ECON 306-2: History of Economic Thought

3 Credits • Fall 2021

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Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 10:00–11:00 and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives:

This course will serve as an introduction to the history of economic thought. Given the almost exclusive domination of a single school of economic thought in the mainstream literature, i.e., neoclassical economics seasoned to a certain extent with a Keynesian flavor, the course will introduce the student to other modes of thinking. The latter includes the Classics, Marxian, Sraffian, Post-Keynesian, and Institutional economics.

The course has several aims:

1) To instill in the student the awareness of the multiplicity of viewpoints concerning the same economic phenomena in the modern world.

2) To lay bare the ideological assumptions behind the way economists look at economic phenomena.

3) To bring out the relationship between developments in the material world and the world of ideas.

4) To compare and contrast different viewpoints on certain economic issues of fundamental importance (e.g. market vs. state intervention, market vs. planning, development, globalization, economic crisis, etc.).

Course Requirements:

Grading

Mid-term Exam..........................%25
Final Exam..........................%35
Critical Commentaries/Charts [(5+5) x 3].................%30
The final and mid-term exams will be based upon pre-circulated essay-type study questions and short definitional questions.

**Critical Commentaries/Charts** will be based on the assigned readings and WSJ pieces. The structure of the critical commentaries and charts will be explained in the first class meeting. By following the link below, you can get a reduced student subscription rate for the WSJ ($4 for 4 weeks, $12 for the term): [https://r.wsj.com/PROF57fk](https://r.wsj.com/PROF57fk)

An example of Chart is available through the Moodle page of the course.

An example of Critical Commentary is available through the Moodle page of the course.

**Note on Academic Honesty**

Penalties for any breach of academic honesty (such as giving or receiving help or using outside material during exams or plagiarism) are severe and include University disciplinary action. Information on the University’s academic honesty policy and examples of academic dishonesty are available under Academic Honesty Policy at [http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/academic_policy](http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/academic_policy).

**Course Requirements:**

**Textbooks**


*Wall Street Journal*, to be used for critical commentaries and charts.

**Supplementary books**


**Original sources**


Marx, Karl, *Capital, Volume 1, Volume 2, and Volume 3*:

Marshall, Alfred. *Principles of Economics*


Sraffa, Pierro. *Production of Commodities by Means of Commodities*

Veblen, Thorstein. *The Theory of the Leisure Class*

Lenin, V. I. *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*

**Weekly Readings:**

**Week 1: Introduction, the rise of capitalism and the methodology of economics**

**Slides**

HL: 3-22

**Why should you study economics?**

**Pin Worker Productivity since Adam Smith**

**Supplementary**


**Week 2: The Mercantilists and the Physiocrats**

**Slides Week2 A**

**Slides Week2 B**

**Slides Week2 C**

RH: 24-28 and 35-40.

**Supplementary**

D. A. Fusfeld: 7-22
L. G. Magnusson. *Mercantilism* in CHOET
Week 3: The Classical School: Adam Smith-I

Slides Week 3A

Slides Week 3B

Slides Week 3C

Slides Week 3D

HL: 40-64.
RH: 73-105

Smith's Pin Factory

Supplementary

D. A. Fusfeld: 7-22
W. J. Barber: 17-22

Week 4: Adam Smith-II, Thomas Robert Malthus, and David Ricardo

SLIDES are available in a folder (SLIDES) at the bottom of the Moodle page.

HL: 65-90.
RH: 106-126.

Supplementary

D. A. Fusfeld: 23-36

Week 5: David Ricardo and the Classical theory of capital accumulation

HL: 91-124.

International Trade: Cases from the USA (video)

Supplementary

D. A. Fusfeld: 37-48
W. J. Barber: 76-93

Week 6: Mid-Term Exam; October 7th

Week 7: Karl Marx and Marxian Economics-I

SLIDES are available in a folder (SLIDES) on top of the Moodle page.

HL: 202-219
RH: 161-183
**Supplementary**

PolyluxMarx is a Berlin-based collective that produced a guidebook for Capital, vol. I and a series of PowerPoint slides.

D. A. Fusfeld: 57-74

*Week 8: Karl Marx and Marxian Economics-II*

HL: 220-246  
RH: 183-195

**Supplementary**


Heinrich Answers Critics

Slides

*Week 9: Thorstein Veblen and the institutional economics*

HL: 316-346 and 495-501  
RH: 247-263

**Supplementary**


*Week 10: Theories of imperialism: Hobson, Luxembourg, and Lenin*

HL: 347-370

**Supplementary**

**Week 11: The Keynesian Revolution I**

HL: 398-433

Supplementary

Annenberg Learner: The Great Depression and the Keynesian Revolution (video)

**Week 12: The Keynesian Revolution II and Post-Keynesians**

HL: 493-495 and 501-509

RH: 275-296

G. Harcourt on Keynesians and Post-Keynesians

Supplementary

E. R. Canterbery: 250-272

**Week 13: Pierro Sraffa**

HL: 509-516


Amartya Sen. 2016. “*Sraffa's Ideas and his Books*” at the conference launching *The Catalogue of the Library of Piero Sraffa*

Ajit Sinha. n.d. "*A Comment on Sen’s ‘Sraffa, Wittgenstein, and Gramsci’*” unpublished paper

**Week 14: Heterodox Economics and Its Future**

HL: 517-544

Matias Vernengo, 2014. *Radical and Heterodox Economics*

David Harvey. 2018. *Value in Motion.*