

University of Pennsylvania
Department of History
Spring Semester, 2019

History 123

Economic History of Europe, I

Prof. Safley

SYLLABUS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Venue: []
TR, 1:30 - 3:00 PM

Instructor: Thomas Max Safley
College Hall, 309A: TR, 12:00 - 1:30 PM and by appointment
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Purpose: An economy, simply put, is a system of human activities related to the production, distribution, exchange and consumption of goods and services. As such, that system is inseparable from technological evolution, historical change, social organization and political structure to say nothing of regional geography and ecology. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that economic history encompasses all the material aspects of human life, describing a myriad of diverse forms of activity and organization. It stands at the intersection of history with the humanities, the social sciences and the natural sciences. Even the most advanced spheres of moral discourses, political philosophy, social thought and game theory have their acknowledged place in economic history. The purpose of this course is to explore these activities—the changes in their organization and meaning—from the earliest points in written history to the First Industrial Revolution. Through presentations, lectures and discussions, students will become familiar with basic trends and scholarly debates in the economic development of Europe and the World.

Texts: All texts are available at the **Penn Book Center** (34th & Sansom Sts.):

Required: Rondo Cameron & Larry Neal, *A Concise Economic History of the World: From Paleolithic Times to the Present*, 4th ed. (Oxford, 2005);
Douglass C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History* (New York, 1981);
[].

Assignments: Class members will complete three written assignments during the semester: an in-class, mid-term examination (on 2 March), a group project (due 25 April), a take-home final examination (due 2 May). Attendance and participation in all lectures are required.

The **weekly document** exercises are straightforward. Each Thursday, students will receive a historical document, a primary source that relates to one or more of the themes to be addressed during the following week. Each student will be expected to write an evaluation of that source that is **no longer than one page**, typed in 12-point font and double-spaced. The evaluation will seek to answer a series of questions: Who created the document; when they created it; for whom they created it; why they created it; what it tells us; how it relates to the theme of the week. Evaluations are due on the Thursday of the following week.

The **historical analysis** resembles the document exercises, but on a more ambitious scale. Students will select, in consultation with the instructor, a primary source from the special collections of Van Pelt Library. These will be larger and more complex than the sources students have confronted on a weekly basis during the semester, but the questions to be asked of them will remain the same. Who created the document? When did he/she/they create it? For whom was it created? Why was it created? What does it tell us? How does it relate to the themes of our course? Groups will evaluate their sources cooperatively, dividing the questions among their members, or tackling the whole assignment as a group. Each member will write an individual term paper of **10 to 15 pages length** (12-point font, double-spaced) that represents his or her own, original work.

Grading:	Participation in lectures:	15%
	Document exercises:	15%
	In-class midterm exam:	20%
	Historical analysis:	30%
	Take-home final exam:	20%

Integrity: Students are expected to abide by the University of Pennsylvania Code of Academic Integrity, which can be found here:

<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity>

Schedule:	17 Jan.	The Nature of Economic History
	22 – 24 Jan.	The Origins of Economic Life

- Read:** Cameron & Neal, c. 1;
North, c. 7.
Document exercise due Thursday, 24 January.
- 29 – 31 Jan. The Ancient Economy
Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 2;
North, c. 8.
Document exercise due Thursday, 31 January.
- 5 – 7 Feb. Crisis and Transition
Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 3;
North, c. 9;
Readings available on Canvas [].
Document exercise due Thursday, 7 February.
- 12 – 14 Feb. Medieval Agriculture
Read: North, c. 10;
Readings available on Canvas [].
Document exercise due Thursday, 14 February.
- 19 - 21 Feb. Medieval Exchange
Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 4;
Readings available on Canvas [shopkeepers,
merchants, bankers].
Document exercise due Thursday, 21 February.
- 26 - 28 Feb. Medieval Manufacturing
Read: Readings available on Canvas [guilds,
putting-out].
Document exercise due Thursday, 28 February.
- 5 - 7 Mar. **NO CLASS: SEMESTER BREAK.**
- 12 - 14 Mar. Contraction, Reorganization, Expansion
Read: North, c. 11;
Readings available on Canvas [].
14 March: MID-TERM EXAMINATION.
No document exercise due.
- 19 - 21 Mar. The “First Globalization”
Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 5;
Readings available on Canvas [].
Document exercise due Thursday, 21 March
- 26 - 28 Mar. Consequences for Europe

