

**ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES**  
**ECONOMICS 4524 – Spring 2011**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
(Subject to revision)

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INTRODUCTION

There cannot be a better time to take this course. Much of the media discussion of the current recession/depression harkens back to the Great Depression and to America's economic past. This course examines North America's past from the perspective of economics. In designing the course, I had two objectives in mind. First, topics have been chosen to provide a perspective on the development of American economy from the Colonial period to the present. Second, this is a course in applied economics. To that end, topics have been chosen to illustrate how evidence and theory are combined to further our understanding of particular historical events. The economist, by his or her training, tends to become expert in the construction and manipulation of theory or of hypothesis. The historian tends to become expert on sources, evidence, and their

Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are academic offenses and any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will be sanctioned. If you are unsure or uncertain about what constitutes either cheating or plagiarism, please consult me, the University of Colorado catalog, or the honor code.



B. The Rise of Big Business

A & P, ch.17

Mark Aldrich, **Safety First; Technology, Labor, and Business in the Building of American Safety**, 1870-1930 ch. 1 and ch. 5

Alfred D. Chandler, "Organizational Capabilities and the Economic History of the Industrial Enterprise," **Journal of Economic Perspectives** 6 (Summer 1992)

Video: *Mr Sear's Catalogue*

C. Banking and Finance

A & P, ch. 18

Milton Friedman and Anna Schwartz, **A Monetary History of the United States, 1867-1960**, Princeton University Press, 1963.

Richard Sylla, "Federal Policy, Banking Market Structure and Capital Mobilization in the United States, 1863-1913," **Journal of Economic History**, vol 29, 1969.

6. **Interwar Period and Great Depression**

A. The Market for Labor

A & P, ch. 8 and ch. 19

Claudia Goldin, *Understanding the Gender Gap*, ch. 2 and ch. 3

Carolyn M. Moehling, "Family Structure, School Attendance, and Child Labor in the American South in 1900 and 1910", *Explorations in Economic History*, January 2004.

B. The Roaring Twenties

A & P, ch. 20

Martha Olney, **Buy Now, Pay Later**, University of North Carolina Press, 1991.

C. The Great Depression

A & P, ch. 21 and ch. 22

Video: *Job at Ford's No. 1*

7. **New Frontier and the Great Society**

William J. Collins, "The Political Economy of State-Level Fair Employment Laws 1940-1964," *Explorations in Economic History*, January 2003.

Lee Alston and Joseph Ferrie, "Paternalism in Agricultural Labor Contracts in the U.S. South: Implications for the Growth of the Welfare State," *American Economic Review*, Vol 83, September 1993.