

EC2880A: The Rise and Fall of Great Cities
FASStrack 2025

Schedule: AM Session (9.30am-1.30pm, Singapore Time)
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday

Course Description

Cities have existed for more than 10 millennia. They enable trade, self-protection and social expression. They also create the need for politics, law and administration.

This module introduces students to the subject of microeconomics, drawing on applications from cities to illustrate introductory concepts such as demand, supply and externalities. We will use economic theory to investigate the phenomenon of cities. We study both ancient and modern cities to determine why cities form. Then, we explore the success and failures of cities at fulfilling the purposes of their formation. Finally, we discuss how cities should be managed to achieve “greatness.”

Preclusion/ Prerequisite

NIL

Lecturer

Timothy Wong, Senior Lecturer, timwong@nus.edu.sg

Course Assessment

Assessments		Assessment deadlines
In-class participation	20%	N/A
In-class quizzes	50%	8, 15 and 18 July
Essay	10%	22 July
Group Presentation	20%	18 July
Total for CA:	100%	

- In-class participation (20%): Students assessed based on the quality of their contributions to class discussions and during field trips.
- In-class quizzes (50%): Three in-class quizzes on microeconomic theory (15%, 15% and 20% respectively).
- Essays (10%): One essay on an urban topic
- Group Presentation (20%): One 15-minute group presentation on a field trip

Course Topics

Week	Day	Topic	Session Activities
1	Friday, 4 th July	Introduction to Microeconomics I: Trade, Demand and Supply	
2	Tuesday, 8 th July	Introduction to Microeconomics II: Perfect Competition	In-class quiz #1
	Wednesday, 9 th July	Field Trip to Pasir Panjang or Singapore City Gallery	
	Thursday, 10 th July	Introduction to Microeconomics III: Monopoly	
	Friday, 11 th July	Why Do Cities Exist?	
3	Tuesday, 15 th July	Urban Market Failures: Congestion, Pollution and Segregation	In-class quiz #2 Field Trip to Geylang (Group 1)
	Wednesday, 16 th July	Urban Market Failures: Health, Safety and Conservation	Field Trip to Geylang (Group 2)
	Thursday, 17 th July	No class	
	Friday, 18 th July	Group Presentations	In-class quiz #3

Reading List

NIL