

History 247 - American Business History

Semester schedule

Here is a week-by-week schedule of lecture topics, reading assignments, and paper due dates. The lecture topics and reading assignments may be subject to minor changes and I may add a few keywords, but the paper due dates will not change.

Lectures, keywords, readings, papers

Note: MP means the edited collection *Major Problems in American Business History*.

Date	Lecture topics	Keywords	Readings	Papers
Jan. 22 (T)	Introduction		<i>Pocket Guide</i> , chs. 1-4; MP, ch. 1 (Business and Us)	
sections Jan. 23-24			Begin reading for next week: MP, ch. 2 (Capitalism in Early America); MP, ch. 3 (Merchants and Commercial Networks in the Atlantic World, 1680-1790) - only docs. #1-5 and essays by Morgan and Carlos/Lewis.	
Jan. 24 (R)	Doing business in the colonies	bill of exchange	James Fulcher, "What is Capitalism" (handout)	
Jan. 29 (T)	The imperial political economy	colony		
sections Jan. 30-31			MP, ch. 2; MP, ch. 3 - only docs. #1-5 and essays by Morgan and Carlos/Lewis; Beekman letters.	
Jan. 31 (R)	Post-colonial tumult	Tariff of 1789		
Feb. 5 (T)	Breaking with the colonial past: War of 1812	War of 1812	<i>Pocket Guide</i> : review ch. 4, read chs. 6-7	#1 out

sections Feb. 5-7			MP, ch. 3 -- only docs. #6-9 and essay by Doerflinger	
Feb. 7 (R)	A new institutional power -- the corporation	general incorporation		
Feb. 12 (T)	The antebellum political economy: defacto devolution	"American System" (policy package)		#1 in
sections Feb. 13-14			MP, ch. 4 (Public and Private Interests in the Transition to Industrialization, 1790-1860); Daniel Raymond, "Corporations" (1820).	
Feb. 14 (R)	Social limits on property rights: race and gender in antebellum business	Rebecca Lukens		
Feb. 19 (T)	What was so revolutionary about "industry"?	"American System" (of manufacturing)		
sections Feb. 20-21		overseer	MP, ch. 5 (Doing Business in the Slave South, 1800-1860); MP, ch. 6 (Inventing American Industry, 1810-1890) - docs. #1-3; MP, ch. 9 (The Many Faces of Entrepreneurship, 1840-1930) - doc. #1 and essay by Olegario.	
Feb. 21 (R)	Civil War: laying the foundations of post-bellum industrial growth			
Feb. 26 (T)	New strategies of growth: HI and VI	horizontal integration; vertical integration		
sections Feb. 27-28		plutocracy	MP, ch. 6 - docs #4-8 and essays by Ingham and Beckert; MP, ch. 7 (Technology in an Age of Big Business, 1870-1920) - doc. #1 and essay by Usselman; Colleen A. Dunlavy, "From Citizens to Plutocrats" (2004)	
Feb. 28 (R)	Social relations of capitalism transformed (labor + capital)			
Mar. 4 (T)	Social barriers to entry: race and gender at the turn of the century	Granville T. Woods		#2 out

sections Mar. 5-6			MP, ch. 9, docs. #2-4 and essay by Kwolek-Folland; Frederick W. Taylor, <i>Principles of Scientific Management</i> , ch. 2 -- on E-Reserves; MP, ch. 8 (The Age of the Octopus: Business and the Reform Impulse, 1876-1920) - docs. #1, 3-4; MP, ch. 7 - docs #2-5 and essays by Yates and Lipartito	
Mar. 6 (R)	Alternatives to "big business"	producer cooperatives		
Mar. 11 (T)	New structure of bus. regulation: natl. competition policy, state incorporation policies	"race to the bottom"		#2 in
sections Mar. 12-13			MP, ch. 8 - docs. #2, 5-7 and essay by Dunlavy.	
Mar. 13 (R)	Mass production's twin - mass retailing	Sears, Roebuck & Co.		
Mar. 18 (R)	none- spring break			
sections Mar. 19-20	none - spring break			
Mar. 20 (R)	none - spring break			
Mar. 25 (T)	Consolidating "bigness" - the Great War	dollar-a-year men		
sections Mar. 26-27			MP, ch. 8 - doc. #8 and essay by Jacoby; MP, ch. 9 - doc. #5; MP, ch. 10 (Satisfaction Guaranteed? American Business and the Rise of Consumer Society, 1900-1940) - docs #1-5, 7-8 and essays by Millard, Blaszcyk, and Bean.	
Mar. 27 (R)	The rise of "system" . . . and implosion of capitalism?	technological unemployment		
Apr. 1 (T)	World war again - forging the modern American political economy	military-industrial complex		
sections Apr. 2-3			MP, ch. 10 - doc #6; MP, ch. 11 (Times of Crisis: From the Stock Market Crash Through World War II, 1929-1945).	

Apr. 3 (R)	The surprise of post-WWII prosperity	Highway Action of 1956		
Apr. 8 (T)	Conglomeration - the next new thing	conglomeration		
sections Apr. 9-10			MP, ch. 12 (Postwar Challenges and Opportunities: The Culture of Affluence and the Cold War, 1945-1980) - docs #1-6 and essays by Cohen and Schulman; MP, ch. 14 (The Great Transition from Manufacturing to Service, 1945-2005) - docs #1-4 and essay by Dicke.	
Apr. 10 (R)	The problem of the modern corporation	separation of ownership and management	Annual reports of the Kimberly-Clark Corporation - on E-Reserves.	#3 out
Apr. 15 (T)	none - review/writing period			
sections Apr. 16-17	none - review/writing period			
Apr. 17 (R)	none - review/writing period			
Apr. 22 (T)	American business pushes abroad	multinationals		#3 in
sections Apr. 23-24			MP, ch. 15 (American Business in the World, 1945-2005) - docs #1-4 and essay by Jones.	
Apr. 24 (R)	Why the "new regulation"?			
Apr. 29 (T)	Crisis again - the 1970s			
sections, Apr. 29- May 1			MP, ch. 12 - doc. #7; MP, ch. 13 (Business and the Public Interest: Corporate Responsibility for Environment, Health, and Safety, 1945-2005); Hayes and Abernathy, "Managing Our Way to Economic Decline" (1980) - on E-Reserves; Schwartz and Volgy, "The Myth of America's Economic Decline" (1985) - on E-Reserves.	
May 1 (R)	Against the grain of history - late 20c strategies and structures			
May 6 (T)	21c revolutions?			
sections May 7-8			MP, ch. 14 - docs #5-7 and essays by Vietor and Head; MP, ch. 15 - docs #5-8 and essay by Baily/Farrell.	

May 13 (T)	optional early exam - time TBA			
May 16 (F)	scheduled final exam, 7:25 p.m.			

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Readings



The assigned readings are of three kinds: "**primary sources**," which are documents produced by participants in or contemporary observers of the historical events that we are studying; **secondary sources**, the writing of historians in which they interpret primary sources; and **tertiary sources** (such as textbooks) that are based largely on secondary sources and synthesize their findings. Our readings come primarily from a collection entitled *Major Problems in American Business History*. Every week you will also have a couple of **keywords** relating to critical concepts, individuals, or events. For descriptions of each of these, read on; for week-by-week details, click the Semester schedule link at your left.

Primary sources

These are mainly in the *Major Problems* volume, although I have also assigned a few others that will be available on E-Reserves or on our Learn@UW website. Some of the **primary sources** take the form of articles, essays, or excerpts from books or pamphlets written by contemporary observers about controversies that affected American business; others consist of the records of business people that give us first-hand look into the world of business at a given moment.

Both kinds of primary sources provide the grist for the historian's mill. Read them carefully and actively (the reading load has been minimized to allow you time to do so). Think not only about what information a reading conveys but also about **who** wrote it, **why** they might have done so, and **what questions** the reading raises, especially in light of what you have learned in lectures or other readings.

Secondary sources

These are the essays by historians that are excerpted in the *Major Problems* volume. As you read them, ask yourself: do they elaborate upon themes evident in the primary sources, or do they bring up themes not touched upon in the primary sources, or do they suggest an alternative interpretation of the sources?

At strategic moments in the semester, you will also be assigned chapters from a required text, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, which provides advice, among other things, about active reading and skillful analysis.

Tertiary sources

For this class, these consist solely of the brief introductions to each chapter in the *Major Problems* volume. Read them as you would a textbook -- for an overview of the topic on which the chapter focuses.

Keywords

A glossary of keywords will be available on our Learn@UW site. Think of these as are the building blocks of your knowledge. For each keyword, be sure that you can define the term or identify the person, place it/her/him in time,

and explain it/his/her significance in American business history.

Where to find the readings

- Blaszczyk and Scranton, eds., *Major Problems in American Business History* (2006) – at University Bookstore and on reserve at College Library;
- Additional primary sources – available on electronic reserves, on our Learn@UW website, or as handouts in lecture;
- Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (2007) – at University Bookstore and on reserve at College Library;
- Glossary of “keywords”—available on our Learn@UW website.

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