Transformation of the Urban Economy: Case Studies | Fall 2014  
URPL-GP.2452; Class #4914  

Tuesdays, 8:35 – 10:15pm  
25 West 4th Street, Room C-13  

Professor Tim Tompkins, tmt6@nyu.edu

Course Description and Objective: This course examines the tools, tactics, and theories associated with the economic revitalization of cities. Explicit theories and implicit assumptions about the economic life of cities will be illuminated through numerous real-world case studies, some of which will involve the instructor’s hands-on experience with urban park revitalization and the transformation of Times Square. Through specific examples we will examine how ideas about urban economic development shift across time and place, to better identify deeper truths. While reviewing the standard tools in the economic development toolbox, we will also look at relevant ideas and practices in corporate branding and competitive strategy, managing public space, nurturing creative industries, and changing regulations. Across all categories and case studies, we will repeatedly ask: What are the things that make cities thrive and grow, and how does one nurture those things?

Course Format: Classes will consist of opening presentations by the professor, seminar-style discussions of assigned readings, and occasional moderated conversations with guest speakers. Course readings are front-loaded to the first half of the term to familiarize students with a number of core concepts and ideas, which will then be explored through case studies and the process of making policy recommendations for the final paper.

Please note that the order of classes may shift slightly during the term depending on the availability of guest speakers either for case studies or for Q & A sessions.

Office Hours: I will always be available by appointment on Tuesday from 6:00 – 8:00pm at a mutually convenient location near the classroom at 25 West 4th Street. Email me in advance to set a time and place. If class or work conflicts make that time slot problematic, we can arrange to meet at another time.

Course Requirements:

1. Class Preparations and Participation (20%)

   All students should be prepared to discuss and answer questions about the week’s readings in class. Required readings are listed below each week’s topics (see next page), and all readings can be found in the ‘Resources’ folder on the NYU Classes website. On multiple occasions the professor will send students current articles from publications or websites for discussion in class. These will be sent via email and uploaded to the NYU Classes site. Near the end of the term the group presentations and critiques related to the final assignment will also be taken into account for the participation grade.

2. Short Assignments (30%)

   There will be three short (1-2 page) writing assignments (10% of your grade each) relating to the readings and/or specific case studies. There will also be one ungraded photography assignment where students will be asked to upload pictures of a neighborhood (sometime between classes 2-4).

   All papers are due as a PDF on the ‘Assignments’ tab of the NYU Classes page. They should be saved as ‘Last Name: Assignment x: Title of Paper.’
3. Final Paper (50%)

There will be one longer (9-10 page) assignment due at the end of the term where students will present their economic development recommendations for New York City, with a focus on how those recommendations would affect a particular neighborhood and the rational for those recommendations. Students will also form teams to discuss, form and present collective recommendations (which will in turn be questioned by fellow students) near the end of the term.


Final papers are due as a PDF on the ‘Assignments’ tab of the NYU Classes page. Documents should be saved as ‘Last Name: Final Paper: Title of Paper’ and are due Tuesday, December 9 before class.

Main Texts:
COURSE SCHEDULE

Class 1: September 2

Introduction

The professor will introduce the format and objectives for the course and facilitate the first class discussion. Students should bring their resume and be prepared to speak briefly to their background and interest in the course. In addition, please be prepared to answer the question, “What are you hoping to learn about how to make cities thrive and grow?”

Required Readings:
- Glaeser, Introduction
- Jacobs, Chapter 1
- Sagalyn, Preface pp. IX – XVII

Class 2: September 9

Basic Tools & Tactics I

Required Readings:
- Sagalyn, pp 70-132
- Glaeser, Chapter 1
- Jacobs, Chapters 6-8

Class 3: September 16

Basic Tools & Tactics II

Required Readings:
- Glaeser, Chapter 6, Conclusion
- Jacobs, Chapters 10-11, 19, 21-22

Class 4: September 23

The Safety Threshold

Guest Speaker: George Kelling, Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute; Consultant to NYPD

SHORT ASSIGNMENT ONE DUE

Required Readings:
- Glaeser, Chapter 4
- Jacobs, Chapter 2
Class 5: September 30

*Brands, Perceptions and the Press*

Guest Speaker: Steve Cuozzo, New York Post Reporter

Required Readings:
- Selected Readings (see NYU Classes)
- Sagalyn 181-204, 240-252, 269-275, 454-475

Class 6: October 7

*Assets, Liabilities & Competitive Forces*

*Case Study: Singapore*

Required Readings:
- Porter, Michael, *Competitive Strategy*, Chapter 7 & 8

NO CLASS – October 14 – FALL RECESS

Class 7: October 21

*Housing, Equity & Community-Based Economic Development*

Guest Speakers: Andrew Haupt and Rasmia Kirmani-Frye, Community Solutions, Inc.

Required Readings:
- Selected Readings (see NYU Classes)
- Glaeser, Chapter 3, 7
- Jacobs, Chapter 3, 15, 20

Class 8: October 28

*Case Study: Atlantic City, NJ*

Guest Speaker: Curtis Bashaw, Cape Advisors, former Executive Director of the Casino Investment Redevelopment Authority

SHORT ASSIGNMENT TWO DUE

Required Readings:
- Selected Readings on Atlantic City (see NYU Classes)
- Glaeser, Chapter 2
- Jacobs, Chapter 13
Class 9: November 4
Case Study: NYC Parks, the Bronx River & Social Capital

Guest Speaker: TBD

Required Readings:
- NYTimes articles (see NYU Classes)
- Partnerships for Parks Catalyst Materials (see NYU Classes)
- Jacobs, Chapter 5

Class 10: November 11
Arts & the Creative Economy

Guest Speaker: Jessica Goldman Srebnick, CEO of Goldman Properties

SHORT ASSIGNMENT THREE DUE

Required Readings:
- Selected Readings

Class 11: November 18
Case Study: Times Square
(LOCATION CHANGE: Times Square Alliance, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1003)

DRAFT OUTLINE OF FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE

Required Readings:
- Selected Readings (see NYU Classes)

Class 12: November 25
Team Presentations & Cross Questioning: Part 1

Class 13: December 2
Team Presentations & Cross Questioning: Part 2

Class 14: December 9
Panel Discussion: Times Square, NYC & Economic Development

FINAL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT DUE