

University of Pennsylvania
Department of History
Spring Semester, 2023

History 1203

Economic History of Europe, I

Prof. Safley

SYLLABUS (draft)

Venue: tbd
TR, 1:45 - 3:15 PM

Instructor: Thomas Max Safley
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 discourse, 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 lectures, discussions and assignments, students will become familiar with basic trends and in and debates about the economic development of Europe and the World.

Texts: All texts are available at the **Penn Bookstore** (36th & Walnut Sts.):

Required: Rondo Cameron & Larry Neal, *A Concise Economic History of the World: From Paleolithic Times to the Present*, 5th ed. (Oxford, 2015);
Douglass C. North, *Structure and Change in Economic History* (New York, 1982);
Richard Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore, 2008);

Philip D. Curtin, *The World and the West: The European Challenge and the Overseas Response in the Age of Empire* (Cambridge, UK, 2002).

Assignments: Class members complete a series of written assignments during the semester: weekly document exercises; a take-home, mid-term examination (due 8 March) and a take-home, final examination (due 14 May).

The **weekly document** exercises are straightforward. Each Monday, students will receive a historical document, a primary source that relates to one or more of the themes to be addressed during the following week.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 a basic 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 by the following Monday.

The **mid-term and final examinations** will take the form of an essay in response to one or more written prompts of the student's choice. Because both are take-home examinations, they will be "open book", for which specific limits on time and length will be set.

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| Grading: | Class participation: | 20% |
| | Document exercises: | 20% |
| | Mid-term examination: | 20% |
| | Final examination: | 40% |

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: (Active attendance at all lectures is mandatory. Repeated absence will affect a students' final grade.)

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| 12 Jan. | Introduction |
| | Read: No readings. |
| | No document exercise. |

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| 17 Jan. | MARTIN LUTHER KING JUNIOR DAY: NO CLASS |
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| 17 – 19 Jan. | <p>The Origins of Economic Life</p> <p>Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 1; North, c. 7.</p> <p>Document exercise due Monday, 24 January.</p> |
| 24 – 26 Jan. | <p>The Ancient Economy</p> <p>Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 2; North, c. 8.</p> <p>Document exercise due Monday, 31 January.</p> |
| 31 Jan. – 2 Feb. | <p>Crisis and Transition</p> <p>Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 3; North, c. 9; Goldthwaite, Introduction and c. 1.</p> <p>Document exercise due Monday, 7 February.</p> |
| 7 – 9 Feb. | <p>Medieval Agriculture</p> <p>Read: North, c. 10; Readings available on Canvas.</p> <p>Document exercise due Monday, 14 February.</p> |
| 14 – 16 Feb. | <p>Medieval Exchange</p> <p>Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 4; Goldthwaite, c. 2-3 and 6-7; Readings available on Canvas.</p> <p>Document exercise due Monday, 21 February.</p> |
| 21 – 23 Feb. | <p>Medieval Manufacturing</p> <p>Read: Goldthwaite, c. 4-5; Readings available on Canvas.</p> <p>Document exercise due Monday, 28 February.</p> |
| 28 Feb. – 2 Mar. | <p>Contraction, Reorganization, Expansion</p> <p>Read: North, c. 11; Readings available on Canvas.</p> <p>Document exercise due Monday, 14 March.</p> |
| 7 – 9 Mar. | <p>SEMESTER BREAK: NO CLASSES.</p> <p>No document exercises.</p> |
| 14 – 16 Mar. | <p>The “First Globalization”</p> <p>Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 5; Curtin, pt. 1; Readings available on Canvas.</p> |

**MID-TERM EXAMINATION: 14-21 March.
No document exercise.**

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| 21 -- 23 Mar. | Consequences for Europe Read: Curtin, pt. 2; Readings available on Canvas. MID-TERM EXAMINATION DUE: 21 March. Document exercise due Monday, 28 March. |
| 28 – 30 Mar. | New Structures and Institutions Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 6; Curtin, pt. 3; Readings available on Canvas. Document exercise due Monday, 4 April. |
| 4 – 6 Apr. | Production and Consumption Read: Readings available on Canvas. Document exercise due Monday, 11 April. |
| 11 – 13 Apr. | Agricultural Revolution Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 7; Readings available on Canvas. Document exercise due Monday, 18 April. |
| 18 – 20 Apr. | Patterns and Costs of Industrialization, I Read: Cameron & Neal, c. 8; Curtin, pt. 4; North, c. 12. Document exercise due Monday, 25 April. |
| 25 Apr. | Patterns and Costs of Industrialization, II Read: Readings available on Canvas. FINAL EXAMINATION: 25 April-4 May. No document exercise. |
| 4 May | FINAL EXAMINATION DUE BY NOON. |