Course goals:

1. Gain knowledge of recent rigorous economics research on migration (international and domestic), spatial economics, and urban transportation.
2. Understand the key econometric problems with analyzing outcomes for movers (e.g. migrants) and solutions (e.g. randomization).
3. Learn to analyze the workhorse discrete choice models and how they are used to describe how people make spatial choices.
4. Get hands-on experience with big data that describes human mobility.

Course format:

Lecture format with active student participation. Lectures introduce new concepts and study many applications. Lecture occasionally include "break-out" time for group discussion. Section time is used to review key technical concepts (theory models and econometric tools) and provide support for problem sets.

Typical enrollees:

Upper-class economics concentrators, as well as other concentrations (applied math, statistics, etc.). Others with a strong interest in the content matter (migration, urban, transportation) have also enrolled in the past.

The formal pre-requisites are Economics 1010a or 1011a or permission of the instructors. Familiarity with econometrics (at the level of economics 1123 or 1126) is also required.

Here are some points intended to help you determine if you are prepared to take this course

- We will dive right into discussing results from regression tables (with only a short recap)
- The course has an important component focused on a few theoretical models (especially discrete choice models) and how to connect these models to regression analysis and other types of estimators (e.g. logit).

If you have any questions about these requirements, please feel free to reach out (gkreindler@g.harvard.edu) with questions. It will be useful to share an unofficial transcript or list of courses.

When is course typically offered?

Fall semester. (Likely not offered 2025-26)

What can students expect from you as an instructor?

My objective is to make classes a welcoming environment where all students feel comfortable engaging in open and constructive discussions, questions and debate. This is how true learning happens. I ask you to support this by taking part and by honoring the perspectives of your peers.

I encourage you sign up to office hours to get a chance to know you and discuss anything broadly related to the course topics (and beyond).

Assignments and grading:

- (40%) Four problem sets (every two weeks). They are based on material from lectures, readings, and sections.
- (20%) Midterm exam.
  - The in-class exam will take place in mid-October and it will cover materials from lectures, sections, readings, and problem sets, up to that point.
- (30%) Final exam.
  - The in-class exam will cover materials from the entire class (lectures, sections, readings, and problem sets).
  - If your grade for the final is higher than your midterm grade, the final will supersede the midterm and it will account for 50% of the final grade for the class.
- (10%) Class participation.

Sample reading list:

Follow this link for the reading list from last year: **Live Reading List**

Past syllabus:

Follow this link for the syllabus for fall 2024: **Live Syllabus**

Absence and late work policies:

Class participation (lecture, section) accounts for 10% of the grade. Attendance is not recorded.

Late problem sets will not be accepted, and there are no exceptions to this policy. To accommodate any unanticipated events such as illness, or conflicts in your schedule, the problem set with your lowest score will automatically be dropped.