ECON 271-1 Economic History of Europe  
Spring 2013  

Lectures: MW 4.45-6.00pm  
Location: Furman 209  

Professor Claudia Rei  
Office Hours  
Department of Economics  
Calhoun Hall, Room 405  
Ph: 615-322-2482  
(claudia.rei@vanderbilt.edu)  
M 9.30-11am  

TA: Michael Moody  
Office Hours  
M 12.30-2pm  
(michael.q.moody@vanderbilt.edu)  

Course website available at  
http://www.vanderbilt.edu/oak/  

Course information  
This course explores topics of interest to economic historians such as the long run 
international convergence/divergence, property rights, long-distance trade, the industrial 
revolution, international migrations, wage growth and inequality. We focus on Western Europe 
and the specificities that allowed for the rise of the West in order to understand this 
region’s long-term economic success. To this end, we will first study historical changes 
in the medieval economy and then focus on the Industrial Revolution and its 
consequences. The course does not follow the traditional historical narrative of events 
therefore topics are not necessarily organized chronologically.  

Prerequisites  
Since this is an upper-level economics course, at a minimum, students should have 
successfully completed intermediate microeconomic theory (Econ 231 or equivalent) and 
intermediate macroeconomic theory (Econ 232). Students should also be familiar with 
basic principles of regression analysis and statistics.  

Course Requirements  
Students must complete three project reports, an in-class project presentation, and 
two exams (midterm and final). The project reports each count for 5 percent of the course 
grade (the three best reports will be counted). The midterm and the project presentation, 
each count for 25 percent of the course grade. The final exam counts for 35 percent of the 
course grade. The final exam counts for more than the midterm because it covers more 
material. There is no extra credit.  

Graduate students  
Graduate students registered in the course have specific requisites regarding the 
project reports, which should be more research oriented. Please see Professor Rei for the 
specifics on this matter.
Project Reports and Presentation

Five projects assigned throughout the semester, will give students the opportunity to explore relevant topics of the course in terms of data handling and paper analysis. Each student must individually file a 5-page report for each project, except for the project presented in class. Students will be divided into five groups and each group must organize one class presentation for a given project. Student participation is encouraged and counts towards each student’s presentation grade. There will be specific guidelines for each project, but student creativity will be rewarded. The presentation should take about 45-50 minutes and should aim at describing the work of the group on a given project as well as potential research avenues within the topic. The presenting group is responsible for stimulating class discussion for the entire 75 minutes of the class. Project reports for non-presenting students are due in paper form, in class on the day of the corresponding presentation (please check the schedule below). Email, or out of classroom, submissions will not be accepted. All deadlines are firm; extensions are not granted; please plan accordingly.

Objectives

Beyond learning about the economic history of Europe, the course aims at the development of a set of skills that will be useful in the future. Students will be required to work in groups as well as on their own, present their work for an audience, commit to deadlines, read and comprehend large amounts of information and reproduce it in as fine or as little detail according to a given amount of time or writing space.

Exams

The midterm exam is scheduled for Wednesday, February 27 in class. The final exam is scheduled for Thursday, May 2 @9am. There is no alternate exam date. Everyone must take the exams at the scheduled time. If you must be absent from an exam for medical reasons, please email Professor Rei ahead of time if possible.

Honor Code

All submitted work is subject to the Vanderbilt’s code of honor. Cases of suspected academic misconduct and plagiarism will be referred to the honor council. Be vigilant in the use and citation of others’ work in your project reports and presentations. For help with citations, please use the available online resources of Vanderbilt’s library: http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/research/Citing.shtml and http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/peabody/research/apacitation.html

Course Readings

A list of compulsory readings (available on OAK) will help students understand the material covered in lectures. It is recommended that students read the corresponding papers before each topic is covered in class. In addition, the slides corresponding to each topic will be available online by the end of each topic.

The Field of Economic History

Long Run Convergence/Divergence

Project 1 Handling data: Convergence and Divergence

Pre-Industrial Europe – European Expansion

Pre-Industrial Europe – Institutions and Property Rights

Project 2 – Property Rights

The Industrial Revolution and the Rise of the West

Project 3 – Industrial Revolution

Prices and Wages

Population and Economic Growth

Project 4 Population
- World Bank database project
- The Economist, “End of history and the last woman.” August 22, 2011.

Inequality and Living Standards
Project 5  Inequality and Living Standards
- The World Top Incomes Database
# Economics 271 Course Calendar, Spring 2013

(subject to change due to time constraints)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture Topic</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Introduction and logistics of the course</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 9</td>
<td>The Field of Economic History</td>
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<td>January 14</td>
<td>Long Run Convergence-Divergence</td>
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<td>January 16</td>
<td>Long Run Convergence-Divergence</td>
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<td>January 21</td>
<td>No Class – Martin Luther King Day</td>
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<td>Long-Run Convergence-Divergence</td>
<td>Project 1 – Presentation &amp; Reports</td>
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<td>January 30</td>
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<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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<td>March 27</td>
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<td>April 22</td>
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<td>May 2 @9am</td>
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