

Economics 1740 - US Economic History

Fall 2017

Course description:

In this “American Institutions” course, we examine the historical foundations of the American economy from its colonial-mercantilist roots to the present. We will focus on the institutional and structural changes that have taken place over time, and how they have affected economic growth and distribution. Specific attention will be paid to the central capitalist institutions surrounding the development of Land, Labor and Capital from the colonial period, through early independence, westward expansion, the Civil War, the US industrial revolution, the Great Depression and the “Golden Age” of US capitalism, to more recent developments.

Student Learning Objectives

The primary goal of this course is to develop students’ understanding of major economic elements of the modern US economy by tracing their origins from pre-capitalist Europe and pre-colonial America through the colonial experience, the vast changes of the 19th and 20th centuries, to the modern era. A successful student will, by the end of the semester, be able to understand and explain the context and development of land, labor and capital in the modern economy; how the Great Depression was the product of policies relating to Labor and Capital; how the experience of the Great Depression fundamentally changed the institutions of US capitalism; and, finally, how those institutions changed again following the onset of the “stagflation” economy of the 1970s.

Logistics:

Classroom: BU C 105

Dates: Tues., Aug. 22 through Thurs., Dec. 10.

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:10 am to 10:30 am

Instructor: Jean Arment

Office: Building 72 (the old law school library, just north of the new law school). Room: TBA

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1-2 pm

Instructor’s email: ***Please communicate with the Instructor through the Canvas mail system.***

Required Text: *The Economic Transformation of America: 1600 to Present*. Fourth edition 1999. By Robert Heilbroner and Aaron Singer. *Additional assigned readings will be available on the class Canvas website.*

On Class Requirements and Grading

Course grades will be based on the midterm and final exams and on two short Film Review Papers.

Exams: A total of 4 (mainly multiple choice) exams will be given throughout the semester: Three Midterms and one Final Exam. All exams will be administered in class. Questions for the exams will come from three sources; **in-class lectures** (the primary source), required reading, and required video viewing. **The student is responsible for taking notes in-class, reading the required text and viewing videos provided through the Canvas system.** PLEASE BE AWARE: the required text does not cover all relevant class material. Students who do not attend class and take careful notes will be at a disadvantage on the exams.

Midterms: The three Midterms, worth 100 points each, will consist of multiple-choice (and sometimes short answer) questions. Two Midterms will be counted toward your final class score. **Your lowest Midterm score will be dropped.** (See explanation below under “Grading.”)

Final Exam: The final exam, worth 200 points, is scheduled for **Friday, April 29, at 10:30 a.m.** The content will also consist of multiple choice and (perhaps) short-answer questions and will be comprehensive in nature, covering both the final portion of the course as well as previous sections. A maximum of two hours will be allowed for completion of the final exam.

Film Review Papers: As part of the investigation into the *current* US economic situation (to which our economic history has led), each student will be required to view and submit written responses—**2 pages, 12-pt. typed, double-spaced**—worth a maximum of 25 points each, to the two films listed below (at the bottom of the Readings List.) **The focus of the student film response will center on the institutional context of the film’s subject matter and how that contributes to the determination of outcomes, as will be discussed in class.** These films are easy to access, but will also be made available through the Marriott Library Reserve Desk.

Grading:

Grades will be based on the exams and the two film reviews. The two midterms with the highest scores will each be counted as 20 percent of the final grade; the required written film reviews will count as 10 percent each; the final exam will count for the remaining 40 percent. As noted above, the midterm with the lowest score will be dropped. This provides students with the opportunity adjust their schedules or to make up for any exam that might be missed due to illness or travel with teams, etc. **Therefore, please note: there will be no make-up exams given, and no extra credit** in this course.

Grading Scale (Approximate):

A	> 93	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	E	< 60

Class Topics and Outline:

Please note that the following class outline is **not** written in stone. It is a **Tentative Schedule** and some changes are to be expected. Assigned readings outside the required text will be made available on Canvas.

Videos or links to videos will also be on Canvas. **Links to the Marriott Library will require you to be on campus or signed in with your unid and password.**

1. Class Introduction (8/22)

- Introduction; Syllabus Review
- Some Basic Economic Concepts

Part I. The Pre-Capitalist World**2. Pre-Capitalist Americas (8/24)**

- Pre-“Columbian Exchange” Americas - Societies, economies and demographics
 - Reading: Mann, Charles, *1491: New Revelations of the Americans Before Columbus*, Ch. 4, pg 97-101; Ch. 6, pg 191-198.

3. Pre-Capitalist Europe - Markets and Mercantilism I (8/29)

- Markets, supply and demand in pre-capitalist institutions

- The Origins and Development of Capitalist Economics
 - Reading: Heilbroner, Robert, *The Worldly Philosophers*, Ch. 2. “The Economic Revolution,” pg. 18-41.

4. Pre-Capitalist Europe - Markets and Mercantilism II (8/31)

- Early Capitalist Institutions
 - H&S 15-26
 - Reading: Acemoglu and Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*, Ch. 7. pg. 182-202.

5. The Great Transformation (9/5)

- Through Mercantilism to Capitalist Production
 - Reading: Heilbroner, Robert, *The Worldly Philosophers*, Ch. 2. “The Economic Revolution,” pg. 18-41 (already assigned, see Class 3.)
- The Exigencies and Effects of Capitalist Organization
 - Reading: Polany, Karl, *The Great Transformation*, Ch. 6. pg. 68-73.

Part II – The Mercantilist Role of the Colonies

6. Land, Labor and Capital in the Colonies I (9/7)

- The Settlements/Colonies and their Economic/Institutional Origins
 - H&S 28-52
 - Reading: Mann, Charles, *1491: New Revelations of the Americans Before Columbus*, Ch. 2. “Why Billington Survived,” pg. 31-61.
 - Video: *Secrets of the Dead: Death at Jamestown*

7. Land, Labor and Capital in the Colonies II (9/12)

- Land Acquisition in the Colonial Period
 - Reading: Zinn, Howard, *A People’s History of the United States*, Ch. 1, pg. 1-22.

8. Land, Labor and Capital in the Colonies III (9/14)

- The Navigation Acts and Conflict with Britain
 - H&S 49-51; 71-73
 - Reading: Andreas, Peter, *Smuggler Nation: How Illicit Trade Made America*, Ch. 1, pg. 13-22.

9. Midterm I (Tues., 9/19)

PART III – The Early US Economy

10. Independence; Hamilton & Jefferson and the Constitution (9/21)

- H&S 71-90
- Reading: Ellis, Joseph, *The Quartet: Orchestrating the Second American Revolution, 1783-1789*, Ch. 1., pg. 5-14.

11. Land, Labor and Capital in the Early US I – Creating a Labor Force (9/26)

- *Pre-independence labor*
- *Labor in the South*
- *Early manufacturing labor*
 - H&S 40-43, 53-67, 105-114

12. Land, Labor and Capital in the Early US II - Westward Expansion (9/28)

- *Land Grabs and Territorial Expansion*
 - Reading: Marks, Paula M., *In A Barren Land: American Indian Dispossession and Survival*, Ch. 3, pg 68-82.
 - Video: *American Experience: The Gold Rush*

13. Labor and Capital in the Early US III – Overcoming Technological Backwardness (10/3)

- *The Transportation Boom*
 - H&S 91-104
- *Overcoming “Technological Backwardness”*
 - H&S 114-120

14. Pre- and Post-Civil War Economic Conditions (10/5)

- *Pre- Civil War Economic Conditions*
 - H&S 122-138
- *Post Civil War Readiness for “Takeoff”*
 - H&S 138-145

FALL BREAK (10/8 – 10/15)

Part IV – The US Industrial Revolution

15. The Age of the Robber Barons (10/17)

- *Consolidation of Capital in the Age of Combination*
 - H&S 151-165
 - Video: *Origins of Standard Oil*

16. On Scale and the Business Cycle (10/19)

- *On Scale: The Rise of Steel and Big Industry*
 - H&S 173-187; 199-203
- *The Business Cycle*
 - H&S 194-202

17. Midterm 2 (Tuesday, 10/24)

18. The Labor Rebellion (10/26)

- *Working Conditions*
 - H&S 216-218, 225-241
- *Immigration, Unionization and Labor Unrest*
 - H&S 218-224
 - Video: *The Ludlow Massacre*
 - Video: *American Experience: The Triangle Fire*

19. Land Consolidation and Distribution (10/31)

- *Sharecropping and the Homestead Act*
 - H&S 141-44
- *Indian Wars and the Reservation System*
 - Reading: Jackson, Donald, *Custer's Gold: The United States Cavalry Expedition of 1874*, pg 1-8; Ch. 6, pg 104-121.

20. Effects of the US Industrial Revolution of American Society (11/2)

- *The Demise of the Invisible Hand*
 - H&S 181-87
- *The Rise of New Organizational Forms*
 - H&S 163-170 (Bureaucratization); 187-193 (Rise of the corporation)
- *Monopoly and the Anti-Trust Movement*
 - H&S 203-214
- *Effects on American Social Life*
 - H&S 125-129; 160-163; 187-193

21. Banking and the Federal Reserve (11/7)

- J.P. Morgan and the Crash of 1907
- The "Fed" and the Business Cycle

Part V. The Crash, the Depression, and the Economics of Keynes

22. *The Boom and the Crash of the 1920s* (11/9)

- *Economic Boom Times*
 - H&S 243-258; 263-65
- *The Crash and What Was Behind It*
 - H&S 265-268; 273-277
 - Video: *American Experience: The Crash of 1929*

23. *Keynes and The Great Depression* (11/14)

- *The Great Depression*
 - H&S 268-273
 - Video: *American Experience: Surviving the Dust Bowl (Parts 1 and 2)*
- *Keynes and the Economics of Unemployment*
 - H&S 277-286

24. *MIDTERM 3* (Thursday, 11/16)

25. *FDR and The New Deal* (11/21)

- *The New Deal of FDR*
 - H&S 288-305

THANKSGIVING BREAK (11/23-11/26)

Part VI. The Post-War Economy

26. *The Golden Age of US Capitalism – Adam Smith’s “Rising Tide”* (11/28)

- H&S 307-316

27. *The 1970s – The Age of Uncertainty* (11/30)

- *External Shocks, Economic Dilemmas, and Stagflation*
 - H&S 316-320
 - Reading: Mathiesson, Peter, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, Ch. 2., pg 34-57.

28. *The 1980s and Return to Laissez-Faire* (12/5)

- *The Reagan/Volker “New Deal”*
 - H&S 322-333
- *The Demise of Bretton Woods*

29. Current Dilemmas: Market Failures, Externalities, Inequality and Private Debt (12/7)

- *The Rise of Finance and Volatility*
- *The Rise of Inequality and Private Debt*
- *Repeating History???*
 - H&S 333-356

FILM RESPONSE DUE DATES:

“Food, Inc.” film response: Nov. 2

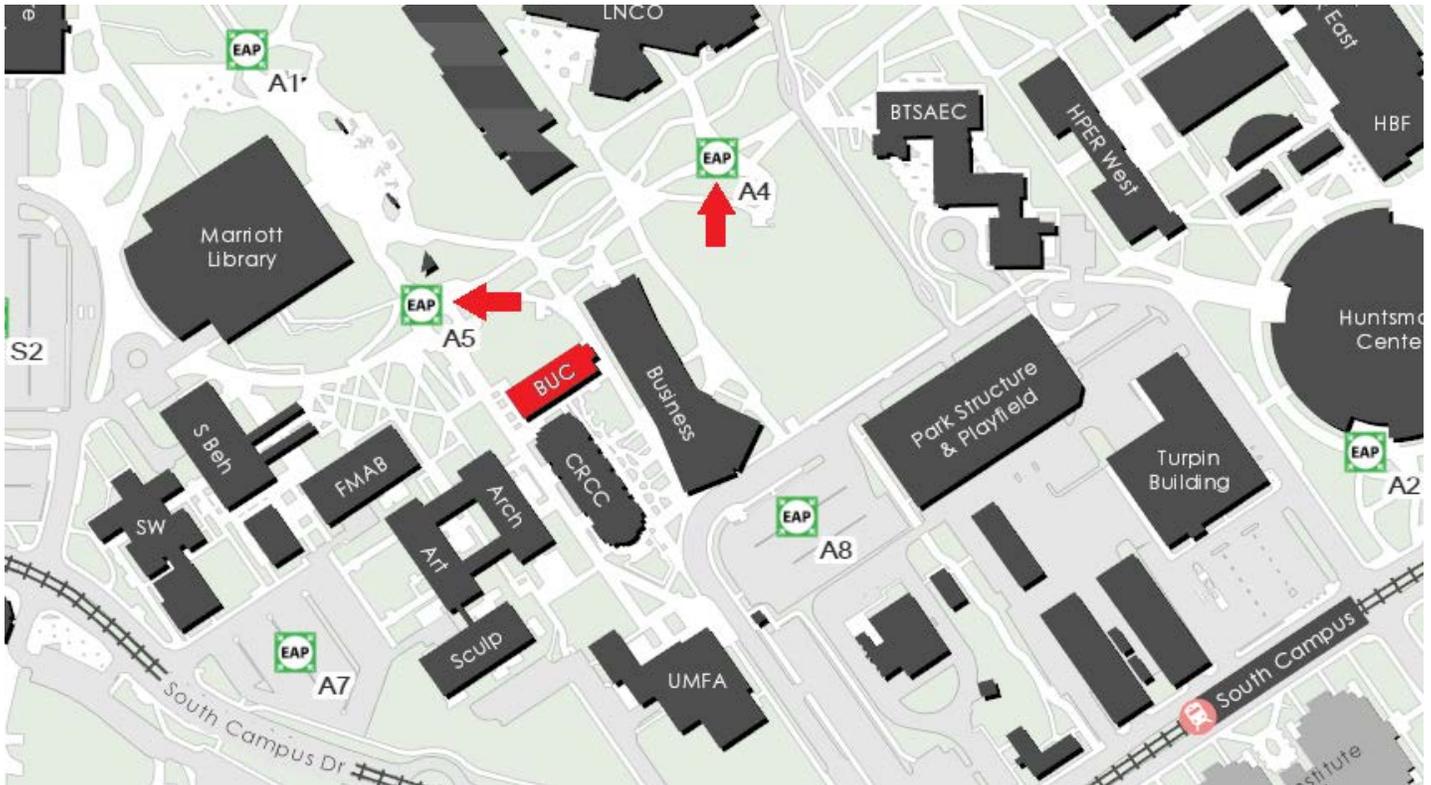
“Inside Job” film response: Nov. 30

FINAL EXAM DATE: Thursday, Dec. 14, 8:00-10:00 a.m.

2- hours, comprehensive, with emphasis on post-Midterm 3 material.

ADA statement: 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 the 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 the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.

CSBS EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN



BUILDING EVACUATION

EAP (Emergency Assembly Point) – When you receive a notification to evacuate the building either by campus text alert system or by building fire alarm, please follow your instructor in an orderly fashion to the EAP marked on the map below. Once everyone is at the EAP, you will receive further instructions from Emergency Management personnel. You can also look up the EAP for any building you may be in on campus at <http://emergencymanagement.utah.edu/eap>.



CAMPUS RESOURCES

U Heads Up App: There's an app for that. Download the app on your smartphone at alert.utah.edu/headsup to access the following resources:

- **Emergency Response Guide:** Provides instructions on how to handle any type of emergency, such as earthquake, utility failure, fire, active shooter, etc. Flip charts with this information are also available around campus.
- **See Something, Say Something:** Report unsafe or hazardous conditions on campus. If you see a life threatening or emergency situation, please call 911!

Safety Escorts: For students who are on campus at night or past business hours and would like an escort to your car, please call **801-585-2677**. You can call 24/7 and a security officer will be sent to walk with you or give you a ride to your desired on-campus location.