

## **Economics 108: Economic History**

**Instructor:** Mike Thicke

**Office:** Room 204

**Office Hours:** To be determined

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**Lectures:** Monday 12:45-14:00

**Seminars:** Tuesday 14:10-15:25

### **Objectives**

The main objectives of this course are to introduce you to episodes in history that are of particular relevance to economists today, and for you to understand how economists think about those episodes.

### **Grading Scale**

A	86-100%	B-	70-72%	D+	57-59%
A-	80-85%	C+	67-69%	D	53-56%
B+	77-79%	C	63-66%	D-	50-53%
B	73-76%	C-	60-62%	F	< 50%

### **Marking Scheme**

10%	Lecture Attendance
10%	Seminar Participation
50%	Assignments
10%	McCloskey Assignment
20%	Best 2/6 Summaries
20%	Best 1/2 Essays
30%	Final Exam

## Lectures

Lecture attendance is mandatory. I will take attendance each class. If you have a good reason for missing a class, please let me know beforehand.

During lectures please do not:

- Use your phones or send texts.
- Talk to your friends.
- Browse the internet or play games on your computer.

## Seminars

Seminar attendance is mandatory. The seminars will focus on understanding and discussing the week's reading (see schedule below). You will be graded primarily on the quality of your participation in discussions and activities. I will also assign short in-class writing assignments. I will deduct marks for arriving late to seminars.

## Readings

There are seven readings for the course. They can all be downloaded from the course bulletin board (e-course). You are responsible for completing the reading each week, and there will be exam questions based on the readings.

## Assignments

Due dates for assignments are firm. This is because the seminars will discuss the material of the assignments each week. Assignments are due before the week's lecture (Monday 12:45).

You may discuss readings and assignments with your peers, but you must complete the assignment on your own.

I will attempt to return assignments as quickly as possible, but I may not always be able to return them by the next class.

## McCloskey Assignment (Due: January 20)

Referring to McCloskey's "Does the Past Have Useful Economics?", argue for or against the thesis: *All economics students at AUCA should be required to take a course in economic history*. Your assignment will be graded based on the persuasiveness of your argument and your demonstrated understanding of McCloskey's essay. Your assignment should be approximately 1-2 pages, double-spaced using normal margins. Assignments should be submitted on the e-course site.

## Summaries

For the six other readings, you must submit a reading response for at least two of them. Responses will be due the day the readings are discussed in lecture (see schedule below). Late assignments will not be accepted.

Each summary should be 300-400 words. It should summarize the main points of the reading in your own words.

Your grades for these assignments will be based on the following criteria:

- **Structure:** The papers should all be clearly organized and should avoid digression.
- **Clarity:** In addition to having a clear overall structure, sentences and paragraphs should be clear and direct.
- **Understanding:** For each assignment you will need to demonstrate that you have understood and thought about the text. Do not try to capture every single point the author makes. Instead, try to identify the most important points of the reading and explain those. Summaries that explain a few points well will receive better marks than summaries that explain many points poorly.

If you submit more than two responses, your final grade will include only your marks from the best two responses you have submitted. *This means that the earlier you do your assignments the better chance you will have of doing well.*

You must submit at least one summary for weeks 3-5 and at least one summary for weeks 6-8.

## Essays

There are two essay assignments. You are required to do at least one. Essays should be 3-4 double-spaced pages in length. Each essay will have to argue for or against a thesis which will be provided on the course website. Your argument should refer to the course readings for support. The first essay will cover material from weeks 3-5 and the second essay will cover material from weeks 6-8. The first essay is due on Monday of week 6 and the second essay is due on Monday March 10<sup>th</sup> (the first day of spring break).

We will discuss the essays further in seminar.

## Final Exam

The final exam will be held during the week before spring break. We will discuss times in class. It will consist of fill-in-the-blank questions, single sentence questions,

and paragraph-length questions. It will be based on both the lecture material and the readings. You will not have to memorize all of the people, places, and dates we discuss in class but should be familiar with the most important ones. More details will be provided later in the term.

There will be a final exam review session to be scheduled later in the term.

### Academic Integrity

AUCA's Code of Conduct can be found at this address:

[https://www.auca.kg/en/registrar\\_code\\_conduct/](https://www.auca.kg/en/registrar_code_conduct/). Please especially refer to Part III: Section A (Academic Misconduct). You are not permitted to cheat, fabricate your work, plagiarize, interfere with another student's work, violate the rules of this syllabus, or facilitate another student's academic dishonesty. Make sure to understand what these mean.

***\*\*Failure to understand these regulations will not be accepted as an excuse for breaking them.\*\****

### Class Schedule

Week	Date	Reading	Assignment
1	Jan 13		
2	Jan 20	McCloskey (1976), "Does the Past Have Useful Economics?"	McCloskey assignment
3	Jan 27	Allen (2011), "Chapter 1: The Great Divergence" in <i>Global Economic History: A Very Short Introduction</i>	Summary #1
4	Feb 3	Landes (1998) "Why Europe? Why Then?" in <i>The Wealth and Poverty of Nations</i>	Summary #2
5	Feb 10	Goldstone (2013) "War, Capital, and Wages"	Summary #3
6	Feb 17	Galbraith (2004) "Vision and Boundless Hope and Optimism" in <i>The Great Crash of 1929</i>	Essay #1, Summary #4
7	Feb 24	Galbraith (2004) "Something Should Be Done?" in <i>The Great Crash of 1929</i>	Summary #5
8	March 3	Farlow (2013) "Crash" in <i>Crash and Beyond</i>	Summary #6
	March 10		Essay #2

*Note: Assignments are due Monday 12:45 on the week they are listed.*