Instructor: Sumner La Croix  
Office: 543 Saunders Hall  
Office Hours: Monday 10-11 am and Wednesday 9-10 am and by appointment  
E-mail: lacroix@hawaii.edu  
Course materials are posted on course webpage at laulima.hawaii.edu

Textbooks:  
None required. All articles are available via UH library electronic journal site.

Student Learning Objectives

- To provide advanced graduate students with training on modern empirics used in the broadly defined areas of public economics, with particular applications to issues of economic development in cities in both developed and developing countries.
- To learn relevant literature in public economics, industrial organization, and urban economics literature required to understand how public policies change and are changed by the growth of cities.
- To learn how to make an effective presentation on the economics of a public policy issue.
- To work with a team of students to complete an independent research project in public economics.

Course Website: Available through laulima.hawaii.edu

Check the website and your UH email for announcements, assignments, and any possible changes related to the course plan.

Course Structure:

Class attendance is mandatory.
Grading:

1) Paper Replication (25%)

An important part of learning how empirical techniques work is the successful application of methods and interpretation of results. Students will be asked to replicate central results from an important paper in the literature.

2) Referee Report (15%)

Writing referee reports is an important part of professional service as an economist. Students will write two referee reports on papers in the area of public economics. These papers will be selected from those on the reading list below that are not covered in class, or other comparable working papers. See handout for guidelines on what a referee report should look like.

3) Presentation (15%)

Each student will give one approximately 20-minute presentation on a paper chosen from the below reading list that is not covered in class by the instructor. Students may substitute other papers with the prior permission of the instructor. The presentation should include a discussion of the motivation, related literature, model/empirical approach/identification strategy (if appropriate), and main conclusions of the paper, as well as any problems, shortcomings, or questions left unresolved in the paper as determined by the presenter.

Slides are due by e-mail (lacroix@hawaii.edu) 48 hours before your presentation; this is necessary to allow enough time for me to give you feedback on your presentation, and for you to make changes before you present. If you would like me to help you edit your slides, please send them in Power Point, or another format that is equally convenient for detailed editing, rather than as a PDF.

4) Team Paper (30%)

A team of three students submits both a one-page single-spaced description of an original research project related to the content of this course by September 14, a five-page summary by October 12, and a full paper by December 2. The one-page description should include a careful statement of the research question and a preliminary sketch and justification of the methodology of the paper (what data will be used, what empirical approaches, why these data and approaches are appropriate for the question). The five-page description will also include a literature review, more specific description of the approach, and any preliminary results.

5) Class Participation (15%)

Read the assigned paper. Come with questions. Be prepared to answer questions.
Reading List (subject to change) ** indicates assigned reading.

Multiple Equilibria in Cities


Cities and Agglomeration Economies


**Big Push Development**


**Human Capital Externalities**


R&D, R&D Policies, and Regional Growth


Housing Prices and Housing Externalities


Subsidies to Business


Regional Development: TVA


State Taxation and State Growth


State Taxation


Taxation, Revenue, and Kinks


Inference with Difference-in-Differences Estimators

