ECONOMICS 3420
Fall 2014
U.S. Economic History
T/TH 9:30am-10:50am

INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. Mary Mathewes Kassis
Email: mkassis@westga.edu (this is the best way to reach me outside of office hours)
Office phone: 678-839-4777
Office hours: T/TH 9:00am-9:30am, 10:50am – 1:50pm and by appointment
Office: Miller Hall 1310

REQUIRED TEXT:


EXPECTED LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

This course will focus on the growth and development of the U.S. Economy from the colonial era through the Great Depression and the New Deal. To this end, students are expected to achieve the following learning objectives:

- Students will learn how to use economic theory to analyze historical trends and events such as industrialization and the Great Depression (LG4, LG7, LG8)
- Students will gain an appreciation of how economic history can help us understand current economic problems (LG4, LG7, LG8)
- The student’s communication, research and computer skills will be improved through in-class discussion, writing assignments and an individual presentation (LG1, LG3)

Note: A complete list of expected learning goals (LG) for the Economics Department can be found at the department web site (http://www.westga.edu/econ/index_12904.php).

SEATING ASSIGNMENTS:

Students will be asked to fill out a seating chart on the third day of class (September 2) based on the seat that they have chosen for that day. Students will be asked to sit in the same seat every class period following.

ASSESSMENT:

You will be graded based on your performance on three exams, class participation and reading check assignments, and a paper and presentation as described below. Extra credit is not an option in this course.

Exams (63% of final grade) – There will be three exams. The exams will be a combination of multiple choice questions, short answer problems, and essays. The questions will be based on reading assignments (both the textbook and any assigned articles), lectures, homework, and class
discussions. Each exam is worth 21% of your grade. **You are responsible for bringing scantron sheets (Form 882-E) and a No. 2 pencil for each exam.**

**Examination Schedule:**

Exam #1 – September 23  
Exam #2 – October 21  
Exam #3 – November 20

**Class Participation and Reading Check Assignments (17% of final grade)** – Completing all assigned reading before class is extremely important for this course. Students are expected to attend class and to participate in class discussions. It is also expected that students will arrive on time and not leave early. Various types of assignments will be used to evaluate students’ preparedness for class including pop quizzes, in-class activities, and homework assignments. Class participation and Reading Check Assignments will be worth 17% of your grade. The two lowest reading check assignment scores will be dropped when calculating your final grade.

Although class attendance and participation are essential to success in the class, the professor will **not** drop students from the class due to nonattendance. Students who wish to withdraw from the class must do so by contacting the registrar’s office directly. The last day to withdraw with a grade of W is October 17.

**U.S. Economic History Issue Paper and Presentation (20% of final grade)** – Each student will select an economic history issue or event to research and analyze. Students are required to read three articles from professional economic journals on their topic (articles we already read for class cannot be used as one of the required articles for your paper). The paper should contain a brief description of the economic issue or event being analyzed, a summary of each article, and a discussion of how these articles add to our understanding of the event or topic. Your topic and a bibliography are due on October 28. The paper should be 3-4 pages in length (typed, double spaced) and is due on November 13. The paper is worth 10% of your final grade and will not be accepted late. The paper must be original for this class – a paper written for another class is not acceptable.

At the end of the semester, students will present their research to the class. The 8-10 minute presentation should describe the issue or event being analyzed, share the research from the three articles and describe how this research adds to our understanding of the historical issue or event. The dates for class presentations will be December 2 and December 4 during class and December 11, which is the final exam period (8:00-10:30am). Each student will be assigned a specific presentation date. The presentation will be worth 10% of your grade.

All students are expected to attend all the presentations days. An unexcused absence from a presentation day will result in an automatic 10 point reduction in your paper and presentation grade.

**Makeup Exams** – Students who miss an exam or presentation will only be allowed to makeup the missed exam or presentation in the case of a **DOCUMENTED medical emergency.** Students should contact the professor as soon as possible after missing the assignment to make arrangements for a makeup exam or presentation. **Students who do not contact the professor**
within one week of missing an exam or presentation will not be allowed to makeup the assignment.

**GRADING SCALE:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
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**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

Cheating and plagiarism are violations of the University’s Honor Code. The penalty for academic dishonesty may include an F in the class.

**CLASS CANCELLATION:**

In the event that classes are canceled on the day of an exam or that an assignment is due, the exam will be given or the assignment will be due on the first day following the cancellation.

**CREDIT HOUR POLICY (3 credit hours):**

For approximately fifteen weeks, students in this class will generally spend 150 minutes with direct faculty instruction (either face-to-face or online) and work about 360 minutes outside of the classroom each week. This out-of-class work may include, but is not limited to, readings, assignments, projects, group work, research, and test preparation.

**OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION:**

All official communications from the university will be through campus email (MyUWG). The professor will use CourseDen for general class announcements.

**EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT:**

No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, or disability, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by UWG.

**AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT:**

University of West Georgia adheres to affirmative action policies to promote diversity and equal opportunity for all faculty and students.
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Please carefully review the information at the following link:

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

COURSE TOPICS:

Why Study Economic History?
The Colonial Economy
Causes of the American Revolution
The Revolutionary War, Independence, and the Constitution
Money and Banking before the Civil War
The Antebellum Transportation Revolution
Early Industrialization in the U.S.
The South before the Civil War - The Economics of Slavery
The Economic Impact of the Civil War
The Post Civil War South – Reconstruction and Debt Peonage
Post-Civil-War Banking
Railroads and Economic Growth
The Development of the American Labor Market
Structural Changes in the Post Civil War Financial Markets
The Great Depression and the New Deal

The specific Reading Assignments for each class will be announced in class and posted in CourseDen.

This course syllabus provides a general plan for the course. However, deviations may be necessary.