Local Economic Development Planning
PLAN A4501.001
Wednesday 2:00 – 4:00
(Fayerweather 201)

Prof. Stacey Sutton

Office: Buell Hall, room 204
Hours: Tuesday 3:00 - 5:00
and by appointment

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GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Urban planners must weigh socially equitable, politically palatable, financially feasible and expedient options. Economic development, widely considered a conceptual tool, analytic approach and an outcome, is an essential dimension of urban planning practice and decision-making. Nevertheless, it’s an elusive and contentious area that often lacks a coherent normative vision, strategic approach, or widely acceptable set of outcomes. At the heart of economic development are broad concerns including: public and private investment; physical development and redevelopment; industrial growth, decline and mobility; human capital development and workforce development; spatial embeddedness, regionalism and localism; economic equity and opportunity structures; as well as civic and state institutions involved in decision-making.

A fundamental feature of this graduate seminar is to enhance critical thinking skills with regard to economic development concerns. In other words, we will routinely reflect on the underlying assumptions about the public good; distribution of benefits and burdens; the market, the state and civic institutions, among other tacit and explicit assumptions. Another fundamental feature of this seminar is to enhance analytic skills necessary for good/fair/just planning, argumentation and decision-making. Consequently, this seminar examines both local economic development (LED) theories and methodologies, and illuminates the underlying politics of LED decision-making.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Local Economic Development Planning (Available at Village Copier on Broadway 111th – 112th)

EVALUATION OF WORK:

All work in this course is evaluated for its substantive content, analytic rigor, plausible argumentation, clarity of presentation (written, visual and otherwise) timeliness and authenticity*. *Zero tolerance for breaching academic integrity. Review the academic integrity guidelines for Columbia University and for GSAPP. Explicit and suspected cases of academic integrity infringement will be referred to school/university Officers. All cases will be processed based on an implicit understanding that the University code of ethics and academic integrity have been agreed to by all registered students.
Hard copies of all assignments should be submitted during class, on the day they are due. Since you select weeks to submit critical reviews, late submissions will not be accepted; plan accordingly. Assignments submitted late will be penalized.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

I. **CLASS PARTICIPATION** (10%)

As a graduate seminar, students are expected to attend class, complete assigned readings prior to class, and actively contribute to an *informed discussion* of the texts. Class participation is weighed heavily, but *informed discussion* is what counts. Given the brevity of the seminar and the scope of material to be covered, anecdotes, tangential arguments and pure conjecture should be kept to a minimum. Attention to *informed discussion* has dual purposes: first, it’s a time management technique. It is also a way to ‘drill-down’ and focus on the evidence underlying arguments, to unpack underlying assumptions, and to consider the implicit and explicit implications of urban planning processes and decision-making.

II. **RESPONSE PAPER & CRITICAL COMMENTARY** (30%)

**DATES DUE:** WEEK 3 AND ONE OTHER WEEK (WEEK 9, 10, 11, 12, OR 13)

A hard copy of the Paper and the Commentary is to be submitted in class NOT electronically.

In the Response Paper students should compare and contrast the images of urban livability and cities of opportunity. What do the texts suggest about urban development? Who are the biggest winners and the biggest losers in the cities of opportunity narrative? What are the strengths/weaknesses with the indicators of development? New York City is one of the top Cities of Opportunity, how does this reconcile with its exorbitant rate of unemployment?

Commentaries should synthesize, analyze and critique assigned texts. These should not be treated as simple summaries. Compare and contrast texts with regard to important question(s) they address or fail to address, and raise questions important for local economic development planning. You may explicate connections between the literature and planning practice or theory, explain what the authors did well, and what you thought was missing. Feel free to incorporate outside material but you must incorporate the readings for the week.

III. **ECONOMIC BASE ANALYSIS** (25%)

**DATE DUE:** WEEK 6 - OCTOBER 10th

Consists of a demographic analysis and an industrial + occupational analysis of the city

I. Conduct a demographic analysis for your city\(^1\) by identifying socioeconomic trends most relevant to economic development

1. Use the list of factors under column (A) to describe socioeconomic shifts in your city. Be sure to present counts and change over time (specify the time period)

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\(^1\) As discussed in class, if city-level data is not available use the counties in which the city resides. The boundaries for some cities (like NYC) are coterminous with multiple counties; other cities are partially represented by multiple counties.
2. Describe an additional contextual factor that may or may not come from US Census data. Either select from the list in column (B) or select a factor you believe is important but isn’t on the list. Briefly explain your rationale for selecting the additional factor.

II. Conduct a city-level industry analysis (select the appropriate reference area)
3. What’s the city’s industrial mix?
4. What industries constitute the local economic base? (What measurement are you using: employment, sales, firm count, etc.?)
5. What are the growing, declining, and stable industries or sectors? (specify the time period)
   a. What are potential economic opportunity areas, why?
6. What factors are influencing change in the city? In other words, decompose changes in local employment into the national (or state) share, industrial mix, and local share.
7. What do these trends suggest?

NOTE: Answers to the questions should be brief. Be sure to explain what the trends you identify, reference them in the attached tables. Only include clearly labeled and well-described tables. Do not staple together output from websites. Download the data and create useful tables. Do not include graphs, charts or pictures. Be sure to include data references for each section.

A hard copy of the Economic Base Analysis is to be submitted in class, NOT electronically.

IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IMPACT - PRESENTATION & REPORT (35%)

DATE DUE: WEEK 10 NOVEMBER 7TH – ABSTRACT
WEEK 14 DECEMBER 5TH – PRESENTATION
FINAL PAPERS DUE BY MONDAY DECEMBER 10TH

Analyze the effectiveness of an economic development project

1. What was the economic development strategy (e.g., technology, energy or innovation project; commercial corridor revitalization; etc)
2. What were the projected and actual capital investments and expenses? How were the resources budgeted? How can the strategy take advantage of state resources?
3. What effects are discernible, such as long and short-term employment, industrial growth, impact on locality and region?
4. Describe how the project should be evaluated and the types of lessons that can be learned.
I. Local Economic Development Concepts and Methods

WEEK 1
SEPT. 5TH

Introduction to Local Economic Development
Discuss the meaning and intent of local economic development
- Blakely and Leigh, chps 1

WEEK 2
SEPT. 12TH

Local Economic Development Theories & Concepts
Discuss key economic development arguments and assumptions; Discuss conventional LED ideology and practices, and ways that it has changed
- Blakely and Leigh, chp 3

WEEK 3
SEPT. 19TH

Economic Opportunity in the Capitals of Finance, Commerce and Culture
Compare and contrast strikingly different pictures of urban livability.
DUE: Response Paper

WEEK 4
SEPT. 26TH

Local Economic Development Measures & Methods
Discuss key measures of LED, methodologies for analyzing economic activity, and sources for economic data
- Blakely and Leigh, chp 6
WEEK 5
OCT 3

Assessing Local Economic Development Projects
Discuss strengths and limits of LED methods for strategic decision making

WEEK 6
OCT. 10
DUE: Economic Base Analysis

From Deindustrialization to the Great Recession
Discuss industrial growth and decline in the US and its impact on American cities; discuss indicators of economic performance; and the current economic trajectory
- Bluestone, Barry and Bennett Harrison. 1982. The Deindustrialization of America.
  chp. 1: “Capital vs. Community”
  chp. 3: “The Impact of Private Disinvestment on Workers”

WEEK 7
OCT. 17

Sectoral Development Strategies
Discuss the development, sustainability and contributions of industries and sectors. Explore how localities cultivate new/alternative growth sectors.
- Accelerating State Adoption of Sector Strategies: An 11 State Project Report, 2008 (a joint project by the National Governors Association, The Corporation for a Skilled Workforce, and the National Network of Sector Partnerships) http://www.sectorstrategies.org/sites/all/files/AcceleratingSectorStrategies-
II. The Politics of Local Economic Development

The Local Environment, Planning Processes and the Profession
Discuss forces behind local economic development, planning processes and the profession

**WEEK 8**
**OCT 24th**
- Blakely and Leigh, chp 4, 5

**WEEK 9**
**OCT 31ST**
People- or Place- Based Development?
Discuss the “who versus where” dilemma and implications for urban development

(Commentary)
- Crane, Randall and Michael Manville. 2008. “People or Place: Revisiting the Who versus the Where of Urban Development” *Land Lines* (July)

**WEEK 10**
**NOV 7TH**
Region & Locality
What constitutes the “local”? Are localities the appropriate scale for economic development? What are the strengths and limits of local action? Should planners work locally or are they most effective at the scale of city or region?

(Commentary)
- Blakely and Leigh, chp 8

**WEEK 11**
**NOV. 14TH**
Investing in the Inner City
What’s the role of private capital investment? What should we expect from private investment in inner-city markets? What are the advantages and challenges of inner-city corporate capital investment?
- Blakely and Leigh, chp 9

**WEEK 12**

**NOV. 21**

**Public -Private Development and Promises Fulfilled**

Discuss public and private roles & responsibilities with regard to urban economic development

(commentary)

- Blakely and Leigh, chp 13
- *Bartik, Timothy. 2007. Solving the Problems of Economic Development Incentives. Upjohn Institute

**WEEK 13**

**NOV 28**

(Evaluating and Improving Economic Development)

How should LED programs be evaluated? How do we know if a LED program actually made a difference? What are inhibitors to “good” ED planning / policy? Can anything be done?

(commentary)


**WEEK 14**

**DEC 5**

**Economic Development Project**

Class Presentation

**Dec 10**

Final Paper Due