

Open Call for Participation

International PhD course on Economic Geography

Main theme of the course of 2010:
Geography of knowledge, networks and clusters

Place
Utrecht, the Netherlands

Period
21 September 13.00 pm – 24 September 18.00 pm
9 November 13.00 pm – 12 November 18.00 pm

Local organizer:
Ron Boschma (Utrecht University)

Co-organizers:
Bjorn Asheim (Lund University)
Anders Malmberg (Uppsala University)

Guest lecturers:
Bjorn Asheim (Lund University)
Thomas Brenner (Marburg University)
Stefano Breschi (Bocconi University)
Ewald Engelen (University of Amsterdam)
Koen Frenken (Eindhoven University)
Gernot Grabher (HafenCity University Hamburg)
Simona Iammarino (LSE)
Anders Malmberg (Uppsala University)
Ron Martin (Cambridge University)
Andrea Morrison (Utrecht University)
Andres Rodriguez-Pose (LSE)
Simone Strambach (Marburg University)

Deadline of registration
21 June 2010

For more information
contact local organizer Ron Boschma: r.boschma @ geo.uu.nl

Content of course:

The course aims to provide an introduction to contemporary research perspectives and approaches in economic geography. The core questions of this discipline – related to the role of place and space in processes of economic development – have in recent years attracted interest not just from geographers but also from economists and other social scientists. This course will debate recent theoretical developments (with special attention to evolutionary and institutional economic geography), and will discuss recent advancements in methodology and empirical analysis in economic geography.

One of the main themes that is currently explored in economic geography is the study of the geography of knowledge, networks and clusters. There is debate whether geographical proximity can be considered a necessary and a sufficient condition for inter-firm knowledge transfer and innovation. Related to that, there is an increasing awareness that (different types of) networks enhance knowledge diffusion and innovation. The study of networks is a key topic in economic geography because it deals with the fundamental questions whether places or networks, and local or global networks matter for innovation. In addition, new tools in social network analysis have become available to analyse the role of (local) networks in regional development. Recently, social network analysis has also enriched the cluster literature. Moreover, the study of clusters has itself been revitalized. For instance, more attention is drawn to the economic effects of clusters (do they enhance or impede regional innovation?) and their dynamics over time.

This course takes up the following questions with respect to the main theme: to what extent need firms to be proximate in order to enhance innovation? What advantages do clusters provide to cluster firms? What kind of network configurations are conducive to regional innovation? And how do networks of innovation evolve over time? What kind of regional policy is needed to enhance regional innovation? And what kind of (institutional, evolutionary) theories are needed to accommodate these crucial questions?

It is these questions what makes economic geography such an exciting discipline. Currently, many social scientists besides economic geographers are working on these topics, making it a cross-disciplinary endeavour. It is fair to say that many theoretical, conceptual and empirical issues still remain to be solved. Leading experts that are currently working on these research frontiers will take up these challenges, and discuss the latest insights. Network analysis will take a prominent part, such as the analysis of patents and R&D collaboration. In addition, students will learn to use and apply social network analysis. PhD students will acquire the latest knowledge concerning these theoretical, methodological and empirical issues.

The organizers will participate actively in the course. Other leading experts will be invited to present the latest developments with respect to the geography of knowledge, networks and clusters, and provide comments on the research projects of the PhD students and the paper that PhD students have to write.

Who can apply?

PhD students in economic geography and human geography, as well as PhD students in related disciplines such as economics and social sciences

Attendance:

maximum of 25 PhD students

PhD students:

Each PhD student will get 45 minutes to present and discuss his/her PhD project (20 minutes presentation, 25 minutes discussion). A senior researcher and a PhD student will act as discussants for each PhD project.

Each PhD student has to select a topic among the ones that are addressed in the first September meeting and write a paper on that topic (max. 5,000 words). This paper has to be submitted to the local organizer a week before the November meeting. During the November meeting, the student will get feedback from a senior researcher and receive a grade, if sufficient.

Course fee:

300 euro, excluding expenditures concerning accommodation costs, travel costs and lunches/dinners

Registration

Deadline of registration: 21 June 2010

Potential candidates of the course should provide the following information:

- (1) name and affiliation
- (2) in which year did you start your PhD
- (3) supervisors
- (4) summary of own PhD project of at least 2 pages (1,000 words)

Please register by email to the local organizer: r.boschma @ geo.uu.nl Applicants will be informed about their participation on 1 July 2010 at the latest.