinking about the levers they have available to use economic development as a tool to promote inclusive growth and preserve neighborhood character, and to engage the community as partners.

This course seeks to enable the practitioner to understand (1) how social and economic forces generate an understanding of goals or interests for economic development in cities, (2) how to design and implement actions or programs successfully within this context, and (3) how to measure success and/or challenge conventional measures to generate new and different approaches.

Themes to be examined:

- Overview of “traditional” economic development practices and of equity-oriented practices
- How economic development projects and programs are structured and measured
- In-depth case studies of growth-oriented projects and equity-oriented practices in U.S. cities, with a focus on New York City

Course format and approach:

Six of the eight practicum sessions will be lecture and discussion format, with the others involving work on, and presentation of, project outcomes. Class sessions will involve a review of the research on this subject and practical case studies of projects, programs and agencies implementing the work, with background readings provided, largely from economic development in practice. The course lecturers are practitioners in the field advising public, private and non-profit entities on urban economic development and city management issues and bring multiple perspectives on the subject matter. Our expectation is of students interested in preparing for class discussions and participating actively in sorting through the issues based on their assigned reading, observation of the New York City context, and personal and professional backgrounds.

Students will also be asked to put tools into action by creating economic strategies for a given community being positioned for “inclusive growth” in New York City, and negotiate these strategies with other students representing various parties to the exchange.

Class readings will include research on economic development from practice, policy documents, as well as scholarly references. The textual explanatory resources provided will be relied on lightly as the coursework focuses more on real-world case studies and project implementation. All readings will be uploaded onto Canvas.

Books referenced in reading assignments include:

Required Readings

Blakely, Edward J., and Nancey G. Leigh. *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice, Fifth Edition*. SAGE, 2017.

Moskowitz, Peter. *How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood*. Nation Books, 2018.

Optional Readings

Malizia, Emil E., and Edward J. Feser. *Understanding Local Economic Development*. Center for Urban Policy Research, 2005.

Seidman, Karl F. *Economic Development Finance*. SAGE, 2005.

Assignments and grading:

More guidance about the following assignments will be provided during the first and second class sessions.

(1) *Reading responses*: 35%

- (a) Prepare a 2-page written response to the readings for each of 2 class sessions, to be submitted prior to the commencement of the class session in question. Responses should address key questions or controversies raised in the readings or the general session topic based on the themes presented in the course to date. Students may also identify additional case studies and/or readings on that week’s topics and review these readings as part of their responses.
- (b) Prepare a 2-page memo in advance of Class 3 to the Bronx Borough President, through the lens of his or her policy advisor, with a recommendation on the position that should be adopted on the future of the Kingsbridge Armory. A fact pattern, relevant news articles, and specific assignment format will be distributed in advance.

(2) *Neighborhood economic development simulation*: 40%

Through research, review of planning materials, and primary data collection from involved actors, develop an economic development strategy for a given NYC neighborhood (e.g. Gowanus, East Harlem, East New York, East Midtown) based on an assigned role (e.g. developer, City official, neighborhood development proponent, etc.).

Students will analyze baseline conditions, interview 2-3 key actors (with assistance in gaining access from the course lecturers), define a strategy with metrics and key actions, and meet with 1-2 other students in different roles to negotiate a general agreement on key strategies and actions. Students will then as a group make a summary presentation highlighting the proposals and agreements and present it to the class and an expert panel in the final session.

(3) *Class attendance and active participation: 25%*

Course outline and reading assignments

3/5/2018 - Class 1: Introduction and Course Organization

Class Focus

- Overview of Origin and History of Growth-Oriented Economic Development Practice
- Evolution to Inclusive Approaches
- Review of Course Syllabus and Assignment Expectations

Class Readings Due

- Blakely and Leigh
 - 1.1 Chapter 2: Phases of Economic Development; Challenges and Opportunities Inherent in Economic Development Policy Making
 - 1.2 Chapter 3: Defining Local Economic Development; Translating Theory into Practice
 - 1.3 Chapter 7: Selecting Strategic Options (including 4 approaches that follow); Economic Development Plans Within the Context of Comprehensive Plans (including community based economic development strategy)
 - 1.4 Randall Crane and Michael Manville – People or Place? Revisiting the Who Versus the Where of Urban Development
 - 1.5 Amy Liu - Remaking Economic Development: The Markets and Civics of Continuous Growth and Prosperity
 - 1.6 Moskowitz – How to Kill a City (Introduction)

Optional Readings

- Blakely and Leigh – Chapter 3 (remainder)
- Malizia and Feser – Understanding Local Economic Development, Chapters 2, 3, 8, 11
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for Brooklyn, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, 2018

3/19/2018 - Class 2: Economic Development Incentives and Finance

Class Focus

- Tools for Economic Analysis of Projects and Programs

- Metrics: Job Creation, GCP, Input/Output; Income, Affordability, Disparity
- Incentives for Business Attraction & Development
- Case Study – Hudson Yards UTEP & P3 Finance

Class Readings Due

- 2.1 Imagine Boston 2030 – pages 54-93, 108-117 (Context & The Opportunity of Growth) – skim
- 2.2 HR&A Campus Redevelopment Project Benefits & Public-Private Partnership Strategy, 2016
- 2.3 Blakely and Leigh – Chapters 8 & 9 Locality Development & Business Development
- 2.4 Hudson Yards Uniform Tax Exemption Policy

Optional Readings

- Seidman Chapter 7 - Real Estate Finance
- Blakely and Leigh – Chapter 6 Introduction to Analytical Methods for Local Economic Development Planning
- Blakely and Leigh – Chapter 12 Building the Implementation Plan
- Other Selected HR&A Economic Impact Studies [to follow]
- Richard Florida – GE's Relocation: Great for GE, Not as Great for Boston's Taxpayers
- Lisa Prevost – For Boston Seaport, G.E. Was Just a Start

3/26/2018 - Class 3: Case Study – Kingsbridge; Inclusive Economic Development

Class Focus

- Rewriting Paradigms of Economic Development to Bring Value to Communities
- Community Benefits Agreements
- Defining the Public Interest

Class Readings Due

- 3.1 PolicyLink – Equitable Economic Development Toolkit (focus on 3-4 tools)
- 3.2 Michael Porter – Inner City Economic Development: Learnings from 20 Years of Research and Practice
- 3.3 Vicki Been – Community Benefits Agreements: A New Local Government Tool or Another Variation on the Exactions Theme?
- 3.4 Edward W. De Barbieri – Do Community Benefits Agreements Benefit Communities?
- 3.5 Laura Flanders – After 20-Year Fight, Bronx Community Wins Big Development Project Committed to Living Wages and Local Economy
- 3.6 Kingsbridge Armory Community Benefits Agreement

Optional Readings

- Blakely and Leigh – Chapters 10 & 11 Workforce Development & Community Development
- The Governance of Inclusive Growth an Overview of Country Initiatives (2016); United States Chapter
- William Lambe, Theresa Singleton, and Susan Wachter – Transforming Communities for Inclusive Growth

4/2/2018 - Class 4: New York City Approaches & Gowanus Case Study Introduction

Class Focus

- New York City approaches to neighborhood change, creating/preserving housing and job opportunities, rezoning and directing capital into neighborhoods
- Gowanus Case Study Introduction

Class Readings Due

- 4.1 Moskowitz - How to Kill a City (Chapters 10-12)
- 4.2 New York Works: Creating Good Jobs
- 4.3 OneNYC: A Plan for a Strong and Just City
Introduction and Evaluation pages 8-21
New York City: Today and Tomorrow pages 22-43
Vision 1: Our Growing, Thriving City pages 44-111
Vision 2: Our Just and Equitable City pages 112-159
- 4.4 Housing New York Plan pages 30-43
- 4.5 Mandatory Inclusionary Housing 1-page summary

Optional Readings

- Blakely and Leigh – Chapter 5 The Local Economic Development Planning Process
- Saving a New York Neighborhood from Gentrification – Rezoning of East New York NYT
- East Harlem Neighborhood Plan
- East Harlem Rezoning Presentation
- New York City Council Approves Rezoning Plan for Midtown Manhattan NYT
- Stacey Sutton – Are BIDs good for business? The Impact of BIDs on Neighborhood Retailers In New York City

4/9/2018 - Class 5: Guest Speakers and Workshopping of Final Project

Class Focus

- In small groups, we will pair students with practitioners to advise on the final projects and workshop initial ideas and approaches.

Class Readings Due

- Background Readings on Projects/Neighborhoods – student-selected

4/16/2018 – Class 6: Case Study - Gowanus

Class Focus

- Perspectives on urban redevelopment from Gowanus and other NYC neighborhoods
- Policy approaches and community engagement
- Critiques of programs increasing density

Class Readings Due

- 6.1 Bridging Gowanus Planning Framework Report
- 6.2 Review of [official planning site](#) dedicated to Gowanus
- 6.3 Review of NYC Gowanus [Neighborhood Planning Study Site](#)
- ~~6.4 NYC Zoning Framework for Gowanus [upon release by NYC DCP]~~
- 6.5 Gowanus Neighborhood Coalition for Justice - Survive and Thrive: Towards a Justice Focused Gowanus Neighborhood
- 6.6 New York City Industrial Policy – Engines of Opportunity

Optional Readings

4/23/2018 - Class 7: Case Study: The Race for Amazon

Class Focus

- Which potential outcomes, and in which geographies, warrant economic development interventions, and which do not
- Case Study of Amazon HQ2 and efforts cities are making to achieve Amazon's promised economic benefits.

Class Readings Due:

- 7.1 Amazon HQ2 RFP
- 7.2 Amy Liu – [How Cities Can Strike a Win-Win Deal for Amazon HQ2](#) CityLab
- 7.3 Peter Moskowitz – How to Kill a City (Conclusion)
- 7.4 Timothy Bartik – Improving Economic Development Incentives (Policy Brief)
- 7.5 Joseph Parilla & Sifan Liu – Examining the Local Value of Economic Development Incentives, Executive Summary

Optional Readings

- Publicly-Available First Round Amazon Bids
- FDOT Tiger II Grant Application

For a reading response for this class, select 1-2 of the first round Amazon bids in Optional Readings and evaluate according to economic development criteria explored in the class.

4/30/2018 - Class 8: Final Presentations