Course Content
Some courses are like classical music concerts -- polished, highly structured, tight. Urban Systems will be more like a concert by the Grateful Dead or Phish. This will be the second time I’ve taught the course, and the content and approach are still evolving -- so expect lots of improvisation.

The unifying theme of the course is the city as a crucial unit of analysis that fits in between the nation-state and the business, and shares attributes with both. The number of people living in cities is increasing at an extraordinary rate. It took 11,000 years to get 3.5 billion people into cities, but in the next 100 years alone, that number will more than double. By the end of this century, between 7 and 8 billion people will call cities home. This explosion in the world’s urban population presents us with a truly historic opportunity. We may never again be so well-positioned to include everyone on earth in the dynamic of rapid progress that until now has been available to relatively few.

In a macroeconomics course, you implicitly adopt the perspective of the president or prime minister who leads a nation. In a strategy course, you implicitly adopt the perspective of the CEO who leads a business. In this course, you will look at leadership from the perspective of a mayor. Doing so offers a new window into some of the deepest questions in both academic social science and practical leadership:

- Why is it that individuals achieve more by cooperating in large social groups?
- Why is it so difficult to sustain both cooperation and change?
- How do we resolve the tension between the interests of the individual and the group?
- What mix of hierarchical control and decentralized action leads to effective cooperation?

Anyone who is part of any social group that wants to accomplish something -- the founder of a small non-profit, an employee in a startup firm, a manager in a large multinational corporation, the leader of a nation -- needs to have workable answers to these questions -- and as we look at these questions through the eyes of a mayor, you will update your answers.

Course Requirements
- You will have to read a lot -- and will be expected to discuss the readings in class
- You must come to class
- You will have to write a paper, either on your own or as part of a group
Course Number: ECON-GB.3375.30
Location: KMC 3-110
Time: M 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Contact info
Paul Romer: promer@stern.nyu.edu
Office hours: By appointment. Start with an email.
Teaching Fellow: TBA

Evaluation
1. 25%: Questions to be answered before each class at the course Blackboard site
2. 25%: Class participation
3. 50%: Paper

Class Participation
Lectures and in-class discussion are a crucial part of the learning experience in this course. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Before each class, I’ll post some open-ended questions -- typically about the readings for that class, or perhaps about our discussion from the previous class -- on the course Blackboard site. At the beginning of class, I’ll call on people at random and ask them to respond to these questions. If for some reason you must miss a class, or if some emergency means that you will not be able to prepare your answers to the questions for the day, you will receive a zero for that session unless you send me an email before class.

Course Paper
Papers may be written individually or by groups of students; the expected length and depth of analysis will be greater for group efforts. Students must select paper topics by week 6 (April 1) provide detailed outlines by week 8 (April 15) and submit the paper itself by week 10 (April 29). Papers that don’t meet expectations may have to be revised and resubmitted by the end of week 12 (May 13, the last day of class.) To give a sense of the length and depth of analysis I expect, I will post an example of a particularly good paper from last year on the Blackboard site.

Course materials (9 books) - available in Kindle editions except where noted
1. Triumph of the City, Edward Glaeser
2. Planet of Cities, Shlomo Angel*
3. The Innovator’s Dilemma, Clayton Christensen
4. The Righteous Mind, Jonathan Haidt
5. The City that Became Safe, Franklin Zimring
6. The Chosen Few, Maristella Botticini and Zvi Eckstein
7. Why Nations Fail, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson
8. Fairness and Freedom, David Hacket Fischer
9. All That We Can Be, Charles Moskos and John Sibley Butler*

* Not available in a Kindle edition
Note: Additional articles will be assigned over the course of the term and made available on the course Blackboard site.

**Electronic Devices**
Following the standard Stern policy, students may not use electronic devices in the classroom. The only exception will be as an accommodation for a disability.

**Name Cards and Seating Assignments**
Students should bring a name card to class and display it. We will not have a seating chart, but by the second class each student should have selected a specific seat and should generally stick with it for the rest of the term.

**Late Arrival**
We’ll devote the first ten minutes of each class (6 pm - 6:10 pm) to an informal discussion of current events, or anything else that interests us. The lecture will begin promptly at 6:10 pm. Students should not enter the classroom after the lecture starts.

**Breaks**
We will take two class breaks, of precisely 10 minutes each, the first at approximately 7 pm and the second at approximately 8 pm. Except in emergencies, students should not leave the classroom except during these scheduled breaks.

**Honor Code**
Students will be expected to follow the Stern Honor Code which can be found here:

[http://www.stern.nyu.edu/UC/CurrentStudents/con_022122](http://www.stern.nyu.edu/UC/CurrentStudents/con_022122)

**Students with Disabilities**
Students with disabilities should register with NYU’s Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities. The center can make arrangements for appropriate accommodations.