

GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING

GPHY 334: Geographies of Growth and Decline



Contact Time	Two 1.5 hour sessions per week	
Format	Lectures and videos; guest presentations; in-class exercises	
Class Assessment	Participation	20%
	Midterm test	35%
	Term paper	45%

COURSE OVERVIEW

Is continuous growth possible? Is it even desirable? This course explores the drivers and effects of urban growth and decline. The growth-focus of Western society has led to the widespread assumption of growth and territorial stigma of slow growth and decline. In this course, we will examine how social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political processes at the local, national, and global level shape and reinforce distinct geographies of growth and decline.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe major economic and demographic trends shaping urban structures and relations at multiple spatial scales
2. Explain conceptual models of regional, urban, and neighbourhood growth and decline
3. Critically review and evaluate policies and strategies for reversing, managing, and adapting to economic and population decline
4. Present conceptual and empirical analyses of urban economic decline in written and verbal formats

COURSE TOPICS

This course will examine the growth and decline of cities with an emphasis on the relationships between local, regional, national, and global processes in a range of topics including: the growth and significance of cities; globalization and the network society; patterns, causes and effects of shrinking and declining cities; perceptions of and responses to urban decline; and post-growth futures. Topics will be discussed in a range of North American and international contexts. Throughout the course we will consider how the growth and decline of cities are associated with, driven by, and perpetuate racial, ethnic, gender, age, and other inequalities.

COURSE READINGS

- Franklin, R. (2020) I Come to Bury (Population) Growth, Not to Praise it, *Spatial Economic Analysis*.
- Hackworth, J. (2016) Why There is No Detroit in Canada, *Urban Geography*, 37(2): 272-295.
- Hartt, M. (2021) *Quietly Shrinking Cities: Canadian Urban Population Loss in an Age of Growth*. UBC Press.
- Martinez-Fernandez, C. et al. (2012) Shrinking Cities: Urban Challenges of Globalization, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 36(2): 213-225.