

# US Economic History

3 Credits, Fulfills American Institutions (AI) Requirement

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**Econ 1740-090**

**Meets:** online

**Office Hours:** online (or by appointment)

## Course description:

This course examines 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 direct special attention to particular topics. These topics include changes in US labor markets, changes in living standards (and their measurement), and the history of female and minority labor.

## Course objectives:

By the end of the semester, a student who is successful in this course will have gained an understanding of

1. The sources of economic growth in the US, including natural resource endowments, innovation and technological change, institutional change, and intra- and international trade (including innovations in communication and transportation),
2. The effects of economic growth for the US population as a whole and for sub-populations, including the evolution of living standards, changes in the nature of work, and the increasing role of markets in people's lives,
3. The measurement of important economic concepts and variables, including gross domestic product, income, wealth, unemployment, and inflation,
4. The evolution of US government policy as it relates to the economy, including the growth of the public sector over time, the regulation of the labor market (including the operation and abolition of slavery and the regulation of immigration), and the use of fiscal and monetary policy to mitigate the harmful effects of economic downturns, and
5. The application of historical insights to contemporary policy debates.

## Texts and Other Materials:

- America: The Story of Us. (This is a video series we will be watching. Since there is no book, I would recommend you just purchase access to this series through Amazon, DVD or other source. It is available on YouTube, however the videos are in pieces, and more difficult for you to watch.)
- **OPTIONAL:** Walton and Rockoff, History of the American Economy, 11th EDITION. OH: Cengage, 2010. This is the book I base my lectures on, and while it is not required, some of you may find it helpful or interesting to read for more details.

Each week we will be covering material about the History of the American Economy. You are expected to watch the video lectures I post, and then you will take a short quiz on each lecture. You will then watch a video that is related to the material covered in the text/lectures. At the end of each week, you will write a one-page reaction paper to the material we've covered that week.

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:

### **WEEKLY QUIZZES** (approx. 60 points \*\*this may change\*\*)

Each week you will take a short (10 question, 5 point) quiz based on the material in the lectures. The quiz will be timed (12 minutes for each quiz). The quizzes are closed book/note/internet. You should certainly be able to answer the questions from the lectures I post, so this shouldn't be an issue anyway!

### **REACTION PAPERS** (100 points + 10 possible extra credit points)

Each week you will watch a video online (approx. 45 min). You are required to submit a one-page reaction paper to these videos. Each reaction is worth 10 points: 5 points is for content and 5 points for format (to be explained later). The reactions must be typed, double spaced, 12 pt standard font (Times New Roman or Arial), 1" margins and submitted to Canvas no later than midnight on the Sunday of that week.

**Content:** You will be provided with prompts (up until the first exam), beforehand, to allow you to think about the response as you watch the video. These prompts will be your guide for what to write. You are expected to put thought in your answers and respond intelligibly. You are encouraged to support your answers with material from the video and lecture. **You must clearly indicate your source, and if you directly quote any material, you must clearly indicate what has been quoted along with indicating the source of the quoted material.** If you quote material without clearly indicating so, you will receive a 0 for the assignment and a warning. If it happens a second time, I will pursue action in accordance with the college. (See: Academic integrity Policy, <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>)

**Format:** Although these reactions are only one page, you are expected to submit well-written papers. These will be graded not only on the thoughts submitted, but also on grammar and cohesiveness.

\*Note: Late papers may be accepted, at a penalty. The penalty is as follows: 2 less total possible points for each day, (i.e. 1 day late = 8 points possible, 2 days = 6 points possible, etc.)

### **EXAMS** (300 points)

There will be three exams: two midterms and a final. **The first midterm exam will be available from Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The second midterm will be available from Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> – Sunday April 5<sup>th</sup>. The final exam will be available from Wednesday April 22<sup>nd</sup> – Friday May 10<sup>th</sup>.** Each exam is worth 100 points. The two midterm exams will consist of a mix of multiple choice and short essay questions. On these, you are expected to work alone, and they are timed. The final is not cumulative and will be all short essay questions. You may discuss these questions with other students, however you must all submit your own answers. This is not timed.

\*All exams must be taken during the week they are assigned. You will want to plan your time accordingly so you are able to complete the exam by the due date. Exams may not be taken before the week they are assigned either. 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.

\*\* **You are expected to work alone, without the use of any materials (including the internet) on both Exam 1 and Exam 2.** Any instances of cheating or plagiarism will result in a zero for the entire exam (both the multiple choice and essay question portions).

**PARTICIPATION** (approx. 140 points)

I expect you to participate in weekly discussions online. Each week you will post online about a topic that you found most interesting for the week. You will receive **4 points for the post**.

You are also required to respond to at least two posts that other students have posted. You will receive **3 points for each response**. You may respond to as many as you want, and I highly encourage discussions of this sort, but you are required to respond to three.

**RESEARCH PAPER** (100 points)

You will write a paper relevant to the history of the US Economy. I have a list of topics that you can choose from. If there is something you would like to do that is not on the list, I have to approve the topic before you proceed. Paper guidelines will be provided the second week of class, and you will choose your topics by then end of the second week. I will post the topics list on Canvas for you to look over in advance. Due dates are listed in the guidelines that will be provided and I will remind you along the way as well.

**EXTRA CREDIT**

After each exam, you will have the opportunity to watch a video for up to 10 points extra credit.

In addition, you are required to submit 10 of the 11 assigned reaction papers. You have the option to do all 11 reaction papers, for an additional 10 points extra credit.

There will be no other extra credit offered.

<u>Grading of assignments:</u>		<u>Grade Scale</u>	
Exams (100 points each)	300 points	A: 92+	C: 70 – 74.9
Participation (approx.)	140 points	A-: 90 - 91.9	C-: 65 – 69.9
Reading quizzes (approx.)	60 points	B+: 88 - 89.9	D+: 63 – 64.9
Reaction papers	100 points	B: 82 - 87.9	D: 57 – 62.9
Research paper	100 points	B-: 80 - 81.9	D-: 55 – 56.9
-----		C+: 75 - 79.9	E: < 55
Total	(approx.) 700 points		

Note that I do not round grades, and I do not curve.

**Other things to keep in mind:**

1) While this class is online, you are expected to stay on top of all material. The material is only available for the week that it is covered. I will be available almost any time of day or night to answer questions. While this is an online class, email (and not the Canvas messages) is the best way to get a hold of me. I am also perfectly happy to received texts – this is the fastest way to find me!

- 2) Canvas will be utilized for submitting all of the assignments as well as for posting grades. You may not email me any assignments, unless I say otherwise. You are responsible for monitoring your grades on Canvas that are posted throughout the semester and making me aware of any discrepancies or concerns on or before the last day of class. No changes will be made after Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014, to any grades on assignments, exams, etc., posted to or recorded on Canvas prior to that date.
- 3) Make-up assignments will be given at the discretion of the instructor, only for very serious medical reasons, and **only if cleared in advance.**
- 4) You are expected to post and respond to discussions each week. While you are not required to attend an actual classroom, you must plan to spend time in the “virtual classroom” (i.e. Canvas) on a regular basis. I will be posting announcements, assignments, and grades all online, and you are responsible for staying on top of the information I post. Do not think that because this is an online class, it will be any less work. I am not expecting anything additional from when I teach this class on campus, but the workload is also not any less.

#### **Schedule:**

While it is possible the schedule could change, it is unlikely. The chapters listed are the chapters we will cover that week, and it is encouraged to read the chapters early in the week. Additional information will be provided on Canvas.

#### **Section 1**

Week 1: Mon Jan 12 <sup>th</sup> – Sun Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	Introductions/Explanations/Discussion	
Week 2: Mon Jan 19 <sup>th</sup> – Sun Jan 25 <sup>th</sup> <b>**Topics due**</b>	“Rebels”	(Chapters 2 – 5)
Week 3: Mon Jan 26 <sup>th</sup> – Sun Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>	“Revolution”	(Chapters 6 & 7)
Week 4: Mon Feb 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Sun Feb 8 <sup>th</sup>	“Westward”	(Chapters 8 – 12)
Week 5: Mon Feb 9 <sup>th</sup> – Sun Feb 15 <sup>th</sup>	“Division”	(Chapters 13 & 14)
Week 6: Mon Feb 16 <sup>th</sup> – Sun Feb 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Exam 1</b>	(EC1: “Civil War”)

#### **Section 2**

Week 7: Mon Feb 23 <sup>rd</sup> – Sun Mar 1 <sup>st</sup> <b>**Abstract due**</b>	“Heartland”	(Chapters 15 & 16)
Week 8: Mon Mar 2 <sup>nd</sup> – Sun Mar 8 <sup>th</sup>	“Cities”	(Chapters 17 & 18)

Week 9: Mon Mar 9<sup>th</sup> – Sun Mar 15<sup>th</sup> “Boom” (Chapters 19, 20 &22)  
**\*\*Annotated Bibliography due\*\***

Week 10: Mon Mar 16<sup>th</sup> – Sun Mar 22<sup>nd</sup> **Spring Break**

Week 11: Mon Mar 23<sup>rd</sup> – Sunday Mar 29<sup>th</sup> “Bust” (Chapters 23 & 24)

Week 12: Mon Mar 30<sup>th</sup> – Sun Apr 5<sup>th</sup> **Exam 2** (EC2: Fed 911)

\*This video is not from the series

### **Section 3**

Week 13: Mon Apr 6<sup>th</sup> – Sun Apr 12<sup>th</sup> “WWII” (Chapter 25)

Week 14: Mon Apr 13<sup>th</sup> – Sun Apr 19<sup>th</sup> “Superpower” (Chapter 26)

Week 15: Mon Apr 20<sup>th</sup> – Sunday Apr 26<sup>th</sup> Survey (Chapters 27, 28 & 29)

\*This is not a video. I will post a survey on Canvas for you to fill out.

Week 16: Mon Apr 27<sup>th</sup> – Sun May 3<sup>rd</sup> (Project due)

**\*\*Paper and PowerPoint due\*\***

**Final: Wed Apr 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sun May 10<sup>th</sup> Final Exam** (EC3: “Millennium)

**\*\*PPT reviews due\*\***

**\*\*Note I have the final available before the start of finals week! This way you have time to get it done before you study for your other finals, if you choose. Or you have time to wait and finish it after, since it’s not due till the following Sunday (by midnight).**