

## E/M 274: U.S. Economic History

Fall 2015

1:30-2:20 MTWF

Beck 115

Instructor: Jeff Owen

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Office Hours: M, W, F 9:00-10:00; M,T,W 2:30-3:20; or just stop by

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Course Description: Economic history examines historical questions through the application of economic theory. Ideally, economic history combines the best of economic and historic methodology, adding to our understanding of history and our ability to apply this understanding to current issues. In this class we will see how economic theory has contributed to our understanding of important historical questions. *Why and how did the Industrial Revolution happen? How did slavery impact the Southern economy? What caused the Great Depression?* We will also see how examining history can provide insight into current issues. *What makes some countries grow and while others do not? What role should government take in the economy?*

### Materials:

(1) Gary M. Walton and Hugh Rockoff, *History of the American Economy* (12<sup>th</sup> ed.). This will be the primary text used throughout the course. (Available in Bookmark.)

(2) John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*. This classic novel describes the struggles of a family during the Great Depression.

Additional supplementary reading will be assigned as the semester progresses

Course Requirements: This course will move quickly, so it is important to attend class every day and keep up with the reading assignments as indicated in the course outline. The class meetings will be discussion based, which means readings for the day's topic are to be read *before* the class meets, otherwise you will be lost in discussion. Each student's preparation and contribution is important to the quality of the class, so participation is a significant part of your grade. This means more than just showing up every day, you need to actively participate. If you are unable to attend a class please let me know in advance.

As this is a writing course, there will be a variety of written assignments. The primary assignment is a research paper (15-20 pages) on a topic of your choice in American economic history which will include several intermediate steps in the research and writing process. There will also be five brief summary papers based on assigned readings to aid in discussion. In addition there will be a short essay based on *The Grapes of Wrath*. The exams will also be in essay format.

Grading: Grades will be determined as follows:

		<u>Scale</u>	
Exams (10% each)	30%	100%-90%	A
Summary papers (5% each)	25%	90%-80%	B
<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> Writing Assignment	10%	80%-70%	C
Paper	20%	70%-60%	D
Participation	15%	60%-	F

Students with Disabilities: Gustavus Adolphus College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or you think you may have a disability of any nature) and, as a result, need reasonable academic accommodation to participate in class, take tests or benefit from the College's services, then you should speak with the Disability Services Coordinator, for a confidential discussion of your needs and appropriate plans. Course requirements cannot be waived, but reasonable accommodations may be provided based on disability documentation and course outcomes. Accommodations cannot be made retroactively; therefore, to maximize your academic success at Gustavus, please contact Disability Services as early as possible. Disability Services (<https://gustavus.edu/advising/disability/>) is located in the Academic Support Center.

Help for Students Whose First Language is not English: The Writing Center has on staff a part-time tutor with professional training in ESL/ELL instruction. Students can schedule work with this tutor by contacting the Writing Center. Students may bring their instructors documentation concerning their ELL status. Where it is appropriate, faculty may choose to allow such students more time to complete either in- or out-of-class writing assignments. For further information, contact the Academic Advising Office.

## E/M 274: U.S. Economic History Course Outline

*{Schedule is subject to change}*

		<u>Readings</u>
<u>Week 1</u>		
Sept. 8-11	Introduction, The Colonial Economy	W&R 1, 2; Galenson
<u>Week 2</u>		
Sept. 14-18	Mercantilism and the American Revolution	W&R 3, 4, 5, 6; Adam Smith
<u>Week 3</u>		
Sept. 21-25	Early U.S., Land, Transportation, <b>Institutional Economics and Economic History Conference</b>	W&R 7, 8, 9
<u>Week 4</u>		
Sept. 28-Oct. 2	Money and Banking, Early Industrialization	W&R 12, 10, 11; Sylla
<u>Week 5</u>		
Oct. 5-9	<b>Nobel Conference (T,W)</b> , Slavery	W&R Chs. 13; <b>Exam 1</b>
<u>Week 6</u>		
Oct. 12-16	The Civil War, Agriculture's Western Advance	W&R Chs. 14, 15; <b>Paper Topic</b>
<u>Week 7</u>		
Oct. 19-23	Railroads, Industrial Expansion, Labor Unions	W&R 16, 17, 18
<u>Week 8</u>		
Oct. 26-30	<b>Fall Break (M,T)</b>	Rockoff
<u>Week 9</u>		
Nov. 2-Nov. 6	Money and Commerce	W&R Chs. 19,20; <b>Exam 2</b>
<u>Week 10</u>		
Nov. 9-13	World War I, The Roaring 20s	W&R 21, 22; <b>Paper Outline and Bib.</b>
<u>Week 11</u>		
Nov. 16-20	The Great Depression	W&R Chs. 23, 24; Bernanke
<u>Week 12</u>		
Nov. 23-27	The New Deal, <b>Thanksgiving Break (W-F)</b>	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>
<u>Week 13</u>		
Nov. 30-Dec. 4	World War II	W&R Chs. 25, 26
<u>Week 14</u>		
Dec. 7-11	Growth of Federal Government, Postwar Era	W&R Chs. 27, 28; <b>Paper due</b>
<u>Week 15</u>		
Dec. 14-18	The Current Economy in Historical Perspective	TBA
	<b>Exam 3—Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> (F), 3:30</b>	

Academic Honesty: Gustavus has the following Honor Code statement:

**“As a community of scholars, the faculty and students of Gustavus Adolphus College have formulated an academic honesty policy and honor code system, which is printed in the Academic Bulletin and in the Gustavus Guide. As a student at Gustavus Adolphus College I agree to uphold the honor code. This means that I will abide by the academic honesty policy, and abide by decisions of the joint student/ faculty Honor Board.”**

Violations of the Honor Code will be pursued in accordance with the Academic Catalog.