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11.481J / 1.284J / ESD.192J Analyzing and Accounting for Regional Economic Growth
Spring 2009

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC ANALYSIS EXERCISE

Each team is to pick a region either in a developing or an industrialized country and talk about sources of growth, resilience, restructuring, or current economic struggles in light of some of the regional theoretical, accounting, and technique issues introduced in this class. During the presentation, the students will indicate how they have analyzed a region's economic development (and history) by drawing on some of the theories and techniques covered in class. You are encouraged to use cases with which you are already familiar, such as those you are using in other classes or your research projects.

One example of how you can structure the presentations is for you to pick a declining region, such as Detroit, Appalachia, or some area in a developing country, and to look at some of the underlying reasons for the region's decline and lack of resilience. What lessons can you draw from these cases for other regions? Although history and context are important, there are also real processes and actions that you can look at to help us think about planning development and policy interventions elsewhere. The lessons may not be applicable in all places, but we can draw lessons for regions with a similar institutional context and environment.

1. We will group students into sets of three to five. Each group will have 15-20 minutes to do the presentation and another 10 minutes for class discussion. In other words, each group will be given 25-30 minutes. Please assign someone in the group to keep time. No more than 2 to 3 people should present, but all people in the group should participate in gathering information and in writing the group paper. All members of the group will receive one grade.
2. You should use PowerPoint (or a similar program) in order to produce slides and handouts for the class. Each team is responsible for preparing the handouts from the slides. Please do not cram too much information into each slide—select key points/arguments and use the material on each slide to guide (rather than dominate) your talk. Think in terms of “quality” rather than “quantity.”
3. We want you to be analytical, rather than descriptive, for example: What question will you answer? What are your assumptions? What are your arguments? What evidence can you draw on to support your claims? You are expected to draw on relevant theories of regional growth, development, and planning from the readings for 11.481. In some cases, factors leading to a region's growth/decline and development may contradict some of the core tenets and assumptions of conventional and/or alternative growth theories.
4. Include within your overview some use of the information on accounting issues and techniques reviewed in the class, indicating which technique(s) and accounting analyses you would use to evaluate the region's growth/decline and why?
5. We welcome creativity in style and structure.
6. The oral presentations of each team will be held in the last week of class. All members of the class are required to attend the presentations, even if they are not presenting.

Problem Set 5
Grading Criteria

We will assign 25 points for each of the following:

1. Rationale for explanation of growth/decline in the region.
2. Application of theories, techniques, and/or concepts covered in the class.
3. Originality of the presentation.
4. Presentation skills and slide clarity