

# Economic History of Europe

## Economics 4514

### Course Syllabus and Reading List

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#### **Objectives of the course:**

This course examines the transformation of European economies from a circumstance in which Malthusian population pressure on resources was the dominant historical force to one in which the growth of population and income per-capita has become the norm for industrialized countries. This transformation, covering the period from roughly 1200-1900, marks one of history's great changes, yet the underlying causes of the process are not completely understood. This course aims to provide both historical perspective and experience in the application of economic analysis to major issues. The topics of the course divide into three chronological and logical sections. The first examines the preconditions of European economic development, paying particular attention to the demographic, technological and institutional changes that supported growth. The second section focuses on the Industrial Revolution in England and Europe, asking what exactly it was, how can it be measured and who benefited? The third examines the establishment, or not, of modern economic growth in other European economies. The examination of these themes will comb22.07 uropecs ta1 T benefitedcenefiid26g8C The

## **Group Presentation:**

You will be in a group of 3-4 and be responsible for a 25 minute presentation of a journal article from the reading list. This presentation will be followed by questions on your article from the class and from Professor Shiue. You will know the date and article for your presentation by the mid-September. Prior to your presentation, each group may schedule an optional organizational meeting with Professor Shiue. On the day of the presentation, each group will hand in a six page written assessment of the article and a one-page handout for the class. The six page assessment will briefly summarize the article, and place the article in context and discuss its strengths and weaknesses.

## **Examinations:**

There will be two examinations. The midterms will be an in-class, closed book exam, scheduled for October 3 and November 7. Midterms will ask for short answers on analytical questions. The final will be a take-home comprehensive exam and will ask you to assess articles from the course in an essay response. The final will be posted by Friday December 5 and due in my office no later than Monday, December 15 at 1 pm. All final examinations must be double spaced and typed.

**Attendance:** The success of this class depends in large part upon your participation. This in turn requires you to do the readings and show up on a consistent basis because you cannot participate if you don't show up. I will factor your attendance as part of the class participation grade.

**Policy on Late Work:** NO makeup examinations for missed exams and NO late papers will be accepted. If you miss the midterm or group presentation due to an emergency, you must present adequate documentation of the emergency or your grade for that exam will be zero.

**Honor Code:** Cheating and plagiarism are academic offenses and any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will be sanctioned. If there is any person in the class who is uncertain about what constitutes either cheating or plagiarism, he/she should consult me the University of Colorado Catalog. In addition, obtaining material from "pre-written" sources is *definitely* considered an academic offense! Department policy regarding disabilities and religious holidays is given on the first page of the course site <



Weeks 5 and 6

- Debraj Ray, *Development Economics*, “Economic Growth” and “New Growth Theories” (E-reserve)
- Easterlin, Richard A. 1981. Why Isn't the Whole World Developed? *Journal of Economic History*, vol. 41(1): 1-19.

Part II. Oct 6 – Nov 5

### 3. The Economics of Population

Weeks 7 and 8

- E.A. Wrigley and Roger S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541-1871: A Reconstruction*, Ch. 11. (E-reserve)
- David R. Weir, “Life Under Pressure: France and England, 1670-1870” *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (Mar., 1984), pp. 27-47
- Cormac O'Grada, *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine* pp. 3-46. (E-reserve)

**Group #1** - E.A. Wrigley “Explaining the rise in marital fertility in England in the ‘long’ eighteenth century” *Economic History Review*, August, 1998.

**Group #2** - Kevin O'Rourke “Did the Great Irish Famine Matter?” *Journal of Economic History*, March 1991.

### 4. Medieval Europe: Resources and Expansion and Agricultural Change

Week 9

- Cameron and Neal, pp. 165-168, ch. 3
- Mokyr, *The Lever of Riches*, chs. 3 and 4
- E.L. Jones, *European Miracle*, chs. 3 and 4 (E-reserve)
- Robert C. Allen, *Enclosures and the Yeoman*. (E-reserve)
- D. McCloskey, “The Prudent Peasant: New Findings on Open Fields” *The Journal of Economic History*, 51(2), June 1991.

### 5. Institutional Change

Week 10

- Cameron and Neal, pp. 154-155
- Douglass North, “Institutions” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 5 (2), 97-112
- E.L. Jones, *The European Miracle*, Ch. 5 (E-reserve)

**Group #3** - Douglass North, and Barry R. Weingast, “Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England” *Journal of Economic History*, December 1989.

**Group #4** - DeLong, J. Bradford and Andrei Shleifer. 1993. Princes and Merchants: City Growth Before the Industrial Revolution. *Journal of Law and Economics* 36(5): 671-702.  
Download from: [http://econ161.berkeley.edu/pdf\\_files/Princes.pdf](http://econ161.berkeley.edu/pdf_files/Princes.pdf)

### 6. The Rise of States and Empires: Trade and Finance

Week 11

