

Las Positas College  
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### Course Outline for ECON 5

### ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

Effective: Spring 2010

#### I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

ECON 5 — ECONOMIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES — 3.00 units

Origins and historical development of major economics forces, institutions and philosophies that have shaped the U.S. market economy. 3 hours lecture.

3.00 Units Lecture

#### Grading Methods:

Letter or P/NP

#### Discipline:

	<b>MIN</b>
<b>Lecture Hours:</b>	54.00
<b>Total Hours:</b>	54.00

#### II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

#### III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

#### IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

**Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:**

- A. identify the major economic forces (e.g., business cycles), institutions (e.g., Federal Reserve System), and philosophies (e.g., different and evolving market models) that have influenced the development of the U.S. market economy up to the present time
- B. evaluate the role that these major economic factors play in the performance of today's economy

#### V. CONTENT:

- A. From the Colonial Period to the U.S. Constitution
  1. The Colonies Before 1763
  2. Trade, Taxes and the American Revolution
  3. The Post Revolutionary War Economy
  4. U.S. Constitution and the New Economic Order
- B. The Early American Economy: 1790 to the Civil War
  1. Rise of the Railroad Economy
  2. Economic Fluctuations before the Civil War
  3. Slavery and Economic Development
  4. The Civil War Economy
- C. 1870-1910: Sources of Economic Instability
  1. The long depression of 1873-77 and 1893-97
  2. The Panic of 1907
  3. Income distribution trends at the turn of the century
- D. Restructuring of the US Economy: Taxes, Finance, and World War I
  1. Origins and establishment of the Federal Reserve System
  2. The financial crisis of 1914
  3. Wartime economic policy
  4. Impact of the war on production, income distribution and trade
- E. The U.S. Economy in the 1920s
  1. Postwar Readjustments and the Recession of 1920-21
  2. Banking and Finance, Deregulation, and Stock Market boom
  3. Federal Reserve and Monetary Policy
- F. 1929-1934: Origins and Causes of the Great Depression
  1. The Stock Crash of 1929 and Banking Panics of 1930-33
  2. Fiscal and Monetary Policies during the Depression
  3. Early policy responses of Hoover and Roosevelt regimes
- G. 1935-1941: The New Deal and Recovery from Depression
  1. Roosevelt policies from the NRA through New Deal
  2. Monetary explanations for recovery
  3. Role of international factors in recovery
  4. The 1938 recession
- H. The Wartime Economy in America
  1. Debate on the effects of World War II on recovery

2. Fiscal and Monetary policies and industrial transformations
3. Bretton Woods and post-war (2nd) restructuring of the U.S. economy
4. The New U.S. role in the world economy
- I. The Post World War II Economic Boom: 1947-1970
  1. Economic Growth and Its Determinants
  2. The Expanding Government Sector
  3. Post war recessions and inflation
- J. 1970-1978: The Economic Interregnum
  1. Medicare, social spending and the economic effects of Vietnam War
  2. Nixon's 'New Economic Policy' of 1971 and end of the Bretton Woods regime
  3. The Great Inflation of the 1970s
  4. Stagflation, the deep recession of 1974-75
- K. 1978-1989: The Reagan Revolution and Economic Restructuring
  1. The origins of Reaganomics, 1978-1982.
  2. Federal Reserve, interest rates, dollar valuation, and the recessions of 1980-82
  3. Supply side theory and tax acts of 1981, 1982 and 1986
  4. Federal spending, budget deficits, and monetary policy
- L. 1990-2000: Continuities and Discontinuities in Economic Policy
  1. Clinton monetary policy at the beginning and end of the decade
  2. Accelerating free trade: from NAFTA to China PNTR
  3. Technology, productivity, and the 'New Economy'
  4. New revolutions in finance: hedge funds, securitization, and financial instability
- M. The Post-2000 US Economy: Limits of Restructuring and Economic Imbalances
  1. The dot.com bust of 2000-01; the recession of 2001 and 9-11
  2. Monetary policies, Housing boom, and the speculative economy
  3. Financial and Banking crises of 2007-08
  4. Recession of 2008

#### VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** -
- B. **Discussion** -
- C. **Lecture** -
- D. **Audio-visual Activity** - Films and other audio-visual aids
- E. Student participation

#### VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Students are expected to review recommended textbook readings, and occasional additional materials, before each class.
  1. Answer questions regarding each week's reading material(s)
  2. Ask questions that clear up any gaps in the student's understanding of the assigned reading material(s)
  3. Participate intelligently in answering other students' and the instructor's in-class questions
- B. Students are to write a term paper on a topic in U.S. economic history chosen from an extensive list provided by the instructor.
  1. Using print and online resources, conduct a search by subject for relevant articles
  2. Note relevant information from acquired materials, analyze the information, and organize it in a logical order
  3. Present the information in form of a 3-5 page long term paper

#### VIII. EVALUATION:

- A. **Methods**
  1. Exams/Tests
  2. Papers
  3. Class Participation
- B. **Frequency**
  1. Three tests spaced evenly through the term
  2. Term paper submitted at the end of the term
  3. Final examination at end of the term

#### IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Atack, Jeremy and Peter Passell *A New Economic View of American History: From Colonial Times to 1940*. 2nd ed., W.W. Norton, 1994.
2. Rosenberg, Samuel *American Economic Development Since 1945: Growth and Rejuvenation*. revised ed., MacMillan, 2003.
3. Rasmus, John *The Trillion Dollar Income Shift: Essays on the Origins of Income Inequality in America*., Kyklos Productions, L.L.C, 2007.

#### X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. #2 pencils
- B. Scantron forms for tests