

**University of Pennsylvania
Department of History**

History 123

Economic History of Europe, I

Prof. Safley

PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS – SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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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 European history to the First Industrial Revolution. Through lectures and discussions, students will become familiar with basic trends and scholarly debates in the economic development of Europe.

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

Required: Cameron R., *A Concise Economic History of the World* (Oxford);
Landes, D., *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* (Norton);
North D., *Structure and Change in Economic History* (Norton);
Supplemental readings to be posted on Blackboard.

Assignments: Class members will complete 4 written assignments during the course of the semester. Midterm and final examinations will account for 40 percent of the final grade. Two papers of 5 to 7 pages will account for a further 20 percent each. Class participation will determine the final 20 percent of each student's grade. Part of that grade involves at least one “executive summary of a reading or source.

Each student will prepare a 10-minute oral presentation of the reading, which will be distributed at the beginning of the week, that summarizes its content, offers an interpretation and places it in context.

Schedule:	6 Sept.	The Nature of Economic History
	11-13 Sept.	The Ancient Economy Read: Cameron, c. 1-2; North, c. 7-9.
	18-20 Sept.	Crisis and Transition Read: Cameron, c. 3; North, c. 10. 20 September: FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNED.
	25-27 Sept.	Medieval Agriculture Read: Readings available on Blackboard; North, c. 11.
	2-4 Oct.	Medieval Exchange Read: Readings available on Blackboard; Landes, c. 1-4. 4 October: FIRST ESSAY DUE.
	9-11 Oct.	Medieval Manufacturing Read: Cameron, c. 4; Landes, c. 5-8.
	16-18 Oct.	Contraction, Reorganization, Expansion Read: Readings available on Blackboard. 18 October: MID-TERM EXAMINATION.
	23 Oct.	NO CLASS: SEMESTER BREAK.
	25 Oct.	The First Globalization Read: Readings available on Blackboard.
	30 Oct.-1 Nov.	The Consequences for Europe Read: Readings available on Blackboard.
	6-8 Nov.	New Structures and Institutions Read: Cameron, c. 5-6; Landes, c. 9-12. 6 November: SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNED.

13-15 Nov.	Production and Consumption Read: Article available on Blackboard; Landes, c. 13-16.
20 Nov.	Agricultural Revolution Read: Readings available on Blackboard; Cameron, c.7. 20 November: SECOND ESSAY DUE.
22 Nov.	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING.
27-29 Nov.	Patterns of Industrialization Read: Readings available on Blackboard; Cameron, c. 8; North, c. 13-15.
4-6 Dec.	Patterns of Industrialization Read: See Week of 27-29 November
TBA	FINAL EXAMINATION