

GGG 305: ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY

COURSE SYLLABUS, SPRING 2025, 3 CREDITS

INSTRUCTOR

Name: Dr. Timothy Leslie
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COURSE BASICS

Meeting time(s): W 7:20 – 10pm
Location: Exploratory Hall 2103
Modality: 100% in person
Course URL: canvas.gmu.edu
Pre-Requisites: None
Textbook(s): None

COURSE OVERVIEW

Economic geography applies geographic principles to understand purchasing behaviors and the spatial distribution of economic activity. It examines how spatial economic behavior impacts everyday life, including communication, employment, and the global flow of goods and services.

This course emphasizes geographical, historical, social, cultural, and institutional perspectives on the global economy. Key topics include communicative technologies, firms, population and migration, institutions, the environment, and their interactions at scales ranging from local to global. Through the lens of regions, students will explore the spatial aspects of the global economy and the forces that shape the distribution of economic activity. Students will also analyze the patterns of this distribution and its influence on other spatial systems.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course, students Will Be Able To:

1. Understand the major forces, actors, and institutions that shape economic geography, including the unevenness of economic lives at various scales.
2. Apply key concepts and analytical tools to analyze and address real-world problems relevant to economic geography.
3. Critically assess the spatial patterns of global economic activity and their broader implications for society and the environment.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

Your understanding and mastery of the course material will be evaluated through a variety of assessments. Each category is designed to measure different aspects of your learning experience, contributing to your overall grade as follows:

Course Element	Weight
Quizzes	15%
Assignments	30%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%

Quizzes: Regular quizzes will check your engagement with and understanding of the material covered in lectures and readings. These quizzes will be administered at the start of class and will emphasize key concepts, definitions, and foundational quantitative methods. Quizzes are designed to encourage consistent preparation and attendance.

Assignments: Assignments are a key component of the course and will focus on applied economic geography topics. They will involve analyzing datasets related to spatial economic behavior, applying quantitative methods such as economic base models, shift-share analysis, or spatial interaction models, and producing written and numerical interpretations of results.

Exams: The midterm exam will cover foundational topics from the first half of the course, focusing on applied methods and critical understanding. The final exam will emphasize material from the second half of the course but will require a mastery of concepts from the first half for comprehensive understanding. Both exams will consist primarily of applied quantitative questions, short-answer responses, and a small number of multiple-choice or true/false items. Review sheets will not be provided.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Date	Weekly Topic	Date	Weekly Topic
Wk 1 - Jan 22	Introduction	Wk 8 - Mar 19	Shift-Share Analysis
Wk 2 - Jan 29	Components of the Economy	Wk 9 - Mar 26	Globalization and Development
Wk 3 - Feb 5	Data on the Economy	Wk 10 - Apr 2	Spatial Divisions of Activity and Labor
Wk 4 - Feb 12	Population and Economic Systems	Wk 11 - Apr 9	Urban-Economic Structure
Wk 5 - Feb 19	Spatial Interaction Models	Wk 12 - Apr 16	Inequality and Regional Disparities
Wk 6 - Feb 26	The Economic Base Model	Wk 13 - Apr 23	Geographic Economies of Scale
Wk 7 - Mar 5	<i>EXAM 1</i>	Wk 14 - Apr 30	Location Science and Optimization
Mar 12	NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK	May 17	<i>FINAL EXAM</i>