**Topics in Urban Economics**

**Master Seminar, WS 2022/23**

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*Last update: June 27, 2022*

**Description**

This seminar provides an overview of empirical research on cities from an economic perspective. We will be studying questions like: Why do cities exist, and why do some of them grow more than others? What happens when a city or a local labor market experiences a positive or negative economic shock, like a big company closing? How do recent changes and policies like rent control laws or AirBnB affect rents? After completing this seminar, participants should know about the state of research in these areas, and should also have a good knowledge of micro-econometric methods commonly used to establish causality.

**General information and prerequisites**

The seminar is open to students in the MSc Economics and MSc Political Economy. Students should have a good background in econometrics and statistics.

Participants choose a paper from the list below. They are required to present the paper in class (roughly 35 minutes, the seminar presentations will take place online) and write a seminar paper on it (maximum 12 pages excluding tables, references, and figures, font size 12, line spacing 1.5). The seminar paper should summarize the paper, provide a critical evaluation and a comparison with the related literature. The grade is based on both parts, the term paper counting 70% and the presentation 30%. However, to pass the seminar, a passing grade of 4.0 or better in each part is needed. Students will also be asked to do a short (5-minute) discussion of the presentation of another student. This will not be part of the grade, but is nonetheless mandatory.

**Procedure**

Students who have received a registration confirmation for the seminar should pick three topics from the list below, rank them according to their preferences and email them to me at stephan.maurer@uni-konstanz.de. Topics are allocated on a “first come, first served” basis. The deadline for emailing me your preferences is September 20. After the enrolment period students cannot drop the seminar any more. No-shows receive a grade of 5.0.

The actual seminar starts with an online introductory meeting on **October 27,** **from 10.00-11.30, using zoom.** I will send the link the day before via ILIAS. Seminar presentations will take place on **January 12 and 13, also online via zoom**. The slides will have to be submitted by **January 10** (details in the kick-off meeting)**.** The term paper needs to be submitted as a PDF **via email by March 10.**

**Topics**

**Topic 1: Location Fundamentals and City Locations**

* Bosker, Maarten, and Eltjo Buringh. 2017. City Seeds: Geography and the Origins of the European City System. *Journal of Urban Economics* 98:139-157.

**Topic 2: Trading Opportunities and City Growth**

* Bakker, Jan-David, Stephan Maurer, Jörn-Steffen Pischke, and Ferdinand Rauch. 2021. Of Mice and Merchants: Connectedness and the Location of Economic Activity in the Iron Age. *Review of Economics and Statistics*,103: 652-665.

**Topic 3: Temporary Shocks**

* Hanlon, W. Walker. 2017. Temporary Shocks and Persistent Effects in Urban Economies: Evidence from British Cities after the US Civil War. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 99: 67-79.

**Topic 4: Trade Shocks and Regional Labor Markets I**

* Autor, David H., David Dorn, and Gordon H. Hanson. 2013. The China Syndrome: Local Labor Market Effects of Import Competition in the United States. *American Economic Review* 103: 2121-68.

**Topic 5: Trade Shocks and Regional Labor Markets II**

* Dauth, Wolfgang, Sebastian Findeisen, and Jens Suedekum. 2014. The Rise of the East and the Far East: German Labor Markets and Trade Integration. *Journal of the European Economic Association* 12: 1643-1675.

**Topic 6: Big Plant Closures**

* Jofre-Monseny, Jordi, María Sánchez-Vidal, and Elisabet Viladecans-Marsal. 2018. Big Plant Closures and Local Employment. *Journal of Economic Geography* 18: 163-186.

**Topic 7: Can Cities Be Stuck in Bad Places?**

* Michaels, Guy, and Ferdinand Rauch. 2018. Resetting the Urban Network: 117-2012. *Economic Journal* 128: 378-412.

**Topic 8: Can Cities Be Stuck in Bad Shapes?**

* Harari, Mariaflavia. 2020. Cities in Bad Shape: Urban Geometry in India. *American Economic Review* 110: 2377-2421.

**Topic 9: AirBnB and Rents**

* Garcia-López, Miquel-Angel, Jordi Jofre-Monseny, Rodrigo Martínez-Mazza, and Mariona Segú. 2020. Do Short-Term Rental Platforms Affect Housing Markets: Evidence from AirBnB in Barcelona. *Journal of Urban Economics* 119, 103278

**Topic 10: Rent Controls**

* Diamond, Rebecca, Tim McQuade, and Franklin Qian. 2019. The Effects of Rent Control Expansion on Tenants, Landlords, and Inequality: Evidence from San Francisco. *American Economic Review* 109: 3365-94.