

Economic History

Department: Fudan International Summer Session 2026

Course Code	GEIS30019						
Course Title	Economic History						
Credit	2	Experiment (including Computer) Credit		Practice Credit		Aesthetic Education Credit	
Credit Hours Per Week	9 credit hours per week, 36+3 tutorial hours in total (one credit hour is 45 minutes)	Education on The Hard- Working Spirit Credit Hours		Language of Instruction		Honors Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Course Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Core General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Specific General Education Course <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Course in General Discipline <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Others			2+X Major : <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Core Course <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Advanced Course <hr/> Non 2+X Major : <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Compulsory Course <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Elective Course			
Course Objectives	<p>This course has been meticulously crafted to offer students a unique opportunity to grasp the long-term trajectory of global economic development, spanning from the dawn of civilization to the present day. It will delve into pivotal historical milestones, including the birth of civilization, religious reform movements, the Industrial Revolution, the Columbian Exchange, the Black Death, the Great Depression, the World Wars, and more. Diverging from typical history courses that primarily focus on historical facts, this course seamlessly melds economics with history and history with economics. Upon completing the course, you will not only possess a profound comprehension of the historical roots underpinning our contemporary economic and social systems but also recognize how the study of history can profoundly enrich your understanding of economic theory. You will gain a deeper insight into the intricate processes governing economic and social development, their causes, and their far-reaching consequences. Furthermore, you will be astutely attuned to ongoing transformations, better equipping yourself for the challenges of the future.</p>						

<p style="text-align: center;">Course Description</p>	<p>The course includes eight broadly defined topics that delve into significant events and issues in the history of humanity, spanning from the Neolithic era to the present day. In addition to our regular lectures, we have allocated four sessions dedicated to debates. Each module will be comprehensively explored within one to four sessions, with each session consisting of two credit-hour lecture periods, totaling 1.5 hours each. Below are the detailed particulars of our course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ☒Module 1: Introduction to Economic History (1 session) ● ☒Module 2: From Stone Age to the Rise of Ancient Empires (2 sessions+1 catch-up) ● ☒Module 3: Early Modern Growth (3 sessions+1 catch-up) ● ☒Module 4: The New World, Columbian Exchange & Slave Trade (3 sessions+1 catch-up) ● ☒Module 5: The Industrial Revolution and the Great Divergence (3 sessions+1 catch-up) ● ☒Module 6: The Great Wars (2 sessions) ☒Module 7: Rebuilding the World (3 sessions+1 catch-up)
<p>Course Requirements:</p> <p>If students are registered for this course, you will need to complete the following assignments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participation and discussion: Students are expected to attend all classes, read the assigned readings, and come to sections prepared to discuss them. The participation and class discussions are weighted 20% in the course grade. ● Reading notes: Students are required to write a short reading note (no more than 500 words) for two of the papers listed in the course materials (One paper should be selected from the reading materials assigned in the first week and the other from the second week) and submit this note to your TA before the end of each week through e-learning system. Each note will be weighted 15%. In total, the reading notes will take 30% of the final grade. <p>Term paper: Students are required to complete a term paper as your final exam. Term paper should be at least six pages in length (1.5 space, including tables, figures, and references). Guidelines for the term paper will be provided in the class. Hopefully, at the end of this course you will have written a well-argued paper that you will be willing to show to others as a sample of your writing. Term paper counts 50% in the course grade.</p>	
<p>Teaching Methods:</p> <p>Lecture, Q and A sessions, discussions. Class participation is highly recommended. Students are encouraged to share their thoughts or current works in class.</p>	
<p>Course Director's Academic Background:</p>	

Instructor's Academic Background:

Dr. Dan Li is a professor of Economics at Fudan University and holds a PhD in Economics from Boston University. Her research fields include Economic History, Development Economics, and Urban Economics & Regional Science. Her research focuses on the development of China through both historical and contemporary lenses. She has published in the top journals in related fields including Economic History Review, Journal of International Money and Finance, World Development etc. She serves as an associate editor for Australian Economic History Review.

Prof. Dan Li teaches courses of Economic History and Chinese Economy in Fudan University. Her courses have received various teaching awards from the Minister of Education of Shanghai and Fudan University.

Members of Teaching Team

Name	Gender	Professional Title	Department	Responsibility
Li Dan	Female	Professor	Economics	Instructor of the course

Course Schedule :**Module 1: Introduction to Economic History** (1 session)

Session 1: Introduction

* Textbook 1, chapter 1.

McCloskey, Donald N., 1976. "Does the Past Have Useful Economics?" *Journal of Economic Literature* 14 (2): 434-61.

Module 2: From Stone Age to the Rise of Ancient Empires (2 sessions + 1 catch-up)

Session 2: The rise of Homo Sapiens

* Textbook 2, chapters 1-2

Session 3: The Agricultural Revolution and the Rise of Ancient Empires

* Textbook 1, chapter 2

* Textbook 2, chapter 5

Matranga, Andrea. 2019. "The Ant and the Grasshopper: Seasonality and the Invention of Agriculture." Chapman University, *Working paper*.

Bentzen, Jeanet Sinding, Nicolai Kaarsen and Asger Moll Wingender. 2017. "Irrigation and Autocracy." *Journal of the European Economic Association*, Vol.15 (1): 1-53.

A catch-up session

Module 3: Early Modern Growth (3 sessions+1 catch-up)

Session 5: Economic Development in Medieval World

* Textbook 1, chapters 3&4

Hirst, John, 2010, *The Shortest History of Europe*, Old Street Publishing Ltd, chapter 1.

Greif, A. and Tabellini, G., 2010. Cultural and institutional bifurcation: China and Europe compared. *The American economic review*, 100(2), pp.135-140.

Session 6: Social Reforms in Modern Europe

* Textbook 1, chapter 5

Hirst, John, 2010, *The Shortest History of Europe*, Old Street Publishing Ltd, chapter 2.

Session 6: The Role of Religion

* Textbook 2: chapter 12, from the beginning till before the section of "The Worship of Man"

Weber, Max. (1930). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. London: Routledge.

Becker and Woessmann. 2009. "Was Weber Wrong? A Human Capital Theory of Protestant Economic History". *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (5): 531-596.

Cantoni, D., Dittmar J. & Yuchtman, N., 2018, Religious competition and reallocation: The political economy of secularization in the protestant reformation. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 133.4: 2037-2096.

A catch-up session

Module 4: The New World, Columbian Exchange & Slave Trade (3 sessions + 1 catch-up)

Session 8: The New World and Europe

* Textbook 1, chapter 5.

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James Robinson, 2005. "The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change, and Economic Growth." *American Economic Review*, Vol. 95 (3): 546-579.

Session 9: The Columbian Exchange and its Impact

Nunn, Nathan, and Nancy Qian. 2010. "The Columbian Exchange: A History of Disease, Food, and Ideas." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 24 (2): 163-88.

Nunn, Nathan and Nancy Qian. 2011. "The Potatoe's Contribution to Population and Urbanization: Evidence from A Historical Experiment." *Quarterly Journal of Economics*: 1-58.

Chen, S., & Kung, J. K. S. 2016. "Of maize and men: the effect of a New World crop on population and economic growth in China." *Journal of Economic Growth*, 21(1), 71-99.

Session 10: Slave Trade and its Impact

* Textbook 2, chapter 8 before the section “He and She”

Nunn, Nathan. 2008. “The Long Term Effect of Africa’s Slave Trades.” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 123 (1): 139-176.

Nunn, Nathan and Leonard Wantchekon. 2011. “The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa.” *American Economic Review*, 101(12): 3221-3252.

A catch-up session

Module 5: The Industrial Revolution and the Great Divergence (3 sessions + 1 catch-up)

Session 12: The Industrial Revolution

*Textbook 1, chapters 7, 9 &10

Session 13: The spread of the Industrial Revolution

*Textbook 1, chapter 11,12 &13

Hornung, Erik. 2014. “Immigration and the Diffusion of Technology: The Huguenot Diaspora in Prussia.” *American Economic Review*, 104 (1): 84-122.

Session 14: The Great Divergence

Lin, Justin Yifu. 1995. "The Needham Puzzle: Why the Industrial Revolution Did Not Originate in China." *Economic Development and Cultural Change*. 43(2): 269–92.

Landes, S. David. (2006). “Why Europe and the West? Why Not China?” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 20 (2): 3–22

Huang, Ray (1981), *1587, A Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline*, Yale University Press.

茅海建 (2014), 《天朝的崩溃：鸦片战争再研究》，生活·读书·新知三联书店。

A catch-up session

Module 6: The Great Wars (2 sessions)

Session 15: The World War I and the Consequences

*Textbook, chapter 14

Ferguson, Niall, (2006), Political risk and the international bond market between the 1848 revolution and the outbreak of the First World War, *Economic History Review*, LIX, pp.70-112.

Session 16: The World War II and the Consequences

*Textbook, chapter 14

Acemoglu, D., Hassan, T. A., & Robinson, J. A. (2011). Social structure and development: A legacy of the Holocaust in Russia. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 126(2), 895-946.

Davis, D. R., & Weinstein, D. E. (2002). Bones, bombs, and break points: the geography of economic activity. *American Economic Review*, 92 (5), 1269-1289.

Module 7: Rebuilding the World (3 sessions + 1 catch-up)

Session 17: Recovery after WW2 in Europe

*Textbook 1, chapter 15&16

Session 16: Recovery after WW2 in Former Colonies

* Textbook 1, chapter 15&16

Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson. 2001. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation," *American Economic Review*, v91 (5), 1369-1401.

Session 18: Recovery after WW2 in Asia

Koo, Richard C. (2011), *The Holy Grail of Macroeconomics: Lessons from Japan's Great Recession*, Wiley.

Vietor, Richard H. K. (2007), *How Countries Compete: Strategy, Structure, and Government in the Global Economy*, Harvard Business Review Press.

Krugman, Paul, 1994. "The Myth of Asia's Miracle". *Foreign Affairs*, 73.

The design of class discussion or exercise, practice, experience and so on:

See the "course requirements".

If you need a TA, please indicate the assignment of assistant:

Grading & Evaluation:

See the "course requirements".

Usage of Textbook: Yes (complete textbook information form below) No

Textbook Information (No more than two textbooks) :

Title	Author	ISBN	Publishing Time	Publisher	Type I	Type II
					<input type="checkbox"/> Self-compiled Textbook (Published) <input type="checkbox"/> Non-mainland Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Other Textbook (Published)	<input type="checkbox"/> National Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial and Ministerial Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> School Level Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Others

					<input type="checkbox"/> Self-compiled Textbook (Published) <input type="checkbox"/> Non-mainland Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Other Textbook (Published)	<input type="checkbox"/> National Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial and Ministerial Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> School Level Planning Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Others
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Teaching References :

For teaching references, please see "course schedule".