Fall 2014  
ECON 4524-001  
Economic History of the United States  

Instructor: Zach Ward  
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Schedule: MWF 11:00-11:50,  
Office/Office Hours: Econ 14; Tuesday 3:30-5:30; Wednesday 1-2

I. Course Description:  
This course serves as a general overview of United States economic history. Economic history plays an important role to understanding the world today and for testing economic theories by using data from the past. The United States offers a unique perspective to understanding various aspects of the economy; this class will specifically focusing on the technological advance, institutions, inequality, labor and health side of American economic history.

II. Requirements  
This is a 4000-level course, which requires you to have taken ECON 3070 and ECON 3080 (Intermediate Microeconomics and Macroeconomics). The following book is recommended for the class and available at the UMC bookstore  
- American Economic History (Eighth Edition) by Jonathan Hughes and Louis Cain (H&C)  
- Articles for the course will be posted at D2L.

III. Performance  
Midterm 1: 25% - Friday, September 26th  
Midterm 2: 25% - Friday, October 31st  
Final Exam: 40% - Sunday, December 14 from 7:30 pm – 10 pm  
Attendance/Participation: 10%  
Note that you are graded on outputs, not inputs. In other words, I do not observe how much time you spend studying or preparing, I only see and thus grade you on the final output.
Outline of Course (subject to revision):

*read

(8/25) Introduction to Economic History and Cliometrics

(8/27) Thinking about Long-Run Economic Growth


(8/29) Path Dependence in Economics


(9/1) Labor Day

(9/3) Pre-Colonial and Colonial America

- *H&C Ch 3

(9/5) Indentured Servitude

- *H&C Ch 6

(9/8) Constitution and Institutional Background

- *H&C Ch 7
- *The Constitution

(9/10) Land Policies and Funding of the Government


(9/12) Cancelled Class: at Economic History Association Meetings

(9/15) Farming in early 1800s

- *H&C Ch 9
(9/17) Industrialization in early 1800s
- *H&C Ch 11

(9/19) Migration under Sail and America as Refuge

(9/22) Land Expansion and Internal Migration: Go West Young Man
- H&C Ch 5

(9/24) Transportation: Canals, Railroads and Economic Growth
- *H&C Ch 14 and Ch 8

(9/26) Exam 1

(9/29) Economics of the Civil War
- *H&C Ch 13

(10/1) Fallout of the Civil War
- *H&C Ch 15
- Alston, Lee J. and Robert Higgs, Contractual Mix in Southern Agriculture since the Civil War”, Journal of Economic History, 1982

(10/3) Demographic Changes: Births, Deaths and Health
- David Cutler and Grant Miller, “The Role of Public Health Improvements in Health Advances: The Twentieth-Century United States”, Demography, 2005
(10/6) Rise of Big Business, Technological Change and Inequality Part I: The 1800s

(10/8) Rise of Big Business, Unions and Progressive Movement
- *H&C Ch 17 and Ch 21

(10/10 – 10/13) Age of Mass Migration and Globalization
- *H&C Ch 20

(10/15) Human Capital Century and High School Movement

(10/17-10/20) Technological Change and Inequality Part I: The 1800s and Early 1900s
- Rowena Gray, “Taking Technology to Task: The Skill Content of Technological Change in the Early Twentieth Century United States”, Explorations in Economic History, July 2013

(10/22) The Great War
- *H&C Ch 22

(10/24) Immigration Restrictions and changes to population flows
The Roaring Twenties
- *H&C Ch 23
- Banking and Farm Failures

Political Enfranchisement and Disenfranchisement

Exam 2

Altruistic Capitalists

The Great Depression: Causes and the New Deal
- *H & C Ch 24, Ch 25

The Dust Bowl

The End of the Great Depression and World War II
- *H&C Ch 26

The Expansion of Government
- Robert Higgs, The Sources of Big Government
- Robert Higgs, How Much has Government Grown?

The Great Compression and Social Mobility, Inequality Part II
- *H & C Ch 27
(11/19) The New Frontier and Great Society


(12/1) White Flight, Suburbanization and Inequality across Space

- H & C Ch 28
- Glaeser et al. “Growth in Cities”

(12/3) The Rise of Mexican Migration

(12/5) The Power of the Pill


(12/8) The Fetal Origins Hypothesis: Long-term health effects


(12/10) Inequality III: Today!


(12/12) Office Hours
Classroom Behavior Policy
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty has the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions.
Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.
See policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_cod

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All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273).
Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/.

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The University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment applies to all students, staff and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises or create an environment that is hostile or offensive. Harassment may occur between members of the same or opposite gender and between any combinations of members in the campus community: students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Harassment can occur anywhere on campus, including the classroom, the workplace, or a residence hall. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed can be obtained at: http://www.colorado.edu/odh/