

Syllabus - Spring, 2024

Course and Instructor Information

Course Title: Honors Core: Deep Roots of Modern Societies

Credits: 3

Prerequisites: ECON 2201, ECON 2202, ECON 2211Q, or ECON 2212Q.

Restrictions: Not open for credit to students who are currently enrolled in or who have passed ECON 2103

Professor: Metin Coşgel

Email: Metin.Cosgel@UConn.edu

Web: www.cosgel.uconn.edu

Office Hours/Availability: 10-10:45 am on Thursdays, and by appointment.

Textbooks

There are two required textbooks for this course:

1. Galor, Oded. 2022. *The Journey of Humanity*, Penguin.
2. Diamond, Jared. 1997. *Guns, Germs, Steel*. Norton and Company.

In addition, we'll use various supplementary videos and journal articles, also required, available in [HuskyCT](#).

Catalog Copy

Historical and comparative analysis of deep-rooted issues affecting modern societies. The evolution of societies and the origins of poverty, discrimination, conflict and war, income inequality, racism, gender roles, and other challenging issues.

Course Description

This course examines the sources of challenging issues facing modern societies, such as inequality, racism, sexism, armed conflict, and environmental crises. You will learn pathbreaking approaches that inform our understanding of these issues by revealing their historical roots and the channels that transmitted these roots to today.

The course will consist of three parts. In the first part, we will survey a brief economic history of the World, our long journey from a period in which human life was “nasty, brutish, and short,” to highly developed modern societies with vastly higher but unequal living standards. The second part will examine the origins of our journey by differentiating between the proximate reasons and deep roots of today’s problems and the channels of transmission between the past and present. We will study the relative importance of institutions, culture, geographic endowment, agricultural history, and human diversity. In the third part, we will apply these insights to examine the deep roots of some of the important problems facing modern societies.

Each student will choose a geographic region of the world and one topic from each of the three parts of the course. These choices will guide your individual research and exploration and be the basis for your writing and presentation assignments. You will have the opportunity to contribute to class discussion from the perspective of your region and topics.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the semester, the students will be able to:

1. Examine the roots of challenging issues facing modern societies.
2. Differentiate between proximate determinants and ultimately deeper, more fundamental factors that are rooted in long-term history.
3. Identify important historical events that have had persistent effects on economic development over time.
4. Investigate the evolution and deep historical roots of modern individual values and social institutions.
5. Analyze the channels that transmit the effects of historical events on today's economies.
6. Determine the relative importance of alternative channels that cause persistence and reversals.
7. Apply cutting edge methods of historical and comparative analysis to explore the economic history of a specific issue and region in detail.
8. Apply scientific standards of economic history to analyze important issues, communicate findings, and critique others.

Course Outline

The following is a brief list of topics to be covered in the course this semester. For details, see the Course Schedule and Reading List in [HuskyCT](#).

Part A: A Brief Economic History of the World: Journey towards Wealth and Inequality

First Steps, Stagnation
The Storm and Full Steam
Metamorphosis and Growth

Part B: The Origins

Proximate Causes vs. Deep Roots
Institutions
Culture
Geography
Neolithic Revolution
Genetic Diversity

Part C: Deep Roots of Modern Issues

Global Inequality
Racism
Sexism
Armed Conflict
Ecological and Environmental Crisis

Course Requirements and Grading

The following is a brief description of course requirements and grading. The details of each assignment will be discussed in class and made available in [HuskyCT](#).

Summary of Course Grading:

Course Components	Weight (%)
Midterm Exam	25
Presentation	25
Discussion	25
Final Exam	25

Exams

There will be a midterm examination and a final exam to test your knowledge of the basic themes of the course.

Presentation

You will be asked to choose a region and one of the topics covered in Part C for independent research, based on

your own interests. The presentation of research projects is an opportunity to share your ideas with fellow students in the class and to receive comments and suggestions. You will be graded for the quality of your presentation slides.

Discussion

Discussion will be key to your reflection process as a learner in this course. Following student presentations in Part C, you will post in the Discussion Forum to offer comments and suggestions on the research projects of your colleagues.

Grading Scale:

Grade	Letter Grade	GPA
95+	A	4.0
90+	A-	3.7
85+	B+	3.3
80+	B	3.0
78+	B-	2.7
75+	C+	2.3
70+	C	2.0
68+	C-	1.7
65+	D+	1.3
60+	D	1.0
55+	D-	0.7
<55	F	0.0

Due Dates and Late Policy

It is important to submit your assignments on time so that you can receive meaningful feedback from me. Discussion Forums in particular require that you submit your posts by the due dates so that you and your peers can participate in a dialogue about the topics we cover.

The deadlines for assignments are serious. Late submissions will lose a significant portion of the available points past the due date, as specified in the grading rubrics (available in HuskyCT).

Feedback and Grades

I will make every effort to provide feedback and grades in a timely manner. To keep track of your performance in the course, refer to My Grades in HuskyCT.

Student Responsibilities and Resources

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. Review these important [standards, policies and resources](#), which include:

- The Student Code
 - Academic Integrity
 - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism

- Copyrighted Materials
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

Students with Disabilities

The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let us know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the Center for Students with Disabilities, Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020 or <http://csd.uconn.edu/>.

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government.” (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from [Blackboard's website](#))

Software Requirements

The software/technical requirements for this course include:

- HuskyCT/Blackboard ([HuskyCT/ Blackboard Accessibility Statement](#), [HuskyCT/ Blackboard Privacy Policy](#))
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) ([Adobe Reader Accessibility Statement](#), [Adobe Reader Privacy Policy](#))
- Google Apps ([Google Apps @ UConn Accessibility](#), [Google for Education Privacy Policy](#))
- Microsoft Office (free to UConn students through uconn.onthehub.com) ([Microsoft Accessibility Statement](#), [Microsoft Privacy Statement](#))
- Dedicated access to high-speed internet with a minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps (4 Mbps or higher is recommended).

Help

[Technical and Academic Help](#) provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course is completely facilitated online using the learning management platform, [HuskyCT](#). If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through [HuskyTech](#). You also have [24x7 Course Support](#) including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the [Computer Technology Competencies](#) page for more information.

Evaluation of the Course

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the [Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness](#) (OIRE).