Objectives

During this class, students will:

• Engage with a series of academic articles, reading critically, summarizing the arguments effectively, and critiquing the logic and methods involved
• Discuss periods of American history, reflecting on the scale and costs involved in each
• Write a short research paper, summarizing the extant literature and proposing new arguments that lead to new research

Prerequisites

Eco 102: Introduction to Microeconomics
Eco 103: Introduction to Macroeconomics

This class fulfills the requirements a low-level elective class for economics majors and minors.

Textbook and Resources

Readings will be assigned every other class (see below). Readings from journals can be accessed through the university library system (an important research skill that we will discuss in the first class. You can also watch the video demonstration at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I2EUfiQAL6s). Readings from books will be posted to Sakai.

Reference: “History of the American Economy” by Gary Walton and Hugh Rockoff. This is a good general reference for the periods we will be studying (and other aspects of American history).

Class materials (syllabus, homework, and practice exams) will be posted on the Sakai web site: https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the academic integrity policy which can be found at http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy. I will report every violation of academic integrity.
Format
Each unit will consist of two classes: The first class (called Lecture, below) will consist of a student presentation of the historical background of the subject, and then a lecture about the economic history implications. The second class (called Discussion, below) will be a discussion section about the relevant reading in class. Participation grades will come solely from these discussion sessions.

Grading
Assignments
You will earn 30% of your grade on a 5 to 7 page paper exploring a topic in American economic history in additional depth. Other topics may be selected with the instructor’s approval. This will require additional research into the topic and a synthesis of ideas into an academic paper. 5% of your grade will be earned from a two-paragraph description of your paper topic, and an additional 5% of your grade will be earned by submitting a rough draft of your paper. Late topics will be deducted one-half grade per day. Late rough drafts will earn no credit. Late papers will also be deducted one-half grade per day, as well as earning a temporary grade for up to three weeks after the paper is submitted.

Final Exam
There will be a final exam on the readings, lectures, and student presentations, when you will earn 30% of your grade. This exam will consist of short answer, medium-answer (1-2 paragraph), and essay questions.
Makeup policy: Makeup exams will be given in the event of absences. Please note that, due to the low number of makeup exam takers, there can be no curve applied to makeup exams.

Participation
Your participation in class discussion will earn you 15% of your grade. This includes discussion of readings for each session (and, necessarily, attendance).

Additionally, you will earn 15% of your grade in one in-class presentation. This 10-minute presentation will provide the broad historical outlines of the period we will be discussing that day.

Attendance
Attendance is counted in your final grade via your participation grade. If you do need to miss a lecture, you may find the self-reporting absence website helpful: https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/

If you miss a class, review the reading, lecture notes and historical overview presentations posted to Sakai, and notes from a classmate. Lectures will not be repeated during office hours.
Course Outline

Since participation is a part of your grade, it is necessary to read the assigned text(s) and note any questions you may have.

Tuesday, May 30
Lecture and Discussion: Why study economic history?
Reading: Fleming (2012)

Wednesday, May 31
Historical Overview: Colonial America
Lecture: Indentured servitude

Thursday, June 1
Discussion: Indentured servitude
Reading: Galenson (1984)

Monday, June 5
Historical Overview: Navigation Acts
Lecture: Development of early markets

Tuesday, June 6
Discussion: Development of early markets
Reading: Rothenberg (1981)

Wednesday, June 7
Historical Overview: Asian immigration
Lecture: European immigration

Thursday, June 8
Discussion: European immigration
Reading: Abramitzky et al. (2012)

Monday, June 12
Historical Overview: The Civil War (up to 1862) (only mentioning, at most, two battles)
Lecture: Slavery: economic justification for slavery

Tuesday, June 13
Discussion: Slavery: economic justification for slavery
Reading: Fogel & Engerman (1977)

Subject to change
Wednesday, June 14
Historical Overview: The Civil War (1863-65) (only mentioning, at most, two battles)
Lecture: Slavery: the treatment of slaves

Thursday, June 15
Discussion: Slavery: the treatment of slaves
Reading: Fogel & Engerman (1995)
Paper topic due

Monday, June 19
Historical Overview: The Jim Crow Era
Lecture: African Americans after the Civil War

Tuesday, June 20
Discussion: African Americans after the Civil War
Reading: Ransom & Sutch (2001)

Wednesday, June 21
Historical Overview: Railroads and economic growth
Lecture: The Gold Standard

Thursday, June 22
Discussion: The Gold Standard
Reading: Rockoff (1990)

Monday, June 26
Historical Overview: The New Deal
Lecture: The Great Depression
Rough drafts due

Tuesday, June 27
Discussion: The Great Depression
Reading: Friedman & Schwartz (2008)

Wednesday, June 28
Historical Overview: Latinx Civil Rights Lecture: Discrimination and Civil Rights

Thursday, June 29
Discussion: Discrimination and Civil Rights
Reading: Donohue III & Heckman (1991)
Monday, July 3
No class - Holiday

Tuesday, July 4
No class - Holiday

Wednesday, July 5
Lecture and Discussion: Women's Rights
Reading: Myers (2017)
Paper Due

Thursday, July 6
Final Exam

References


**Student Wellness Services**

Just In Case Web App, for a mental health crisis for you or a friend
http://codu.co/cee05e

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS), for non-emergency psychological health issues
(848) 932-7884
or visit 17 Senior Street
New Brunswick, NJ
www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)
(848) 932-1181
or visit 3 Bartlett Street
New Brunswick, NJ
www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

Disability Services
(848) 445-6800
or visit Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145
Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue
Piscataway, NJ
https://ods.rutgers.edu/

Scarlet Listeners, for confidential peer counseling and referral hotline
http://www.scarletlisteners.com/
or call (732) 247-5555