



## Economics 455: The Path to the Modern Economy

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**Office Hours:** Monday, 2:20-4:20pm, or by appointment

### Prerequisites

Economics 200, 201

### Course Objectives

By the end of this course, the student should be able to understand the various mechanisms that contribute to long-run economic growth, including (but not limited to):

- Institutions (political, legal, economic, religious, etc.)
- Markets
- Technology and innovation
- Human capital
- Culture and religion

The student will be exposed to various theories on why the “modern economy” rose when and where it did. Students will be expected to analyze these theories and apply critical thinking to compare and contrast the theories.

Students will also be required to:

- Write a group term paper analyzing at least two theories on the “rise of the modern economy”
- Present, with their group, their paper to the rest of the class
- Participate in class discussions

### Course Description

This course analyzes the evolution of the modern economy from various perspectives. It overviews various arguments for why the modern economy arose first in Europe and not in other parts of the world, such as China or the Middle East.

### Course Learning Goals

This course is aimed at facilitating critical thinking. This class will provide: 1) a general overview of the forces that facilitate modern economic growth; 2) a comparison between various leading theories on the “rise of the West.”

### **Remote Instruction**

This semester will be unlike any other. As new information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic emerges, we may have to change how the course is taught.

- **Instructional strategy**: We will begin the semester remotely, with all students expected to attend class via Zoom. If we are allowed back on campus, we will transition to a hybrid model, where some students are in class and others attend via Zoom. Since this is a participation-heavy course, students will be expected to attend at the time of the course (1pm, Monday and Wednesday) unless they have an excused absence.
- **Excused absences**: Beyond the normal excused absences (illness, death of a family member, etc.), I am willing to be lenient on what constitutes an excused absence. We are living through a very stressful time. In addition to the pandemic, high unemployment and important social justice issues can make everyday life seem overwhelming. Your mental, emotional, and physical health are of utmost importance to me and to the university. If you need a mental health day, just ask for it. All I ask is that you do not unduly take advantage of my leniency. I am instituting this policy to protect you and to give you the most out of your Chapman experience.
- **Technology requirement**: Since we start the semester by using Zoom, you will need a computer or tablet with camera and speaker or headphones. You will also need an internet connection. This will be required throughout the semester in any case, since homework is turned in via Canvas.
- **Attendance**: Even though we will be remote, attendance is still required! Class participation is essential to this course. I will count your attendance on Zoom just as I would if you were in the physical classroom.
- **Attire**: I don't care what you wear, but please try to only wear attire you would wear to class if we were to meet in person. This hopefully goes without saying, but yeah, wear a shirt.
- **Office hours and group meetings**: I will conduct office hours every Monday after class via Zoom. There will be an open link which you can hop onto. If you need to meet at another time or if your group (for the group project) would like to schedule a meeting, we will schedule a separate time to meet on Zoom.

**All of the above, with the exception of excused absences, may be subject to change with little to no notice, depending upon state, local, and University guidelines.**

### **Recording**

In this class, software will be used to record live class discussions. As a student in this class, your participation in live class discussions will be recorded to assist those who cannot attend the live session, or to serve as a resource for those who would like to review content that was presented. These recordings will be made available only to students who are enrolled in the class, and only during the period in which the course is offered. All recordings will become unavailable to students in the class shortly after the course ends. Students who prefer to participate via audio only will be allowed to disable their video camera so only audio will be captured. Please discuss this option with me.

### **Safety Protocols in Response to COVID-19**

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, Chapman University has developed the CU Safely Back program (CUSBP) and mandatory safety measures (<https://news.chapman.edu/coronavirus/>). The

University's mandatory safety measures may be stricter than local, state or federal guidelines and may be subject to change at any time. Students are expected to adhere to the University's safety measures while attending classes, including when entering and exiting classrooms, laboratories, or other instructional areas. Individual faculty may choose to have requirements for their courses that are stricter than the University's. **Safety precautions and procedures may change in response to emerging findings and the recommendations of scientific experts and authorities.** Refusal to abide by the University's mandatory safety measures or to the safety requirements specific to this course will result in your being asked to leave the area immediately and may result in an administrative dismissal from this course.

The COVID-19 pandemic requires all of us to accept the possibility that changes in how this course is taught may be required and that some changes may occur with little or no notice. For example, some or all of the in-person aspects of a course may be shifted to remote instruction. If this occurs, you will be given clear instructions as to how to proceed. The uncertainty of the situation is not ideal for any of us. We must all try to approach this situation with good-will, flexibility, and mutual understanding.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

Chapman University is a community of scholars that emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work and academic dishonesty of any kind will be subject to sanction by the instructor/administrator and referral to the university Academic Integrity Committee, which may impose additional sanctions including expulsion. Please see the full description of Chapman University's policy on Academic Integrity at <https://www.chapman.edu/academics/academic-integrity/index.aspx>.

### **Chapman University's Students with Disabilities Policy**

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the [Office of Disability Services](#). If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 if you have questions regarding this procedure, or for information and to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

### **Equity and Diversity Policy**

Chapman University is committed to ensuring equality and valuing diversity. Students and professors are reminded to show respect at all times as outlined in [Chapman's Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#). Any violations of this policy should be discussed with the professor, the [Dean of Students](#) and/or otherwise reported in accordance with this policy.

### **Important Addresses and Telephone Numbers**

Disabilities Services:	Tutoring, Learning, and Testing Center:
410 N. Glassell	Cecil B. DeMille Hall 130
Phone: (714) 997-6778	Phone: (714) 997-6828

### **Withdrawal and Drop Policy**

See your Chapman University Catalogue. The last day to add courses is Friday, September 11. The last day to drop courses without record of enrollment is Friday, September 11. The last day to withdraw from courses is Friday, November 6.

### **Required Texts**

Acemoglu, Daron, and James A. Robinson. 2019. *The Narrow Corridor: States, Societies, and the Fate of Liberty*.  
Scheidel, Walter. 2019. *Escape from Rome: The Failure of Empire and the Road to Prosperity*.  
van Bavel, Bas. 2016. *The Invisible Hand?: How Market Economies have Emerged and Declined Since AD 500*.  
Rubin, Jared. 2017. *Rulers, Religion, and Riches: Why the West Got Rich and the Middle East Did Not*.

### **Course Requirements**

The course will consist of one group presentation and one term paper. The term paper is due *via Canvas* on the final day of class, at the beginning of class. Any papers turned in after this time will be accepted, but will carry a penalty of 10 points per 24-hour time period.

### **Grading**

There are 100 possible points. The grading breakdown is as follows:

Class Participation	20 points
Homework	10 points
Individual Presentation	20 points
Group Term Paper	15 points
Group Presentation	15 points
Final Exam	20 points

I grade on a ten-point scale:

<u>Numeric Grade</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numeric Grade</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numeric Grade</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
≥93	A	80-82.99	B-	67-69.99	D+
90-92.99	A-	77-79.99	C+	63-66.99	D
87-89.99	B+	73-76.99	C	60-62.99	D-
83-86.99	B	70-72.99	C-	<60	F

### **Class Participation**

Class participation is vital in this class. It is expected that you will have done all of the readings *in advance* of the class for which they are assigned. For most of the course, we will be discussing the four assigned books. This will consist of a 15-minute student presentation (see below) introducing the main topics, and then a discussion for the remainder of class. You are expected to speak in every class, and you will be graded on the quality of your comments. It will be obvious if you are unprepared, and this will be reflected in your grade.

### **Homework**

With the exception of the first class and the group presentations at the end of the semester, there will be homework due at the beginning of *every class*. The homework is simple: please submit on Canvas 5 questions related to the readings for class. They can be questions you would like answered, questions you think would open up conversation, or questions linking multiple readings. These questions are meant to facilitate conversation. When the conversation stalls, I may choose one of you at random to read one of your questions to the class.

### **Individual Presentations**

Each class will be split into two parts, corresponding to two readings. At the beginning of each part of each class, one student will be assigned to present an overview of the material. The presentation should take 10-15 minutes. Each student will make two presentations during the semester. Presentations will begin the third week of the semester. I will be randomly assigning each student to presentation slots after the second week. Your slot may be subject to change as students add and drop the course. You will need to turn in your presentation slides via Canvas.

### **Group Term Paper and Presentation**

Please see the handout for details on the term paper and presentation.

### **Course Outline**

This is a tentative schedule and it is subject to change at any time. All due dates will not change, however.

#### *August 31*

Introduction to the course

#### *September 2*

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, Introduction

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 1, p. 1-28

*September 7*: Labor Day

#### *September 9*

1<sup>st</sup> half: van Bavel, ch. 1, p. 18-38

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 1

**Individual presentation times will be assigned at the end of class**

**Groups will be assigned at the end of class**

#### *September 14*

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 1

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 2, p. 33-53

#### *September 16*

1<sup>st</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 2, p. 53-73

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 7, p. 219-232

#### *September 21*

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 7, p. 232-258

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 3

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September 23

1<sup>st</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 4, p. 97-112  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 4, p. 113-125

September 28

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 9, p. 307-320  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 2

September 30

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 9, p. 320-334  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 3

**Due date for groups to choose the book for their paper and presentation**

October 5

1<sup>st</sup> half: van Bavel, ch. 2, p. 41-60  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 6, p. 152-178

October 7

1<sup>st</sup> half: van Bavel, ch. 2, p. 60-78  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 6, p. 178-200

October 12

1<sup>st</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 7  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 5

October 14

1<sup>st</sup> half: van Bavel, ch. 3, p. 97-124  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 6, p. 119-131

October 19

1<sup>st</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 6, p. 131-148  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: van Bavel, ch. 3, p. 124-142

October 21

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 10, p. 337-367  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 8, p. 237-250

October 26

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 10, p. 367-392  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 8, p. 251-265

October 28

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 10, p. 392-419  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 11, p. 338-355

November 2

1<sup>st</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 11, p. 355-369  
2<sup>nd</sup> half: van Bavel, ch. 4, p. 145-170

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November 4

1<sup>st</sup> half: van Bavel, ch. 4, p. 170-188

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 7

November 9

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 11, p. 420-453

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 8, p. 169-184

November 11

1<sup>st</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 11, p. 454-471

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Rubin, ch. 8, p. 184-200

November 16

1<sup>st</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 14, p. 427-444

2<sup>nd</sup> half: van Bavel, ch. 6, p. 251-276

November 18

1<sup>st</sup> half: Acemoglu and Robinson, ch. 14, p. 444-463

2<sup>nd</sup> half: Scheidel, ch. 12

*November 23, 25:* Thanksgiving recess

November 30, December 2, 7, 9

Group Presentations

**December 9: Term Paper Due**

December 17

**Final Exam**, 1:30 PM