

**ECON 2234H1F/423H1F**  
**Topics in North American Economic History**  
**Course Outline**

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Class Hours: Mon 12-2 TC24  
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**Web management:**

This course is managed by the university's learning management system: Blackboard. You can access it via <http://portal.utoronto.ca/>

The course outline as well as other handouts, links, announcements et cetera will be available through the Portal (Blackboard). Please check it weekly.

**Contacting Me:**

Feel free to come and talk to me during office hours or class time (or you can drop by, but it is safer to make an appointment first).

**E-mail policy:**

Please include the course code in the subject of your message (ECO2234 or ECO423). It is also helpful to ensure that your userid or the name that appears as the sender is your actual name and not a nickname. These practices will help ensure that your message does not get stuck in my spam filter and subsequently deleted. To this end it is also best to use your UofT account (e.g. utor). If I do not respond within 48 hours please re-send the message or leave a phone message—your original message may not have been received.

**Course Description**

This course is a seminar style course with emphasis on discussion, not lecturing. It is topic oriented, with particular attention to applied microeconomics and the themes of incentives, institutions, and the impetus for change. We study various labour market institutions, tackle the evolution of production from artisan shop to factory production and examine issues of institutions and growth.

*Prerequisites for undergraduate students:* [ECO206Y1](#)(70%), [ECO227Y1](#)(70%) /([STA257H1](#)[70%],[STA261H1](#)[70%]), or permission of the instructor.

## Evaluation

	Weight (percent)
1) Article presentation	10
2) Essay presentation	5
3) Essay	45
4) Exam	35
5) Participation	5
Total	100

### 1) Article presentation

You will present one of the articles we cover in class. I will circulate a list of possible articles. You are expected to present a clear summary of the article, steer the class through difficult sections of the paper and lead the discussion. It is often useful to use power point or provide a handout, especially when discussing the main points you wish to raise; describing a model and certainly for any tables.

### 2) Essay presentation

You will present a brief summary of your essay to the class a week or two before your essay is due. The purpose of the presentation will be to share your findings with the class and to gain feedback on your project.

### 3) Essay

The paper can be on any aspect of economic history with a focus on North America and applied empirical microeconomics. At the core of your paper will be a dataset that you will use to investigate your topic. Many datasets are available on-line. I will offer guidance, but you are free to define the topic of your paper. You should choose something with a narrow focus—a well-defined, specific problem. Your paper should be similar in format to a journal article. It should include an introduction, a summary of the relevant literature, a description of the data, your empirical investigation, findings and conclusions. We will discuss the essay requirements in detail throughout the course. A separate document will circulate with more details concerning the essay.

### 4) Final Examination

The exam will be comprehensive. Previous test questions will be circulated prior to the exam. There will be some restrictions on the test questions available to each student, such that if you presented on a topic and/or wrote your paper on a topic, you cannot write an exam question on that topic. The restrictions will be clearly identified prior to the exam.

### 5) Participation

Participation in class discussion is very important to the success of the course. You will be expected to be prepared for class (having read the readings for the week) and to participate in class discussion.

## Important dates and penalties

Class on March 19<sup>th</sup> is cancelled; a make-up lecture will be scheduled.

The essay is due April 2. The penalty for lateness is 2% per day.

## Course Material

Most of the required readings can be downloaded from a University of Toronto computer (or one with a proxy library account).

If you are unfamiliar with the basic historic experiences we are discussing, you may find a text such as Atack and Passell, A New Economic View of American History 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, WW Norton, 1994 helpful. It is available in Robarts library.

For the empirical work for your essay, I strongly encourage you to use STATA. If you are unfamiliar with STATA, learning this language will be very useful for you in other aspects of your academic and possibly your future professional life. It is the software used in higher-level econometric courses as well as other applied courses in economics. You can purchase a site license for STATA from the library. See the Licence Software Office website on the Library website:

<http://www.utoronto.ca/ic/software/>

and (for a list of software):

<http://www.utoronto.ca/ic/software/alphalist.html>

If you follow those links to the STATA website, you will see the options for STATA plans.

<http://www.stata.com/order/new/edu/gradplans/cgpcampus-order.html>

For our purposes, the 6 month STATA/IC 12 (STATA for moderate-sized datasets) is sufficient (small stata is not big enough). The cost is \$75.

- denotes required readings.

## **Gender roles**

- Alesina, Alberto, Paola Giuliano and Nathan Nunn. "On the Origins of Gender Roles: Women and the Plough" Working Paper, 2011.

## **Married Women Property Laws**

- Gillian Hamilton, "Property Rights and Transaction Costs in Marriage: Evidence from Prenuptial Contracts", *Journal of Economic History* 59 (1) (1999), 68–103.
- Geddes, Rick & Dean Lueck. "The Gains from Self-Ownership and the Expansion of Women's Rights." American Economic Review, vol. 92, no. 4, September 2002, pp. 1079-92
- Geddes, Lueck and Tennyson. "Human Capital Accumulation and the Expansion of Women's Economic Rights." Working paper, 2010.

Fernandez, R. "Women's Rights and Development" NBER Working paper, 2010.

### **Invention**

- Kenneth Sokoloff, "Inventive Activity in Early Industrial America: Evidence from Patent Records, 1790-1846," Journal of Economic History, 48 (Dec. 1988): 813-30.
- Nicholas, Tom. "The Role of Independent Invention in U.S. Technological Development, 1880-1930." Journal of Economic History 70, no. 1 (March 2010)

### **Patent Laws**

- Moser, Petra. "How Do Patent Laws Influence Innovation? Evidence from Nineteenth Century World Fairs." American Economic Review 95 (4) 2005: 1215-1236.

Nicholas, Tom. "What Drives Innovation" *Antitrust Law Journal* (forthcoming).

Nicholas, Tom. "Did R&D Firms Used to Patent? Evidence from the First Innovation Surveys." Journal of Economic History 71, no. 4 (December 2011)

### **Did Innovation matter?**

- Atack, Bateman, Haines and Margo. "Did Railroads Induce or Follow Economic Growth? Urbanization and Population Growth in the American Midwest, 1850-1860." Social Science History 34 (2010): 171-97.
- Dittmar, Jeremiah. "Information Technology and Economic Change: The impact of the printing press" Quarterly Journal of Economics 2011.

### **Patent Laws & Married Women's Property Rights**

Zorina Khan "Married Women's Property Laws and Female Commercial Activity: Evidence from United States Patent Records, 1790-1895." Journal of Economic History 1996, Vol 56 (2): 356-88.

### **Apprenticeship**

- Hamilton, G. "The Efficiency of the Market for Apprentices in North America: Contract Length and Information." EEH 33, no.4 (1996): 496-523.

### **Relative Efficiency of Factory Organization**

- Sokoloff, Kenneth and Claudia Goldin. "Women, Children, and Industrialization in the Early Republic." JEH 42, No.4 (1982): 741-74.
- Clark, Gregory. "Factory Discipline." Journal of Economic History, vol. 54, no. 1, March 1994, pp. 128-63

- Atack, Haines, Margo. "Railroads and the Rise of the Factory: Evidence from the United States, 1850-70." Ch. 7 *Economic Evolution and Revolution in Historical Time*, ed. Paul Rhode, Joshua Rosenbloom & David Weiman. (see google books)
- Hamilton, G. "The Decline of Apprenticeship in North America: Evidence from Montreal." *Journal of Economic History* 60 (Sept., 2000): 627-664.

### **Slavery research: U.S. view**

- Fogel and Engerman. "The Relative Efficiency of Slavery: A comparison of Northern and Southern Agriculture in 1860." *Explorations in Economic History*, Spring 1971, 8: 353-67.
- Steckel, R. "A Peculiar Population: The Nutrition, Health and Mortality of American Slaves from Childhood to Maturity." *Journal of Economic History* 46 No.3 (1986): 721-39.
- Pritchett, J. and H Freudenberger. "A Peculiar Sample: The Selection of Slaves for the New Orleans Market," *Journal of Economic History* 52 no 1 (1992): 109-27.

### **Slavery: The view from Africa**

- Nunn, Nathan. "[The Long Term Effects of Africa's Slave Trades.](#)" *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 123, No. 1, February 2008, pp. 139-176.

### **Institutions: constitutions**

Douglass North, "Institutions," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 1991, 5, 97-112.

- Douglass North and Barry Weingast. "Constitutions and Commitment: Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice." *Journal of Economic History*, December (1989): 803-32.

Rafael La Porta, "Legal Determinants of External Finance." *Journal of Finance*. 52 (July 1997): 1131-50.

Robinson, James A., and Steven C. A. Pincus. "What Really Happened During the Glorious Revolution?" Working Paper.

### **Institutions: Factor Endowments & Geography:**

- Sokoloff, Kenneth L; Engerman, Stanley L "[Institutions, Factor Endowments, and Paths of Development in the New World.](#)" NBER Working Paper, October, 2002. (also *Economia: Journal of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic Association*, vol. 3, no. 1, Fall 2002, pp. 41-88)
- Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson, "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation," *American Economic Review*, 91 (Dec. 2001): 1369-1401.