

## Money, Trade, & Power: The History of Capitalism

History 278 / Spring 2020

Our goal in this course is to explore the dynamic, restless nature of capitalism. Like every other aspect of human affairs, the economy has a history. Those who hope to shape the future will find it worthwhile to consider the many forms capitalism has taken over the past several centuries. How did banks and joint-stock companies emerge? Why did capitalism facilitate overseas expansion and imperial subjugation? What is “growth,” and why did it not accelerate until the era of industrialization? How did various societies seek to mitigate the business cycle and enhance social welfare? How did modern corporations emerge, and what role did they play in driving the globalization of capital?

This course seeks to balance between *historical* and *conceptual* approaches. The textbook readings and most class sessions will emphasize historical narrative, while the written assignments will focus on schools of economic thought.

### Course Objectives (Learning Outcomes)

Students will enhance their ability to synthesize complex themes and contemplate global dynamic systems. They will deepen their experience in reading non-fiction by working through highly regarded trade-press books. A series of short papers will provide experience in analyzing historical primary sources and articulating views about economic issues.

### Course requirements

Participation (10% of course grade). You will be expected to keep up with the readings and demonstrate your familiarity with them during class sessions. The occasional in-class quiz will be administered to help keep you on track.

Reaction papers (40% of course grade). These five short papers, to be submitted online, will ask you to respond to primary sources with well-reasoned, well-written arguments. Each paper will be due at the end of a weekend (Sunday @ 11:59 pm) unless otherwise noted.

Midterm examination (20% of course grade for each). This in-class exam, scheduled for March 2, will feature handwritten essays asking you to synthesize key themes.

Final exam (30% of course grade). This, too, will involve handwritten essays. One essay will cover course themes since the second midterm; the other will ask you to reflect on the semester as a whole.

### Course Readings

Lizzie Collingwood, *The Hungry Empire: How Britain's Quest for Food Shaped the Modern World* (New York: Vintage, 2017). ISBN (paperback): 978-0-09958-695-1. [Note: this book is also marketed under the title *The Taste of Empire*. Either will do; the contents are the same.]

Jeffrey A. Frieden, *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Norton, 2006). ISBN (paperback): 978-0-393-32981-0.

Jürgen Kocka, *Capitalism: A Short History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017). ISBN (paperback): 978-0-69117-822-6.

In addition, there will be a substantial set of primary and secondary sources posted on-line on the course Blackboard page.

### **Course Policies**

Attendance is essential. You are allowed six unexcused absences; after that, each absence will be counted against your participation grade. It is not my job to “approve” absences one way or another, but if you expect to be representing the university in an official capacity (sports, band, etc.), please let me know in advance.

Common courtesy suggests that you should arrive on time. If you must leave early, please inform us ahead of time and then raise your hand at the appropriate time. A classroom discussion is not the same thing as a television viewing! Your coming and going may represent a significant distraction.

Contemporary students are tempted by all kinds of electronic distractions that inhibit their ability to learn effectively in class. I am going to ask that you refrain from using any electronic devices during class: no laptops, no tablets, and no phones will be permitted during lecture or discussion sections. This is your opportunity to perfect the art of note-taking by hand!

Academic integrity: The assignments in this course require you to formulate complex thoughts in your own words. Attempts to pass off another’s words as your own – be it on an exam or in your primary source exercise – will carry harsh penalties. Plagiarized papers will earn a “zero” for the assignment and may lead to further consequences, including notification of the Dean of Students Office. The “University Regulations” handbook contains further information on dishonesty. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing [integrity@purdue.edu](mailto:integrity@purdue.edu) or by calling 765-494-8778.

Disclaimer: In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted, once the course resumes, on the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructor via email or phone.

### **Contact Information**

Prof. Gray ([wgray@purdue.edu](mailto:wgray@purdue.edu))  
Office hours in University Hall 328: MW 1:30 – 3:00 or by appointment  
Office phone (765) 494-2772

January 13	Introduction	
January 15	What is capitalism?	Kocka 1-24
January 17	Medieval Europe: guilds & bankers	Kocka 25-53
January 20	NO CLASS (MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY)	
January 22	Portugal, Spain, France	
January 24	Greener pastures: England, Ireland, & beyond	Collingwood (LC) 3-40
January 27	The culture of consumption	LC 71-96
January 29	The Dutch in the East Indies	Kocka 54-94
January 31	The Atlantic trade: sugar and slaves	LC 41-69
February 3	Debating British mercantilism	<b>Smith documents (BB)</b>
	PAPER #1 due Feb. 4 @ 11:59 pm	
February 5	The cotton textile revolution	
February 7	Atlantic rebellions	LC 97-141
February 10	Napoleon's wars	
February 12	Full steam ahead	
February 14	Opium, tea, and... free trade?	LC 145-158
February 17	Manchester Liberalism	<b>Cobden documents (BB)</b>
February 19	Marx and the workers	<b>Marx/Engels (BB)</b>
February 21	Marx and capital	<b>Marx (BB)</b>
	PAPER #2 due Feb. 23 @ 11:59 pm	
February 24	Land, finance, and industry in the USA	
February 26	Slavery and westward expansion	
February 28	The civil war and global capitalism	
March 2	MIDTERM EXAM	
March 4	Corporations and the rise of branding	

March 6	The model of heroic entrepreneurship	Kocka 95-161
March 9	Communication & transport revolutions	Frieden 1-55; LC 213-224
March 11	Continental empires: opening up interiors	Frieden 56-79; LC 159-195
March 13	Overseas empires: patterns of subjugation	Frieden 80-104; LC 199-211
March 23	The gold standard & birth of the Fed	Frieden 105-123
March 25	The Great War and the global economy	Frieden 127-154
March 27	The 1920s: a weak recovery	Frieden 155-172; LC 225-248
March 30	The crash of '29	Frieden 173-194
April 1	The New Deal – a reinvention of capitalism?	
April 3	Keynes and his critics	<b>Keynes excerpts (BB)</b>
	PAPER #3 due April 5 @ 11:59 pm	
April 6	Autarky and aggression in the 1930s	Frieden 195-228
April 8	Social Democracy in power	Frieden 229-250
April 10	Bretton Woods & the new international economy	Frieden 253-277
April 13	The postwar boom	Frieden 278-300; LC 249-260
April 15	Import substitution: the periphery lags	Frieden 301-320
April 17	The end of Bretton Woods	Frieden 321-360
April 20	Crisis & recovery: capitalism in the 1970s	Frieden 363-91
April 22	Origins of the “Washington consensus”	Frieden 392-412; <b>BB docs</b>
	PAPER #4 due April 23 @ 11:59 pm	
April 24	A new market revolution: the 1990s	Frieden 413-34; LC 261-276
April 27	Trans-Atlantic crises and the politics of bailouts	Frieden 435-56
April 29	The “battle for Seattle”	Frieden 457-76
May 1	Populism vs. capitalism	Kocka 162-169