

URBAN ECONOMICS SHORT COURSE

Wednesday 21 June - Friday 23 June 2023

Griffith University
South Brisbane, QLD 4101

VLC and Ethos Urban are excited to offer this three-day urban economics short course to an Australian audience for the first time. Over three intensive days, the course will provide participants with an intuitive introduction to urban economic concepts and consider their implications for policy.

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COURSE CONTENT

DAY	SESSION	OUTLINE
WEDNESDAY (8:30am -4pm)	The monocentric city model	In the monocentric city model (MCM), the trade-off between commuting costs and housing costs gives rise to a “bid-rent curve”. We consider evidence of how the bid-rent curves varies over time and space and link it to the related concept of “density gradients”. To finish, we consider implications of the MCM for policy, e.g. the effects of growth on commuting distances and urban form.
	Agglomeration economies	The economic advantages of cities (“agglomeration economies”) give rise to clustering as well as urban wage/rents premiums. Using a simple model of city formation and size, we discuss the interplay between agglomeration benefits and congestion costs before considering their underlying microeconomic foundations and empirical evidence. To finish, we touch on types of agglomeration and potential benefits for consumers.
	Transport economics	Transport plays a critical role in urban economic models, where it influences both the shape and size of cities. This session covers key topics in transport economics, including transport models, generalised costs, dynamic/static models of congestion, the components of transport systems, and (dis)economies of scale/density. To finish, we consider empirical evidence on sub-urbanisation and “induced demand”.
THURSDAY (8:30am -4pm)	The Rosen-Roback model	The Rosen-Roback model provides a useful conceptual framework for thinking about inter-city location choice. We introduce the model and build an intuitive understanding for how spatial variation in prices and amenities help us to understand differences between locations. To finish, we complement this intuition with discussion of empirical evidence, policy insights, and dynamics. What cities are “winning” and why?
	Heterogeneity / sorting	Many urban economic concepts and models can be extended to explicitly accommodate differences (“heterogeneity”) in various dimensions, such as income, education, age/gender, and industry sector. These differences can, in turn, give rise to spatial sorting, whereby similar people and firms sort into similar locations. We consider gnarly normative questions of “good” versus “bad” sorting and potential implications for policy.
	Infrastructure policy	Infrastructure helps to transform cities “from dark and isolated” to “bright and networked”. This includes economic infrastructure—such as transport, electricity, and water—as well as social infrastructure—such as education, health, and recreational facilities. We consider the demand for infrastructure, supply-side characteristics, and institutional arrangements. We finish with a case study of congestion pricing in Stockholm.
FRIDAY (8:30am -4pm)	The economics of place	Urban economic concepts for thinking about intra and inter-city location choice are also useful when applied to land use and development of small areas. The session will illustrate how the variety of competitive and dynamic forces in our cities and suburbs influence growth and how this differs between industrial, retail, commercial land uses. We finish by considering implications for the effectiveness of place-based policies.
	Housing markets and policy	The demand for and supply of housing is of critical importance to urban economic outcomes. In this session, we take a deep dive into the economics of housing, looking at the main theoretical drivers of housing costs, both prices and rents, such as location and amenity. We then consider evidence on demand patterns for cities in Australia and New Zealand, with a focus on South East Queensland.
	Planning & policy development	Land use planning and policy impacts on the size and shape of our cities. In this session, we present and develop a detailed case study that considers the implications of urban economic concepts for policy in South East Queensland. In doing so, we will draw heavily on the SEQ Regional Plan and local government planning frameworks to consider how the economics of place can support stated strategic outcomes.

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WHAT WILL YOU LEARN?

- What economic factors influence where people and firms choose to locate?
- How does transport shape our cities and how have these effects changed over time?
- Does quality-of-life or the business environment matter more to the attractiveness of urban areas?
- How do incomes, preferences, and technologies affect urban structure?
- What is the role of urban infrastructure and how might it be funded?
- How urban economics can inform planning and policy development?
- What is the role of housing markets and land use policy?

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The course is designed for people with a variety of academic backgrounds and professional interests, including but not limited to economics, engineering, planning, and policy. Please note that no formal training in economics is required.

Want information on pricing? Click Register Now to learn more, or email either of our course presenters if you have further questions.



COURSE PRESENTERS



STUART DONOVAN

Executive Consultant, Veitch Lister Consulting

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Drawing on his 18 years experience working as both a consultant and a researcher in Australia, New Zealand, and the Netherlands (particularly in Brisbane and Auckland), Stuart will provide an evidence-based and policy-relevant introduction to urban economics. Stuart has been delivering similar short courses to international audiences for more than 5 years.



MARK CASE

Director, Economics, Ethos Urban

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Mark has 10+ years experience in business case development, economics, and strategic planning in both public and private sectors across Australia, the Asia Pacific, and US. He is a specialist in economic development strategies, major project approvals, strategic plans, small area modelling and infrastructure network plans.

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