Economics 111B
Spring 2008

American Economic History since the Civil War

Professor Alan L. Olmstead (752-8491)            TA:  Rowena Gray
SSH Room 1127                                         SSH Room 121
Office Hours:  Wed. 3-4                                Office Hours:  Monday 1-2
    Thurs. 9:30-10:30                                   Tuesday 3-4
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Lecture:  Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:40-3:00 pm in 230 Wellman
Sections:  Thursday at (1)7:10-8:00 and (2) 8:10-9:00 in 233 Wellman

Class Web Page:

Exam Dates:
First exam: Tuesday, April 22
Second exam: Tuesday, May 20
Final: Tuesday, June 10, 10:30-12:30
*There will be no make-up exams

Grading: 20% for each midterm exam, 40% for the final exam; 20% for sections and home work assignments. Additional assignments will be made in the sections. The final exam will be comprehensive.

Course Description:
The topics and readings are designed to give students a look at the broad sweep of American growth with an emphasis on the period since 1866. Economic history attempts to supply a dynamic perspective to help understand institutional, technological, and political changes. The field offers a laboratory for testing key elements of economic theory. You will be exposed to real data. Economics 1A and 1B are prerequisites for this course—you will need a grasp of the ideas taught in those courses. You can expect some changes in the outline and assignments as the quarter develops.

Outline and Readings:
One text, Gary Walton and Hugh Rockoff, History of the American Economy Tenth Edition (WR) is available in the bookstore. Other readings are available on the class webpage and marked (E) on the syllabus.

edition because there are extra readings and sources here that you will need for your section and homework assignments. HSUS is available to you via a UCD campus connection:  http://uclibs.org/PID/108043

I. Introduction, A Comparative Perspective of the American Experience
   WR: Chapter 1


In class assignment for discussion: Write a list of the five most important technological changes that have made your life better.

Section Assignment for week 1, April 3rd:
First day business and introduction to HSUS on line edition—you do not want to miss this.

II. Long Run Growth in Income, Sources of Growth, Wealth, and Welfare
   WR: Chapters 28 & 29


   Brad Schiller, “The Inequality Myth,” *WSJ*, March 18, 2008. (E)

Assignment for Section #2 and Homework #1:

See web, due in class, before the start of lecture, on April 8th

III. The American Dilemma: The Civil War, Race, and the Post War South
   WR: Chapter 14


   Gavin Wright, Old South, New South (1986), Ch. 8 on the new economy of the postwar South, pp. 239-274, notes on 299-303. (E)

First Exam: Tuesday, April 22

IV. The American Population: Demographic Change, Immigration, Working Conditions, the Changing Role of Women.
   WR: Chapters 18 Review Chapter 28 & pp. 436-443

Homework # 2 due in class before the start of lecture on April 29\textsuperscript{th}. See web for details.

V. Agricultural Development: Technological Change, Farmer Unrest, and Willie Nelson


Second Exam: Tuesday, May 20

Homework # 3 due in class before the start of lecture on May 27\textsuperscript{th}. See web for details

VI. Structural Change During Two Wars: Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and the New Deal.
WR: Chapters 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26


VII. Foreign Aid and Nation Building: The Case of the Marshall Plan


Final Exam: Tuesday, June 10, 10:30-12:30