

University of Utah
Department of Economics

Economics 1740 Section 1: US Economic History
Spring 2014 W 6:00 – 9:00 PM
(3 Credits, Fulfills American Institutions (AI) Requirement)

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Office: OSH, Room: 209
Office Hours: Monday, 1 PM - 2 PM; other times by appointment

The course explores the economic and social history of the United States from the colonial period to the present day. While the course is broad in scope, we will pay special attention to particular topics. These topics include changes in US labor markets, changes in living standards, the growth of income inequality in the US, and if time permits, the evolution of the US macroeconomy.

The course will rely both on lectures and class discussions. The class setup will be to begin each class with a lecture and close with a class discussion to memorialize the assigned readings. Student participation is not only encouraged but required to earn full participation points.

Course objectives:

By the end of the semester, a student who is successful in this course should gain understanding of:

1. The sources of economic growth in the US, including natural resource endowments, innovation and technological change, and international trade (including innovations in communication and transportation),
2. The effects of economic growth for the US population as a whole,
3. The evolution of US government policy as it relates to the economy,
4. The application of historical insights to contemporary policy debates.

Texts and Other Materials:

There is one required text that you should purchase:

- Walton and Rockoff, History of the American Economy, 12th Edition. OH: Cengage, 2009.

Note that I will post copies of graphs, lecture outlines, and class announcements online on the course Canvas site. Even if you make use of these outlines, it will still be necessary for you to come to class to take good notes and participate in class discussions to earn full participation points. We will have a roll call every class to keep track of class participation.

Disability Services:

The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and with me to make arrangements for accommodations.

Requirements and Grading:

1. Exams

There will be three non-cumulative exams. All exams will consist of a mix of multiple choice and short answers. In very rare cases of extreme, unavoidable, and documented scheduling conflicts, individual students may arrange to take exams early, and these arrangements must be made well in advance of the scheduled exam time. Late exams may be given in cases of documented medical or other emergency. Otherwise, failure to take an exam at the scheduled time will result in a 0 for the exam.

2. Canvas Discussions

Some weeks you are required to participate in an online discussion session on Canvas. You are required to post a 600 words response post to the discussion question posted on Canvas. Each post is worth 10 points.

Some general writing rules apply to the assignment. First, your grade will be based in part on whether or not you expressed yourself clearly. Spelling, grammar, and organization matter. **Second, if you use material from any source, you must clearly cite your source at the end of your response post, and if you directly quote any material, you must clearly indicate what has been quoted (along with indicating your source).** If you quote material without clearly indicating so, you will receive a 0 for the assignment. You will have a week to respond to the discussion and you may **NOT** submit response posts late.

Weighting of Assignments & Exams:

Exam 1	25%
Exam 2	25%
Exam 3	25%
Discussion Posts	20%
Participation	5%

Grade Scale

A	92+
A-	90 - 91
B+	88 - 89
B	82 - 87
B-	80 - 81
C+	75 - 79
C	70 - 74
C-	65 - 69
D+	63 - 64
D	57 - 62
D-	55 - 56
E	< 55

Class Outline

Note that the precise schedule of topics may change slightly, but exam dates and assignment due dates are very unlikely to change. Any change in exam dates or due dates will be announced well ahead of time. Also note that the W+R readings refer to the Walton and Rockoff text and are listed by their chapter number in the 11th and 12th editions of the book.

Jan 8th Introduction

Jan 15th Ch. 2 - 4 Colonial Era

Jan 22nd Ch. 6 - 7 The Birth of a Nation

Discussion 1 due on Canvas

Jan 29th Ch. 8 - 9 Westward Migration

Feb 5th Exam 1

Feb 12th Ch. 10 - 11 Emergence of the Factory System

Feb 19th Ch. 13 - 14 Civil War and Post-Civil War

Discussion 2 due on Canvas

Feb 26st Ch. 15 - 16 Agriculture and Railroads

Mar 5th Ch. 17 - 18 Industrialization

Discussion 3 due on Canvas

Mar 19th Ch. 20 - 22 Economic Boom

Mar 26th Exam 2

April 2nd Ch. 23 The Great Depression

April 9th Ch. 24 New Deal

Discussion 4 due on Canvas

April 16th Ch. 25 WWII

April 23rd **Exam 3**

Special Note: This syllabus is intended to provide general information about the class and is subject to change. Adjustments or changes will be posted as announcements on the course's Canvas page.