This course explores the transformation of economic life from pre-colonial times to the American Civil War. We will give special attention to the following questions: How was economic life transformed through the interaction of Native American, European, and Mexican cultures? How and why did capitalism take root in colonial North America? To what degree was the American Revolution about economics? What were the causes and consequences of early industrialization? Why did the American North, South, and West follow distinct economic paths? How profitable was slavery, and is the answer important? What did the railroad contribute to U.S. antebellum economic growth? How were American wealth and income distributed before 1865? To address these and related issues, we will analyze primary sources by ordinary and elite historical actors as well as secondary writings by economists and historians.

**Goals:** This course is designed to 1) strengthen student knowledge of U.S. economic and business history and 2) strengthen student skills in historical research and interpretation. The latter skills include the ability to distinguish among a variety of genres of primary and secondary historical texts; the ability to use historical texts appropriately and effectively in academic work; and the ability to define and argue persuasively a historical thesis.

**Requirements:** We will investigate each topic through multimedia presentations, discussions, and required readings. All students are required to complete two papers, five quizzes one midterm exam, and one final exam. Course grades will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date due</th>
<th>percent of course grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>each class</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes (5)</td>
<td>random dates</td>
<td>10 (2 percent each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>October 27</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>December 17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Class participation.** Classroom discussions are one of the most important components of the course. The best way to earn high marks for discussion is to complete each
week's required reading **before** class meetings; bring to class specific questions and issues for discussion; and participate regularly and constructively in class discussions.

**Make-up Exams and Late Papers.** If for any family or medical reason you find it absolutely necessary to miss an in-class examination, you must contact the instructor before the examination to obtain his consent to your absence if you wish to take a make-up exam. Papers are due *in class* on their due dates. Unless you make other arrangements with the instructor, late papers will be penalized one half letter grade (5 points) for each day of tardiness.

**Disputing Grades.** If you believe one of your assignments was graded unfairly, reread the assignment and the professor’s comments, write down the reasons why you think the grade was inappropriate, and make an appointment to meet with the professor.

**Students with Disabilities.** Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester if you require any disability-related special accommodations.

**Religious Observances.** The University System of Maryland policy provides that students not be penalized because of observances of religious beliefs, but rather shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment missed due to individual participation in religious observances. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester if you are going to miss any assignments due to religious observances by personally handing him written notification of the projected absence at the beginning of the semester.

**Academic Integrity.** The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit [http://www.shc.umd.edu](http://www.shc.umd.edu).

To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, remember to sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment)."

**Classroom Etiquette.** The University values the diversity of its student body and is committed to providing a classroom atmosphere that encourages the equitable participation of all students. At ALL times, students must be respectful of others’ opinions. If you disagree with someone you should express your alternative view using the evidence that led you to your interpretation, just as a professional historian would do. Personal comments, inappropriate language, insults, and raised voices are not conducive to learning and will not be tolerated in the classroom. Food and outside
reading material, such as The Diamondback, should not be brought to class. Computers are for note-taking only, not for surfing the internet, IMing friends, or checking email. Cell phones and i-pods must be switched off. If you arrive after class has begun, please enter quietly in the rear of the classroom.

**Required readings.** The following books are available for purchase at the University Book Center. Those marked with an asterisk are on course reserve.


**Schedule of Topics and Readings**

9/1: **Course Introduction**

9/3: **North America before England**
Hughes & Cain, pp. xviii-8; Blaszczyk & Scranton, pp. 1-23

9/8: **Early Settlements and Regional Specialization**
Hughes & Cain, pp. 8-43; begin reading Bailyn

9/10: **Colonial Merchants**
finish Bailyn; Blaszczyk & Scranton, ch. 3

9/15: **Early Capitalism and Its Opponents**
Blaszczyk & Scranton, ch. 2

9/17: **The Money Problem**
Hughes & Cain, ch. 3

9/22: **Economic Causes of the Revolution**
Hughes & Cain, pp. 66-74

9/24: **Revolution, Confederacy, and Constitution**
Hughes & Cain, pp. 74-92
9/29:  **Westward Ho**  
Hughes & Cain, pp. 92-104

10/1:  **Immigrants and Workers, Free and Slave**  
Hughes & Cain, ch. 6

10/6:  **The Early Manufacturing Debate**  
Licht, ch. 1

10/8:  **A Legal Regime for Development**  
Hughes & Cain, ch. 7

10/13:  **Banks and Other Corporations**  
Blaszczyk & Scranton, ch. 4

10/15:  **Building Transportation Infrastructure**  
Hughes & Cain, ch. 8

10/20:  no class

10/22:  **Railroads and Modern Management**  

10/27:  midterm exam

10/29:  **The Political Economy of the Cotton South**  
Hughes & Cain, pp. 170-180

11/3:  **Westward Agriculture and Mechanization**  
Hughes & Cain, pp. 180-186

11/5:  **Debating the Economics of Slavery**  
Hughes & Cain, ch. 10

11/10:  **The Business of Slavery**  
Blaszczyk & Scranton, ch. 5

11/12:  **Paths to Industrialization**  
Hughes & Cain, ch. 11

11/17:  **The Slater and Lowell Experiments**  
Licht, ch. 2; Blaszczyk & Scranton, pp. 174-176
11/19: Reactions to Industrialization
   Licht, ch. 3; Blaszczyk & Scranton, pp. 176-187

11/24: Early Unions: The Case of the NLU

12/1: Money and Banking
   Hughes & Cain, pp. 234-244

12/3: Two Financial Controversies: The Bank War and Bimetallism

12/8: Economics of the Civil War
   Hughes & Cain, ch. 13

12/10: War, Business, and Industry
   Blaszczyk & Scranton, pp. 202-207; Licht, ch. 4

12/17 Final Exam, 10:30-12:30, KEY 0103

Revised Nov. 17, 2009