

GEOGRAPHY AND PLANNING



GPHY 370 – Special Topics in Human Geography: Geographies of Growth and Decline

Course Instructor	Maxwell Hartt		Email: m.hartt@queensu.ca
Office	Mackintosh-Corry Hall E324		
Contact Time	Two 1.5 hour sessions per week		
Format	Lectures and videos; guest presentations; in-class exercises		
Class Assessment	Class participation	20%	
	Midterm test	30%	
	Term paper	35%	
	Presentation	15%	

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, a student should be able to:

1. Identify and describe major economic and demographic trends at multiple spatial scales
2. Explain conceptual models of growth and decline
3. Critically review academic literature and public policy
4. Present and analyze complex concepts 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 and definitions of shrinking and declining cities, causes and effects of urban shrinkage and decline; perceptions of and responses to urban decline, reversing and managing decline, and post-growth futures. Topics will be discussed in a range of North American and international contexts, particularly in the Global North. 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.

SELECT 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*. Vancouver: 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.