

**Fall 2012**  
**ECN 451-3: Seminar in European Economic History**

**T, 1:30-2:20 RCB 7101**  
**R, 12:30-2:20 RCB 7101**

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**Office hours: TR 2:30 to 3:30, WMC 4665**

### *Overview*

The focus of this course will be long-run economic growth, particularly within the European context. Topics to be included will be the determinants of pre-industrial agriculture and commerce, the role of European exploration and colonization, the industrial revolution, and the comparative performance of western nations versus the rest of the world. *NB: Since this is a seminar course, students will be required to **actively** discuss material in class.*

### *Organization*

The course website can be found at [www.sfu.ca/~djacks/](http://www.sfu.ca/~djacks/)  
Here, you will be able to download the syllabus, the reading list and assignments, and reports.

### *Grading*

Grades will be given on four elements: an in-class presentation, in-class participation/summaries, a midterm exam, and a (non-comprehensive) final exam.

In the first and second weeks, I will distribute a sign-up sheet for the presentations, so you can arrange the dates and topics according to your tastes. After the second week, I will randomly assign any remaining presentations. You will be expected to present for 20 minutes on your assigned reading. You must also submit a report (minimum of 5 pages) using the website, [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com), before your presentation (this lets you use your report as a guide for your presentation). Finally, you will be responsible for generating 3 multiple choice questions based on your reading.

The presentations and reports should be clearly organized to summarize the central arguments of the paper and any concerns about it. Some questions to be answered when preparing them are:

- What is the big question? Why is it interesting?
- How does the paper go about answering its question?
- What kind of evidence does the paper rely on?
- Do the models, specifications, or tests make sense?
- What are the conclusions?
- What are the main problems/criticisms/possible extensions?

*NB: what you should NOT do is present a blow-by-blow summary of the paper; try to answer the above and integrate some of the background readings into your presentation.*

Once a week, we will have a directed reading up for discussion. Your job is to read this paper carefully and come to class with a good knowledge of the paper. You will also be required to turn in a two page summary of the paper using the website, [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). This is a critical part of your grade, so I suggest not blowing it off. *You should also come to class with at least one question for me.*

The midterm and final exams will be ½ multiple choice, ½ essay questions. The multiple choice will be drawn from lecture material and the student presentations. I will also distribute a list of essay questions for you to study. The exams will include three of these questions. Hopefully, this will allow you time to draw some conclusions as well as dig up any other sources you might want to use.

Your final grade will be based on the following weights:

- 1.) in-class presentation, worth 25% of the final grade
- 2.) in-class participation/summaries, worth 25% of the final grade
- 3.) one midterm exam, worth 25% of the final grade
- 4.) one final exam, worth 25% of the final grade

### ***Texts***

No required text. Required readings will be taken from journal articles and books and can be downloaded from the course website.

### ***Course Schedule***

The following are the proposed course topics. Entries with:

a \* are background readings which I expect all of you to have had a look at by the start of class.

a \*\* are the readings available for presentation.

a \*\*\* are the assigned readings for each week and which you need to write a one-page summary.

I highly encourage you to read as widely as possible—even drawing in other sources if you wish.

***NB: you may need to download the articles from an SFU IP address; also, the reading list is subject to changes due to enrollment.***

*09/04: Introduction and overview of the course*

*09/06 & 09/11: The big questions and approaches*

\*On economic growth: Kuznets, “Modern Economic Growth”

\*On technology: Mokyr, *Lever of Riches*, 3-18.

\*On institutions: North, “Institutions” and/or North, “Economic Performance”

\*On markets/values: Landes, “Why are We So Rich and They So Poor?”

\*On geography: Jones, “The European Miracle”

*09/13 & 09/18: The Malthusian world*

- \*Parker, "Opportunity sequences in European history"
  - \*Wrigley, "Why poverty was inevitable in traditional societies"
  - \*Miller and Upton, "The Malthusian Model"
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- \*\*Lee, "Population in Preindustrial England"
  - \*\*Kelly and O'Grada, "Living Standards and Mortality"
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- \*\*\*Clark and Hamilton, "Survival of the Richest"

*09/20 & 09/25: Early Agriculture*

- \*Kahan, "Notes on Serfdom in Western and Eastern Europe"
  - \*Thirsk, "The Common Fields"
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- \*\*North and Thomas, "The Rise and Fall of the Manorial System"
  - \*\*Fenoaltea, "The Rise and Fall of a Theoretical Model"
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- \*\*\*Clark, "The Cost of Capital and Medieval Agricultural Technique"

*09/27 & 10/02: Early Commerce*

- \*Greif, "Institutions and International Trade"
  - \*Pirenne, "Chapter IV" & "Chapter V"
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- \*\*Greif, "Reputation and Coalitions in Medieval Trade"
  - \*\*Greif et al., "Coordination, Commitment, and Enforcement"
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- \*\*\*Milgrom et al., "The Role of Institutions in the Revival of Trade"

*10/04 & 10/09: An Agricultural Revolution*

- \*de Vries, "Change in Rural Society, 1000-1800"
  - \*Price, "The Transformation of Agriculture"
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- \*\*Clark, "The Economics of Exhaustion, the Postan Thesis, and the AR"
  - \*\*Allen, "The Nitrogen Hypothesis and the English Agricultural Revolution"
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- \*\*\*Wrigley, "Urban Growth and Agricultural Change"

*10/11 & 10/16: Trade and Growth in the Early Modern Period (exam questions distributed)*

- \*North and Thomas, "The Early Modern Period"
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- \*\*Reed, "Transaction Costs and Differential Growth"
  - \*\*De Long and Shleifer, "Princes and Merchants"
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- \*\*\*Acemoglu et al., "The Rise of Europe"

*10/18: Midterm*

*10/23 & 10/25: The Industrial Revolution*

- \*Jones, "A Know-All's Guide to the Industrial Revolution"
  - \*McCloskey, "1780-1860: a survey"
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- \*\*Crafts, "British Economic Growth, 1700-1831"
  - \*\*Temin, "Two Views of the Industrial Revolution"
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- \*\*\*Crafts, "Exogenous or Endogenous Growth?"

*10/30 & 11/01: Standards of living & the Industrial Revolution*

\*Ashton, "The Standard of Life of the Workers in England"

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\*\*Lindert and Williamson, "English Workers' Living Standards"

\*\*Nicholas and Steckel, "Heights and Living Standards"

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\*\*\*Voth, "The Longest Years"

*11/06 & 11/08: Can exploitation explain "The Rise of the West"?*

\*Anderson, "Development as Exploitation"

\*Frank, "World Capital Accumulation, Trade Patterns, and Modes of Production"

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\*\*O'Brien, "European Economic Development"

\*\*Solow, "Caribbean Slavery and British Growth"

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\*\*\*Acemoglu et al, "Colonial Origins"

*11/13 & 11/15: Can geography explain "The Rise of the West"?*

\*Diamond, *Guns, Germs and Steel*, pp. 405-20

\*Jones, "The European Miracle"

\*Crosby, "Introduction"

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\*\*Sachs and Warner, "Tropical Underdevelopment"

\*\*Sokoloff and Engerman, "Institutions, Factor Endowments, & Paths of Development"

*11/20 & 11/22: Can values explain the "The Rise of the West"?* **(exam questions distributed)**

\*Landes, "Why Europe and the West? Why not China?"

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\*\*Goldstone, "Cultural Orthodoxy, Risk, and Innovation"

\*\*Goldstone, "Gender, Work, and Culture"

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\*\*\*Clark, "Why isn't the Whole World Developed?"

*11/27 & 11/29: To be announced*

*12/07 (Friday, 12:00-3:00 pm): Final exam*