

## AMERICAN ECONOMIC HISTORY

Economics 2102  
Spring 2023  
Office Hours: 3:30 pm -4:45 pm M and W,  
and by appt.

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Required Texts: An Economic History of the United States: From 1607 to the Present Ronald E. Seavoy (S)

Historical Perspectives on the American Economy (Selected Readings) Robert Whaples and Dianne Betts (Editors) (W & B)

Additional articles and readings will be assigned during the course.

**Course Scope and Description:** This course examines the history of the American economy. We will first explore our economic and institutional roots as a British Colony, with an emphasis on British institutions as they evolved before and concurrently with the colonization of the (North) American continent. From there, we will explore the economic developments and forces of economic growth (and contraction) occurring in America from the Colonial Period (1607-1775), through the National or Antebellum Period (1783-1861), the Civil War, the Postbellum Period (1865-1910), World War I to World War II (1914-1945) and the post-World War II period (1945 – present).

**Grading:** There will be two mid term examinations (each worth 30% of grade) and a (cumulative) final exam (40% of grade). *The subject matter coverage of each of the exams will be the class materials (lectures, readings etc.) covered up to the date of the exam (which may or may not, be reflective of the topics and readings set forth below.) The exams are cumulative.* Class participation and **extraordinary** achievement **may** be worth up to 10% of the grade. Students must take the exams when scheduled, unless other arrangements have been made prior to the exam.

The following is a **tentative** week-by-week listing of concepts and topics to be discussed and reading assignments.

Week 1: Intellectual, Political and Institutional Background  
S- Ch. 1  
W&B – Reading No. 1  
Sokoloff and Engerman, “Institutions, Factor Endowments, and Paths of Development in the New World”  
  
Handout No. 1 (British Antecedents and Colonial Period)

Weeks 2 -4: The Colonial Period

S- Chs. 2-4  
W&B – Readings Nos. 2-4

Thomas, “A Quantitative Approach to the Study of the Effects of British Imperial Policy on Colonial Welfare”  
Sawyer, “The Navigation Acts Revisited”

Weeks 5-7:

The Antebellum Period: The North Thesis, Transportation, Early Industrialization, Banking and Cotton  
S- Chs. 5-7  
Handout Nos. 2 and 3 (Antebellum Period)  
Declaration of Independence and Constitution  
Hurst, “Law and the Conditions of Freedom in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century,”  
Chapter 1: Release of Energy  
Wallis, “Constitutions, Corporations and Corruption: American States and Constitutional Change, 1842-1852”  
Selected U.S. Supreme Court Opinions

### **Midterm Examination February 24th (Week 6)**

Weeks 7-8:

The Political Economy of Slavery and the Conflict in Land Policies  
S-Ch. 8  
W&B – Readings Nos. 5-7  
Fogel and Engerman, “Time on the Cross” selected excerpts  
Conrad and Meyer, “The Economics of Slavery in the Antebellum South”  
Anderson and Gallman, “Slaves as Fixed Capital: Slave Labor and Southern Economic Development”

- Week 9                      Spring Break (March 12-18)
- Week 10                     The Civil War and its Economic Consequences  
S- Ch. 9
- Weeks 11-13                The Postbellum Period and the Transformation of the American  
Economy: The Rise of Big Business and the Federal Government  
S- Chs. 10-13  
W&B – Readings Nos. 8-15  
Handout Nos. 4 and 5 (Postbellum Period)  
McCurdy, “American Law and the Marketing Structure of the  
Large Corporation: 1875-1900”  
Lamoreaux, “The Great Merger Movement in American Business,  
1895-1904” selected excerpts

**Midterm Examination March 31<sup>st</sup> (Week 11)**

- Weeks 13-14:              The Interwar Period, the Great Depression and the Extension of the  
State  
S- Ch. 14  
W&B – Readings Nos. 18-19  
  
Romer, “What Ended the Great Depression?”
- Week 15:                    Continuation of The Interwar Period, the Great Depression and the  
Extension of the State; Post World War II, Evolution of the  
Modern Economy and the Political Economy of the International  
System  
  
S- Ch.15  
W&B – Readings No.17

**Final Examination Date: TBA**

**Grading Scale:**

The course grading scale is as follows:

Grade	Letter Grade	GPA
92-100	A	4.0
90-91	A-	3.7
87-89	B+	3.3
82-86	B	3.0
80-81	B-	2.7
77-79	C+	2.3
72-76	C	2.0
70-71	C-	1.7
67-69	D+	1.3
62-66	D	1.0
60-61	D-	0.7
<60	F	0.0

**Help and Resources:**

In addition to my office hours, the Economics Department offers free one-on-one tutoring for all student in principles of economics classes. Even though this is an upper division class, should any of you have any “principles questions,” please feel free to take advantage of this resource.

**For support for HuskyCT:**

Digital Learning Center, Level One of Homer Babbidge Library.

Phone: (860) 486-1187

Website: <http://dlc.uconn.edu>

### **Accommodations:**

The Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) at UConn provides accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you wish to request academic accommodations and have not contacted the CSD, please do so as soon as possible. The CSD is located in Wilbur Cross, Room 204 and can be reached at (860) 486-2020 or at [csd@uconn.edu](mailto:csd@uconn.edu).

Detailed information regarding the accommodations process is also available on their website at [www.csd.uconn.edu](http://www.csd.uconn.edu).

### **Student Responsibilities:**

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. This section provides a brief overview to important standards, policies and resources.

### **Student Code:**

You are responsible for acting in accordance with the [University of Connecticut's Student Code](http://www.community.uconn.edu/student_code.html), available at [http://www.community.uconn.edu/student\\_code.html](http://www.community.uconn.edu/student_code.html). Review and become familiar with these expectations. In particular, make sure you have read the section that applies to you on Academic Integrity:

- [Academic Integrity in Undergraduate Education and Research](#)

Cheating and plagiarism are taken very seriously at the University of Connecticut. ***As a student, it is your personal responsibility to avoid engaging in any conduct that would constitute academic misconduct (or plagiarism.) If it is determined that you have engaged in academic misconduct, such as, for example, cheating on any academic assignment (like an exam or quiz) which would include fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in such academic assignment, or using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of that academic assignment in question, you may be subject to academic penalties, including, without limitation, failing the class.***

If you need more information about the subject of plagiarism, use the following resources:

- [Plagiarism: How to Recognize it and How to Avoid It](#)
- [University of Connecticut Libraries' Student Instruction](#) (includes research, citing and writing resources)

### **Copyright:**

Copyrighted materials within the course are only for the use of students enrolled in the course for purposes associated with this course and may not be retained or further disseminated.

### **Netiquette and Communication:**

At all times, course communication with fellow students and the instructor are to be professional and courteous. It is expected that you proofread all your written communication, including discussion posts, assignment submissions, and mail messages. If you are new to online learning or need a netiquette refresher, please look at this guide titled, The Core Rules of Netiquette.

### **Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence:**

The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate amorous relationships can undermine the University’s mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate amorous relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University. Additionally, to protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees (including faculty) are required to report sexual assaults, intimate partner violence, and/or stalking involving a student that they witness or are told about to the Office of Institutional Equity. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help.

### **Statement on Absences from Class Due to Religious Observances and Extra-Curricular Activities:**

Faculty and instructors are strongly encouraged to make reasonable accommodations in response to student requests to complete work missed by absence resulting from religious observances or participation in extra-curricular activities that enrich their experience, support their scholarly development, and benefit the university community. Examples include participation in scholarly presentations, performing arts, and intercollegiate sports, when the participation is at the request of, or coordinated by, a University official. Such accommodations should be made in ways that do not dilute or preclude the requirements or learning outcomes for the course. Students anticipating such a conflict should inform their instructor in writing within the first three weeks of the semester, and prior to the anticipated absence, and should take the initiative to work out with the

instructor a schedule for making up missed work. For conflicts with final examinations, students should contact the Office of the Dean of Students.