

# Greeting and Introductory Remarks

Gregory H. Wassall, Professor of Economics  
Northeastern University  
g.wassall@neu.edu

## For Those of You Who Don't Know Us Yet

- Northeastern University is located in the center of Boston, Massachusetts.
- We're one of the 10 largest private universities in the United States, with a current FTE enrollment of 25,484.
- We receive almost \$100 million annually in research funding.



## More on Northeastern University

- In the most widely-cited ranking of national U.S. research universities we are ranked #69. We have leapfrogged past almost 100 universities in this ranking over the past 15 years. This is unprecedented.



# The Department of Economics

- We offer two undergraduate degree programs, and Master's and PhD degree programs.
- We have about 400 undergraduate majors.
- We have about 100 graduate students; roughly half come from outside the United States.



# The Department of Economics II

- This fall we are launching an on-line Master's degree program in Commerce and Economic Development.
- It is designed to provide skills in implementing economic development to an international audience of graduate students.
- More information can be found at <http://cps.neu.edu/degree-programs/graduate/masters-degrees/masters-economic-development.php>.



## Economics at Northeastern and the University of Reggio Calabria

- Beginning in the 1980s and continuing for over a decade, a number of students from the University of Reggio Calabria went on to graduate study in the Economics Department at Northeastern.
- Most of these students – about 20 - received Master of Science degrees in Economic Policy and Planning.
- Two went on to earn a PhD degree.
- Several are still affiliated with the University of Reggio Calabria.



## Other Resources Relevant to this Project

- The Center for Labor Market Studies
- The Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy
- Northeastern's College of Business Administration
  
- Other linkages
  - Enterprise Center at Louisiana Tech University
  - Boston University Arts Administration Program

# Center for Labor Market Studies

- The Center for Labor Market Studies is an applied research, evaluation, and policy-oriented technical assistance unit located within the Department of Economics of Northeastern University.
- CLMS activities include conducting sponsored and other research on labor market developments, trends and problems and the outcomes
- Its director, Professor Andy Sum, has long been associated with our former M.S. program in Economics, and with former students from Reggio Calabria.
- Its recent research has included:
  - Workforce development
  - Issues of transitioning to the labor force for less-educated young adults, especially adult men.

## Dukakis Center for Urban and Regional Policy

- The Dukakis Center conducts interdisciplinary research to identify and implement solutions to challenges facing urban areas.
- It often works with scholars outside Northeastern University.
- Its members have conducted research on
  - Housing policy
  - Transportation policy
  - A variety of urban/regional issues in the Greater Boston area

# College of Business Administration

- Their MBA program offers graduate concentrations that may be of interest.
- Certificate program in Supply Chain Management.
  - Focuses on current best practices through a combination of class discussion, individual research projects, case analysis, and interaction with supply chain management professionals
- Development Projects
  - They are Northeastern University's new thrust in experiential learning and technology commercialization. They have been developed to provide our students with as real an entrepreneurial experience as is possible within a university setting:
- Certificate program in technological entrepreneurship.
  - Hands-on instruction in developing a free-standing startup organization.

## Other Linkages

- Enterprise Center at Louisiana Tech University
  - It serves as an incubator and facilitator in starting new business in Northern Louisiana.
  - We will have the use of their expertise while undertaking our project.
- Boston University Arts Administration Program
  - It has engaged in a collaborative effort with the Economics Department to study the Adams Grant program in Massachusetts (more later)

## Some Points of Interest

- Business Improvement Districts
- Business Incubators
- Cultural Economic Zones

# Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

- The inability of municipal governments to provide public services to business districts has often led to decline of older downtown areas.
- BIDs are a response to this trend, levying assessments for specific improvements and additional services beyond which local governments can reasonably provide.
- BIDs therefore utilize collective action to raise the funds to fulfill the unmet demand for public services
- A BID is an organizing and financing mechanism used by property owners and merchants to determine the future of their retail, commercial and industrial areas.
- The BID is based on state and local law, which permits property owners and merchants to band together to use the city's tax collection powers to assess properties, thereby creating a reliable, multi-year source of funds for economic development.
- These funds are collected by the city and returned in their entirety to the BID and are used for supplemental services.

## Business Improvement Districts II

- Although there are many BIDs, particularly in North America, they tend to share the same components.
- These funds are collected by the city and returned in their entirety to the BID and are used for
  - supplemental services (maintenance, sanitation, security, promotions and special events)
  - capital improvements beyond those services and improvements provided by the municipal government (street furniture, trees, signage, special lighting).
- In essence, the program is one of self-help through self-assessment and business-led management.

# Business Incubators

- Locations that house several new business.
- Besides space they provide a variety of services:
  - Low rents
  - Shared business services
  - Business development training
  - Financial assistance
  - Networking opportunities
- Most business incubators have entrance requirements, and a predetermined length of residence.
- Financing may be drawn from
  - Federal and local government and non-profits
  - Equity positions with new businesses

# Cultural Economic Development Zones

- Several years ago, the state of Massachusetts established the John and Abigail Adams Arts Grant Program.
- This program provides grant funding to communities who have created projects that employ the arts and culture to spur local economic development.
- The program awarded its first grants in 2005 and since that time has funded 23-48 grants each year.
- This program, the oldest and most comprehensive in United States, has provided funding to a wide variety of cities and towns – large and small; inland and coastal; urban and rural – representing every region of the Commonwealth.

# Cultural Economic Development Zones II

- The John and Abigail Adams Arts Program fosters and promotes the use of cultural assets as an economic development tool.
- From their website: “The goal of the program is to maximize the economic impact of the cultural sector in Massachusetts by funding initiatives that connect artists and cultural organizations to local and state economic development efforts, nurture new arts and cultural enterprise development, raise awareness of the Commonwealth’s cultural products, and increase arts and cultural visitors to the state.”
- Can art and culture be used as a development tool in cities with cultural endowments? Can it work elsewhere?