



Instructor: Dr. Sara Avila

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- Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10 am -1 pm using Canvas Chat or Zoom

INSTRUCTOR BIO

I am an economics instructor with more than two decades of experience. My research interests are in the fields of environmental economics and more recently, in how to teach economics. I have worked on topics related to air quality, climate change, urban transportation, and biodiversity conservation. I am passionate about building understanding in a diverse environment and I am an avid (also aging) runner. I am grateful to have the opportunity to share with you this learning experience.

Term Start: Jan 23, 2022

Term End: May 7, 2022

COURSE WEBSITE

Canvas is our class website:

- Login using your University of Colorado Boulder identikey and password
<https://canvas.colorado.edu/>
- Under Course List, click "ECON 4242: Urban Economics: The Economics of Cities"
- Note: all email correspondence will be through your CU Boulder email address.
 - Do not use the Canvas email or messages, it is not checked.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Urban Economics introduces space into the Economic thinking that students have previously acquired. This course solves three types of questions. The first type is about the development of cities. Why cities exist? The second type is about how people behave within metropolitan areas. Why do some parts of cities grow faster than others? How do firms allocate within a city? The third type of questions is about the economics and spatial dimensions of urban problems. Mostly externalities from automobiles, poverty concentration, racial segregation, suburban sprawl, and shifts in urban labor markets. More than half of all humans live in a city. Despite congestion, poverty, dirt, and disease, cities are also where people learn, share, live, and thrive.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Identify the factors that drive the growth of cities.
2. Explain the concept of spatial equilibrium and how it shapes land rents.
3. Analyze the costs and benefits from different land use regulations.
4. Assess the costs of automobile use and evaluate policies to address them.
5. Examine the cost of urban sprawl and justify different policies to address it.
6. Write clear economic arguments advocating for policies to address such challenges as suburban sprawl, urban poverty, and racial segregation.
7. Identify challenges facing cities in the future and how cities can manage them.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

Requires prerequisite courses of ECON 3070 (Intermediate Microeconomic Theory) and ECON 3818 (Introduction to Statistics with Computer Applications) or STAT 4520 or APPM 4570 or CHEN 3010 or CSCI 3022 or CVEN 3227 or MATH 4520 (all minimum grade C-).

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Textbook: Urban Economics, 9th Edition, by Arthur O'Sullivan McGraw Hill Irwin, ISBN 9780078021787.

We will also use the following, you may buy if you prefer the physical version, but it's not required.

- Brueckner, Jan K., Lectures on Urban Economics, The MIT Press, 2011. ISBN 9780262016360
- Glaeser, Edward, Triumph of the City, Macmillan, 2011. ISBN 9780230709393

Course Website: <https://canvas.colorado.edu/> (Canvas) Grades and any further additional readings will be posted on Canvas. Please check Canvas frequently for any relevant notifications/changes that may occur throughout the course.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY AND DELIVERY

This course is delivered via distance education format using the CU Canvas system. This format will use a combination of readings, online discussion, and other web-based resources. You will interact with the instructor and other students using the communication functions provided by Canvas. You will submit assignments in accordance with the course outline using Canvas.

COURSE PRESENTATION AND PROCEDURES

There will be 14 modules corresponding to the 14 weeks of the course (1 module per week). You should proceed through one module per week, which will be comprised of readings from the course texts, supplemental class notes, graded discussion questions, homeworks and quizzes, exams, and various outside sources of information such as additional readings and video content, among other content.

COURSE OUTLINE

Review the separate weekly class schedule found on Canvas under “Syllabus” link.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

This course is designed to engage you mostly through exercises, however, there will be 3 to 4 class discussions on the topics covered in the course materials. It is important that you participate in class discussions to facilitate learning by other students and gain exposure to different viewpoints of other students in the class.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Course grades will be determined by the completion of assignments, exams, and discussions, as shown below:

	Points per assignment	Frequency	Grade Points	Grade Percentage
Perusall*	5	22	110	11%
Discussions	30	5	150	15%
Homework*	40	8	320	32%
Proctored Midterm Exam	200	1	200	20%
Proctored Cumulative Final Exam	220	1	220	22%
TOTAL			1000	100%

Keep a copy of all work created for the course, including work submitted through Canvas.

*The lowest grade of these assignments will be dropped. See below.

COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Grade	Percentage Grade	Equivalent Points	Indicates
A	93-100	930 – 1000	<i>Excellent</i>
A-	90-92.99	900 – 929	
B+	87-89.99	870 – 899	
B	83-86.99	830 – 869	<i>Above Average</i>
B-	80-82.99	800 – 829	
C+	77-79.99	770 – 799	
C	73-77.99	730 – 769	<i>Average</i>
C-	70-72.99	700 – 729	

D+	67-69.99	670 – 699	
D	63-67.99	630 – 669	<i>Below Average</i>
D-	60-62.99	600 – 629	
F	0-59	600 or lower	<i>Failure</i>

There is +/- grading in this class.

ASSIGNMENTS

Perusall (220 POINTS) – There will be 26 or more Perusall activities, each worth 5 points. I will count your 22 best Perusall scores so you can use these judiciously.

Homework (240 Points) – There will be nine 30 point homework assignments. The format can be problem sets or writing assignments. Your lowest one (1) homework will be dropped from your final grade calculation.

Discussion postings (140 POINTS) – There will be five discussion postings. The discussion will occur asynchronously; I will post a discussion question and you will respond to the questions at your convenience prior to the due date. Some of the questions will require solving a problem set and making comments about your results. See the class schedule for due dates of posts and comments. Discussions are open book and open note. Discussions will be submitted through Canvas. The initial discussion post is due Thursdays, and the discussion response is due Sundays.

Exams (380 POINTS) – There will be two (2) exams. The proctored Midterm Exam is worth 180 points and the proctored cumulative Final Exam is worth 200 points. The format of the exam will be multiple choice, short answers, and calculations and will be closed book. The exams are completed on Canvas in a proctored setting.

This course requires proctored examinations. Exams are proctored which will require planning on your part. Proctors are individuals who administer the exam process following the guidelines provided by University of Colorado Boulder to ensure academic integrity.

Who can be my proctor?

If you are in Boulder or nearby, you can take your exam:

1. At the Department of Economics. There is no cost for using this proctor. This option is only on selected days during the exam period.
2. At the University Testing Center on-campus in Boulder, CO. There may be a cost for using the testing center. This option is only available M-F during regular business hours.
3. With Proctorio. Online proctoring is a service that uses a webcam and microphone to ensure academic integrity. To use this service, you must have access to a computer with a webcam and a microphone. There will be a cost for using the online proctoring services. Please review [Proctorio Minimum System Requirements](#) to ensure you have the correct hardware and software to use this tool.

If you are outside of Boulder, you can take your exam:

1. At an accredited college or university testing center in your town or nearby. There may be a cost for using this testing center.
 2. With Proctorio or a comparable online proctoring service as determined by your instructor. Online proctoring is a service that uses a webcam and microphone to ensure academic integrity. To use this service, you must have access to a computer with a webcam and a microphone. There will be a cost for using the online proctoring services.
- Note that you are required to have a computer with a functioning webcam and microphone or have access to a computer with a functioning webcam microphone to complete your exams.
 - See Canvas for detailed information about proctoring. If you are in a rural area or on a military base, you may need approval process.

EXTRA CREDIT

There may be 50 points of extra credit available (= 5% of the course grade).

- Extra credit may be available during the semester for completing certain activities, such as listening and commenting on a podcast, solving exercises or discussions. These extra credit opportunities will be determined by the instructor and announced on Canvas.

COMMUNICATION

I am nice and I want you to succeed. Do not hesitate to contact me about anything.

E-mail: sara.avila@colorado.edu

- **Please always remind me of what course you are taking.** I teach similar courses, and I have more than 150 students. Sometimes I forget what course you are taking, especially at the beginning of the semester.
- I will respond to email within 12-18 hours, but usually within 2-4 hours. I always respond to emails. If you have not had a response within 18 hours, I did not receive the email. Be sure to use your CU email address because sometimes Gmail and yahoo email accounts are filtered into my spam folder.

Additional ways to contact Dr. Avila:

- Online Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 10 am -1 pm using Zoom (<https://cuboulder.zoom.us/my/saraavila>)

General Course Announcements

- Announcements: Please check the “announcements” section on Canvas.

TUTORING

The Economics Department provides a free drop-in tutorial office which offers assistance on all core courses in the major, and occasionally on other undergraduate courses in the Department. Its website is <https://www.colorado.edu/economics/node/513/attachment>.

The Economics Department maintains a list of tutors who are available for private hire. Its website is <https://www.colorado.edu/economics/node/515/attachment>.

TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT

CU Boulder uses Canvas.

Here is the list of recommended system requirements: [Canvas Computer Specifications Page](#)

Here is the detailed list of internet browsers in Windows, MacOS, iOS and Android: [Supported Browsers Page](#)

Technical Support

- Canvas technical support. If you are experiencing issues with Canvas please contact:
 - CU Boulder's Help desk at 303-735-4357 (5-HELP) or help@colorado.edu. 5-Help will answer your call: Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday from noon to 6:00 p.m., Closed during [University Holidays](#)
 - On your computer, click the “help” (?) icon on the left side of Canvas, once logged in within the Canvas App, you can search the Canvas support guides, Report a Problem or chat with Canvas Support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Connect tech support:
 - <http://mpss.mhhe.com/> or <http://bit.ly/StudentRegistration>

COURSE POLICIES.

Course Withdrawal Policy: Any student who wishes to withdraw from the course must submit a request directly to [Continuing Education](#). For complete information, please visit their website at <https://ce.colorado.edu/resources/topics/dates-and-deadlines-general-info/>

POLICY ON DUE DATES

Each lecture you will complete Problem Sets, Quizzes, and sometimes discussion posts. It is your responsibility to turn in each assignment on the required date. Assignments or discussion postings turned in after the scheduled due date will be lowered to the next letter grade for each 12-hour period late. The exceptions that may be considered is due to sickness, university excused function, or circumstances beyond the students' control. The instructor reserves the sole right to determine what grounds constitutes a reasonable excuse for missing or submitting a late work assignment, the right to require the student to submit proper verification of such excuse.

NETIQUETTE

All students should be aware that their behavior impacts other people, even online. I hope that we will all strive to develop a positive and supportive environment and will be courteous to fellow students and your instructor. Due to the nature of the online environment, there are some things to remember.

1. Always think before you write. In other words, without the use of nonverbals with your message, your message can be misinterpreted. So please think twice before you hit submit.
2. Keep it relevant. There are places to chat and post for fun everyday stuff. Do not stray from the discussion in the assigned questions.
3. Never use all caps. This is the equivalent of yelling in the online world. It is not fun to read. Only use capital letters when appropriate.

4. Make sure that you are using appropriate grammar and structure. In other words, do not use “R U” instead of “are you”. There are people in the class that may not understand this type of abbreviation, not to mention it does nothing to help expand your writing and vocabulary skills. Emoticons are fine as long as they are appropriate. A smile 😊 is welcome, anything offensive is not.
5. Treat people the same as you would face-to-face (or kinder). It might be easy to hide behind the computer. In some cases, it empowers people to treat others in ways they would not in person. Remember there is a person behind the name on your screen. Treat all with dignity and respect and you can expect that in return.

Website: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Compiled by Melissa Landin, Instructor, Dept. of Communication, Inver Hills Community College, mlandin@inverhills.edu

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Both students and faculty are responsible for maintaining an appropriate learning environment in all instructional settings, whether in person, remote or online. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation, or political philosophy. For more information, see the [classroom behavior](#) policy, the [Student Code of Conduct](#), and the [Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance](#).

REQUIREMENTS FOR COVID-19

The CU Boulder campus is currently mask-optional. However, if public health conditions change and masks are again required in classrooms, students who fail to adhere to masking requirements will be asked to leave class, and students who do not leave class when asked or who refuse to comply with these requirements will be referred to Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution. For more information, see the policy on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct. If you require accommodation because a disability prevents you from fulfilling these safety measures, please follow the steps in the “Accommodation for Disabilities” statement on this syllabus.

As a matter of public health and safety, all members of the CU Boulder community and all visitors to campus must follow university, department and building requirements and all public health orders in place to reduce the risk of spreading infectious disease. CU Boulder currently requires COVID-19 vaccination and boosters for all faculty, staff and students. Students, faculty and staff must upload proof of vaccination and boosters or file for an exemption based on medical, ethical or moral grounds through the MyCUHealth portal.

If you feel ill and think you might have COVID-19, if you have tested positive for COVID-19, or if you are unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19,

you should stay home and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office (contacttracing@colorado.edu). If you are fully vaccinated and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay home; rather, you should self-monitor for symptoms and follow the further guidance of the Public Health Office (contacttracing@colorado.edu).

ACCOMMODATION FOR DISABILITIES

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to your faculty member in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the [Disability Services website](#). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition, see [Temporary Medical Conditions](#) on the Disability Services website.

PREFERRED STUDENTS' NAMES AND PRONOUNS

CU Boulder recognizes that students' legal information doesn't always align with how they identify. Students may update their preferred names and pronouns via the student portal; those preferred names and pronouns are listed on instructors' class rosters. In the absence of such updates, the name that appears on the class roster is the student's legal name.

HONOR CODE

All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Honor Code. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from all course instructors involved, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code (honor@colorado.edu; 303-492-5550). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the Honor Code academic integrity policy can be found at the [Honor Code Office website](#).

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT, DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND/OR RELATED RETALIATION

CU Boulder is committed to fostering an inclusive and welcoming learning, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits sexual misconduct (harassment, exploitation, and assault), intimate partner violence (dating or domestic violence), stalking, protected-class discrimination and harassment, and related retaliation by or against members of our community on- and off-campus. These behaviors harm individuals and our community. The Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) addresses these concerns, and individuals who believe they have been subjected to misconduct can contact OIEC at 303-492-2127 or email cureport@colorado.edu. Information about university policies, [reporting options](#), and support resources can be found on the [OIEC website](#).

Please know that faculty and graduate instructors have a responsibility to inform OIEC when they are made aware of any issues related to these policies regardless of when or where they occurred to ensure that individuals impacted receive information about their rights, support resources, and resolution options. To learn more about reporting and support options for a variety of concerns, visit [Don't Ignore It](#).

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Because of the flexibility of timing of completion of assignments in this class, you must contact the instructor in at least two weeks in advance if you anticipate a religious holiday may impact your completion of coursework.

For more information on the religious holidays most commonly observed by CU Boulder students consult the [online interfaith calendar](#).

COURSE WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Any student who wishes to withdraw from the course must submit a request directly to [Continuing Education](#). For complete information, please visit their website at <https://ce.colorado.edu/resources/topics/dates-and-deadlines-general-info/>

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

A variety of instructional support services, such as writing center, guidance on personal or educational issues, tutoring questions and library resources are available to the students. For more information about their services, visit their websites linked under modules on Canvas.



Urban Economics, ECON 4242, Spring 2023, Avila, University of Colorado Boulder

Module (start date)	Topic	Graded Assignments	Due Date by 11:59pm MST/MDT
1 (1/23)	What is a City?	Module 1 Perusall Module 1 Discussion Discussion response Module 1 Homework	Thursday 1/26 Thursday 1/26 Sunday 1/29 Sunday 1/29
2 (1/30)	Agglomeration and Firms	Module 2 Perusall Module 2 Homework	Thursday 2/2 Sunday 2/5
3 (2/6)	Demand for Urban Living	Module 3 Perusall Module 3 Homework	Thursday 2/9 Sunday 2/12
4 (2/13)	Growth and local policy	Module 4 Perusall Module 4 Discussion Discussion response	Thursday 2/16 Thursday 2/16 Sunday 2/19
5 (2/20)	Land rent and land use	Module 5 Perusall Module 5 Homework	Thursday 2/23 Sunday 2/26
6 (2/27)	Residential land use patterns - monocentric model	Module 6 Perusall Module 6 Homework	Thursday 3/2 Sunday 3/5
7 (3/6)	You may take the proctored midterm exam the day of your choosing Thursday through Sunday.	Discussion Post Discussion Response Proctored Midterm Exam	Wednesday 3/8 Friday 3/11 Thursday 3/9- Sunday 3/12
8 (3/13)	Overview of local government	Module 8 Perusall Module 8 Homework	Thursday 3/16 Sunday 3/19
9 (3/20)	Economics of Housing Markets	Module 9 Perusall Module 9 Homework	Thursday 3/23 Sunday 3/26
10 (4/3)	Economics of automobile use	Module 10 Perusall Module 10 Homework	Thursday 4/6 Sunday 4/9
11 (4/10)	Race and housing	Module 11 Perusall Module 11 Discussion Discussion Response	Thursday 4/13 Thursday 4/13 Sunday 4/16
12 (4/17)	Urban poverty: the role of neighborhoods	Module 12 Perusall Module 12 Homework	Thursday 4/20 Sunday 4/23
13 (4/24)	Looking to the future: pandemics	Module 13 Perusall Module 13 Homework	Thursday 4/27 Sunday 4/30
14 (5/1)	You may take the proctored cumulative final exam the day of your choosing Thursday through Sunday	Discussion Post Discussion Response Proctored Final Exam	Wednesday 5/3 Friday 5/6 Thursday 5/4- Sunday 5/7