

EC 4680

History of the American Economy

Spring 2018

Dr. Bruce Kaufman

Rm. 816, 55 Park Place; or contact/see Econ Receptionist, 5<sup>th</sup> Fl. AYSPS Bldg (14 Marietta)

404 413-0152 (404 217 4649 cell)

[bkaufman@gsu.edu](mailto:bkaufman@gsu.edu)

**Course Catalog Description.** An intensive study of the development of the American economy with an emphasis upon the changing structure, institutional pattern, and performance of the system.

**Prerequisites.** None.

**Course Materials.** The textbook for the course is Gary Walton and Hugh Rockoff, *History of the American Economy*, 13<sup>th</sup> ed. (Thompson-Southwestern).

**Course Requirements.** Requirements for the course include three mid-semester exams, a final exam, a written end-of-semester paper, and class attendance. Each exam counts for 21% of the course grade, the paper for 16%, and the final grade based on the above then gets *reduced by one (-1) point* for every class missed beyond the allowable *semester limit of three*.

The paper should examine some specific event, trend, development, or controversy in American economic history (e.g., the economic effect on the South of the abolition of slavery; the reasons for and consequences of the regulation of the railroads in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century; the causes of the 1929 stock market crash) and provide a more in-depth analysis than contained in the book or class discussion. Paper length is a maximum of *12 double-spaced* pages with *standard font* size, not including references. The topic and discussion thereof need to emphasize the *economic* dimension (as opposed to political, social, or purely historical) and, in particular, should describe the economic origins and impact of the subject. Several different reference sources are needed (the textbook does not count and should not be used). The grade will be based on the *depth, breadth, and quality of analysis* and the *quality of writing style and exposition*. Ten points are deducted for the first day the paper is late (after *midnight 4/19*) and five points for every day thereafter. Plagiarism results in a paper grade of F.

**Grades.** The grading scale is: 98-100 = A+, 92 – 97 = A, 90- 91 = A-, 88 - 89 = B+, 82-87 = B, 80-81= B-, 78-79 = C+, 72-77 = C, 70-71 = C-, 60-69 = D, 0-59 = F.

**Course Rules.**

*Make-up Policy.* All students are expected to take the exams at the scheduled date unless serious illness or business travel make this impossible. No make-up test will be given under any circumstances if the student fails to contact the professor prior to the test.

*Cheating/Plagiarism.* Persons engaging in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accord with university policy (Section 409).

*Deviations from Syllabus.* The attached syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Additions or deletions may occur as the course progresses.

*Extra Credit.* No extra credit projects are permitted.

*Attendance Policy.* Class attendance is taken each day. Three (3) absences are permitted.

**Office Hours.** Tue and Thu, 3:00-3:50 but prior contact highly recommended.

**Contact the Professor:** Email at [bkaufman@gsu.edu](mailto:bkaufman@gsu.edu).

## Syllabus

Jan. 9, 11: Chs. 1-2

Standard of Living in the United States (all Wikipedia on Google unless otherwise noted)  
American Exceptionalism  
Ferdinand Magellan  
Indentured Servitude in the Americas

Jan. 16, 18: Chs. 3-4

North American Fur Trade  
Atlantic Slave Trade  
Mercantilism  
History of the Caribbean

Jan. 23, 25: Chs. 5-6

Colonial Shipbuilding  
The Impact of Geography on Colonial America  
Financial Costs of the American Revolution  
France in the American Revolutionary War

Jan. 30, Feb. 1: Ch. 7, Exam I

Economic Interests and the Adoption of the American Constitution (eh.net on google)  
Embargo Act of 1807

Feb. 6, 8: Chs. 8-9

Lewis and Clark Expedition  
Trail of Tears  
Erie Canal  
Steamboats on the Mississippi

Feb 13, 15: Chs. 10-11

Lowell Mill Girls  
Shoemaking  
Effects of the Industrial Revolution & Responses to the Industrial Revolution (Secs. 4 & 5 in 'The Industrial Revolution' on webs.bcp.org on google)  
A Brief History of the Bathroom (porch.com/advice on google)

Feb. 20, 22: Chs. 12-13

Nicholas Biddle  
California Gold Rush  
Slavery in the United States  
The Cotton Revolution (americanyawp.com on google)

Feb. 27, Mar. 1: Ch. 14, Exam II

Economy of the Confederate States of America  
Union (American Civil War)

Mar. 6, 8: Chs. 15-16

Cattle Drives in the United States

Settling the Great Plains: Inventions and Adaptations (fasttrackteaching.com on google)  
First Transcontinental Railroad  
One Hundred Years Ago, Chinese Railroad Workers Stage the Era's Largest Labor Strike  
(nbcnews.com on google)

Mar. 13, 15: Spring Break

Mar. 20, 22: Chs. 17-18

John D. Rockefeller

Andrew Carnegie

Samuel Gompers

The American Worker: The War between Capital and Labor (sageamericanhistory.net/  
gilded age)

Mar. 27, 29: Chs. 19-20

Long Depression

Cross of Gold Speech

The Lost Charm of Mail Order Catalogs in America (countryliving.com on google)

American Imperialism

Apr 3, 5: Exam III, Ch. 21

United States Home Front during World War I

First Red Scare

Apr. 10, 12: Chs. 22-23

Henry Ford

Roaring Twenties

Causes of the Great Depression

New Deal

Apr. 17, 19: Chs. 24-25 [Paper due the 19th]

Dust Bowl

The Great Depression: California in the Thirties (csun.edu on google)

The Way We Won: America's Economic Breakthrough during World War II  
(prospect.com/article on google)

Rosie the Riveter

Last Day to Withdraw: Tuesday, Feb 27

Last Day of this Class: Thursday April 19

Papers Due: Last Day of Class, Thursday April 19

Final Exam: Thursday, April 26, 4:15-6:45 PM (same room)

## Learning Outcomes for EC 4680

1. Students will be able to describe and understand the economic factors that contributed to the decision of the American colonies to seek independence from Great Britain.
2. Students will be able to describe and understand the origins and early development of factories and other forms of manufacturing in the early United States and the contribution these factors had to the economic growth of the nation.
3. Students will be able to describe and understand the main features of the transportation revolution in the 19<sup>th</sup> century United States and how this revolution affected the regional and national pattern of economic growth.
4. Students will be able to describe and understand the development of American agriculture during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, including factors responsible for agricultural productivity growth and the shift of employment out of agriculture to goods production.
5. Students will be able to describe and understand the economic origins and consequences of slavery and the Civil War.
6. Students will be able to describe and understand the reasons for the development of “big business” in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the positive and negative affects large corporations and trusts had on the economy.
7. Students will be able to describe and understand the development of the American money and banking system, including the creation of the Federal Reserve Bank, and the impact of the money and credit system on the development of the economy over the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
8. Students will be able to describe and understand the impact industrialization had on the conditions of labor and the origins and development of trade unions and protective labor legislation.
9. Students will be able to describe and understand the economic impact of World War, I, World War II, and the Cold War had on the growth and development of the American economy.
10. Students will be able to describe and understand the origins and impact of the Great Depression on the American economy and the rationale behind President Roosevelt’s New Deal economic program.
11. Students will be able to describe and understand the transition of the American economy from manufacturing to services and rural to urban in the 20th century.