Culture and Institutions in Economic History
Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
Summer term 2013

Faculty

Prof. Davide Cantoni; email: cantoni@lmu.de.
Office hours: Fridays, 11:00 (please sign up in advance). Other good chances to talk: after classes.
Teaching assistant: Daphne Alvarez Villa; email: daphne.alvarez@econ.lmu.de.

Meeting times and locations

Lectures:

- Fridays, 12:00–14:00 (c.t.). Room: Prof.-Huber-Platz 2 (Lehrturm), Room W 101.

Recitation sections:

- Wednesdays, 16:00–18:00 (c.t.) Room: Prof.-Huber-Platz 2 (Lehrturm), Room W 201; or
- Wednesdays, 18:00–20:00 (c.t.) Room: Prof.-Huber-Platz 2 (Lehrturm), Room W 201.

Sections begin in the second week of the term. In the first three weeks, recitation sections will provide a concise summary of the econometrics background needed for this class. They are thus recommended also for the students choosing the 3 ETCS option (see below).

Credits

90 minutes’ exam, 6 ECTS points. Final exam will be on Friday, July 19, 2012, 18:00–20:00. Room: Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1 (A), Room A 240.

Alternatively, the course can be attended for 3 ETCS credit points. In this case, the final exam will last 60 minutes and cover only the contents discussed in lectures (not the recitation sections).
Course Overview

This course aims to explain the very long run trends in economic history. The two main questions that underlie the classes will be: (1) why are our societies so much more productive/rich than our ancestors’ ones? and (2) why are there such large differences in income levels across societies today? In particular, this class will try to understand how differences in institutions and in culture can help understanding diverging patterns of economic development across the world: between European countries, between the “Western” world and the former colonies, between North and South America etc…

This course is complementary, but does not build on the course “Geographie und Technologie in der Wirtschaftsgeschichte,” which is usually offered in the winter term.

Course prerequisites

It is expected that you have completed the compulsory sequence of economics classes in the economics (BSc) major; in particular, you should have a solid background in econometrics (equivalent to successful attendance of Empirische Ökonomie I and ideally also II) and in macroeconomics. This is a course that is not generally suitable for economics minors (Nebenfachstudenten) unless they meet these prerequisites.

(Tentative) Syllabus

Week 2 (April 26): Introduction; definition of institutions.


Weeks 5–6 (May 17, May 24): European institutions in the early modern period: merchant classes and representation, Atlantic trade, the French Revolution, end of the Ancien Régime.

Weeks 7–9 (May 31, June 7, June 14): Colonial institutions: elites, geographic endowments, exploitation and slavery, inclusive institutions, Neo-Europes.

Week 10 (June 21): Religion: Protestantism, the Weber hypothesis, human capital.

Weeks 11–13 (June 28, July 5, July 12): Culture: definition; trust, social capital, gender roles.

Week 14 (July 19): Summary and conclusion (final exam in the evening).
Literature

Books

There is no required textbook for this class. All lectures will be based on research papers (see below). A very readable introduction to the topic of institutions, and thus a highly recommended reading, is the following book:


Papers

These papers (and likely more) will be the basis for the lectures. The papers will be posted on the course website (on LSF) before classes.

Week 1:


Weeks 2–3:


Weeks 4–5:


Weeks 6–8:


**Week 9:**


**Weeks 10–13:**


