This course offers both an introduction to historical modes of analysis and to the history of American capitalism. What does it mean to think historically? And what is "capitalism" anyway?

One goal of this course is to heighten your intellectual ability to think like a historian. As you will see, this means paying careful attention to events, to change over time, and to the particular sequence of events (chronology). It also means learning to grapple with complexity—with differing rates of change, with multi-causality, and with necessarily incomplete information. You will also become familiar with a range of methodological approaches to history—social-cultural, legal-political, and economic-quantitative—as well as with the kinds of questions and sources that characterize each approach.

The second goal is to show, as we explore the manifold ways in which American capitalism itself has changed over the last two centuries, that the question “what is capitalism?” can only be answered historically. We will trace major changes since the mid-eighteenth century in key aspects of capitalism—property rights, markets, capital, labor, technology, and spatiality—with special emphasis on the role of government.

Requirements (and some recommendations)

Pre-requisites: There are no formal pre-requisites for this course. My assumption, however, is that you already have a broad understanding of U.S. history since the eighteenth century, such as you might...
have gained from Advanced Placement courses. This knowledge will serve as an essential backdrop against which we will develop our understanding of the history of American capitalism.

**READINGS**

These are a mixture of *primary sources* (i.e., documents produced in the years we are studying) and *secondary sources* (written by historians in later years, usually based on primary sources). Our tasks this semester will include learning to distinguish primary from secondary sources and understanding the implications of that distinction. I have tried to keep the reading load relatively light because I expect you to read the assignments closely and carefully in order to develop your analytical skills.

The following books have been ordered at local bookstores and should be on reserve in campus libraries:


(Arnold's book was a late addition to the required readings – my apologies; I'll have more details about access options in the first lecture.) The rest of the required readings will be available on Learn@UW, in a course pack, or on the web.

If you would like to refresh or enhance your knowledge of U.S. history during the semester, a good choice for this course would be Pauline Maier et al., *Inventing America: A History of the United States*, 2d ed. (W. W. Norton, 2006), which I have ordered as a recommended reading.

**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

These are designed to help you develop a variety of essential skills—reading (and listening) carefully, evaluating and synthesizing what you have heard/read, and expressing your understanding coherently and persuasively in writing. The assignments will consist of:

- **Five brief analyses** of selected readings and lectures. The focus of these assignments will change over the course of the semester. We will begin with the basic task of discerning and articulating in your own words the author’s main points. Later assignments will ask you to compare different methodological approaches, to explain the differences between primary and secondary sources, and to synthesize primary and secondary sources.

- **Mid-term paper** (max. word count: 1,250; double-spaced, 1" margins). This will emphasize the evaluation and synthesis of sources (including lectures), while also giving you more extended practice in articulating your understanding on paper coherently and persuasively. After the paper has been returned to you, you will have the option to revise it, based on feedback, and resubmit it.

- **Final exam** (blue-book). This will consist of essay questions (handed out in advance) and short-answer IDs designed to assess your overall understanding of the major dimensions of change in the history of American capitalism since the mid-eighteenth century. We’ll do a brief practice exam during the last week of class.

**Reading on writing:** To prepare for your writing assignments, be sure to read the relevant portions of Rampolla’s *Pocket Guide*. For those who would like to work especially hard on writing this semester (always a worthwhile endeavor!), I have ordered three recommended (thus, entirely optional) books:

**OTHER MATTERS**

**Classroom etiquette:** If you cannot avoid arriving late for lectures (or leaving early), please be sure to let me or your TA know in advance and enter (or leave) with as little disruption as possible. **Laptops** for note-taking purposes are welcome in my lecture hall, but **no internet cruising**, please! Those using laptops to take notes should **sit in the first few rows** of our lecture hall. **Cell phones:** please turn yours off during lecture and sections; no texting, please. Note that no electronic devices whatsoever will be permitted at the final exam.

**Intellectual engagement:** In a lecture course, especially a large one, it is all too easy to adopt a posture of passivity—sitting back and waiting to “receive” information. But developing analytical skills and historical understanding requires engagement: cultivate an active posture in lectures and sections. Don’t be lulled by my use of Powerpoint: use the outline it offers and take your own notes to fill in the details. Engage actively and critically with your readings. Bring the questions that your active engagement stimulates to lectures, sections, or office hours. Engagement is a choice.

**Attendance:** Faithful attendance of lectures is critical to getting the full benefit of a lecture course (seems rather obvious, doesn’t it!). Discussion sections are an equally integral part of this course. Come prepared to participate actively and intelligently in the discussions, based on a close reading of the assignments and on your reflections on the lectures. Your teaching assistant will provide additional details in the first section meeting.

**GRADING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of Your Grade</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation in sections</td>
<td>A 93-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief writing assignments</td>
<td>AB 88-92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 1 – due Sept. 10 (3%)</td>
<td>B 83-87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 2 – due Sept. 24 (5%)</td>
<td>BC 78-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 3 – due Oct. 8 (6%)</td>
<td>C 70-77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 4 – due Nov. 19 (6%)</td>
<td>D 60-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 5 – in lecture Dec. 5 (5%)</td>
<td>E 50-59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term paper – due Oct. 29</td>
<td>F 40-49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table on the left indicates the relative weight of the various components that will form the basis for your semester grade. Your assignments will be graded on the scale shown at the right. Bear in mind that, even if your grade is at the upper (or lower) edge of a grading interval, it will still be reported at the end of the semester as the interval grade (e.g., 83 and 87 would both be reported as a B). Penalty for late papers: one full step (e.g., from A to B) for each day (partial days to be pro-rated).

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

What is “plagiarism”? Here’s a definition, based on *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* (10th ed.):

*To plagiarize is “to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one’s own; . . . [to] present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.”*

Plagiarism has become an increasingly serious offense as our world has become increasingly property-oriented. The very notion of “stealing” ideas or words implies private-property rights in them—

*Check the next page for continuation (rev. 9/3/2013 8:55 AM)*
concept made explicit in the term “intellectual property rights,” a matter of great controversy in the internet/media world today. The minimum penalty for plagiarism in this class is an "F" for the semester, and all cases will be reported to the Dean of Students for possible further action.

In taking this course, you are committing yourself to academic honesty—that is, to submitting assignments that present your own, original words and ideas and to acknowledging clearly when you are relying on the words or ideas of others.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, an excellent source of information is PlagiarismDotOrg (or you may download a pdf copy of Turnitin's manual on plagiarism). Also, be sure to read ch. 6 in A Pocket Guide to Writing in History.

BIAS-FREE LEARNING

I am committed to creating and maintaining a bias-free learning environment that allows each of you to do your best work. Please note carefully the following excerpt from UW policies:

The University of Wisconsin-Madison, in accordance with the laws of the State of Wisconsin, seeks to protect its students from discrimination. S. 36.12 of the Wisconsin Statutes reads in part: No student may be denied admission to, participation in or the benefits of, or [be] discriminated against in any service, program, course, or facility of the (UW) system or its institutions or centers because of a the student's race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, disability, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, or parental status.

If religious obligations should conflict with sections or lectures or with the assignments, please be sure to give me or your teaching assistant advance notice. If you are a McBurney student, please talk with me early in the semester so that we can discuss necessary arrangements.

If you have any questions or concerns about these policies, please don't hesitate to bring them to me or to the Dean of Students in the Division of Student Life. For more information on the university's policies, contact UW-Madison's Office for Equity and Diversity, 179A Bascom Hall, 500 Lincoln Drive, Madison, WI 53706; (608) 263-2378.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

See next page.
SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Note: This course is organized roughly chronologically but some lectures (and readings) span broader periods. I reserve the right to alter the lecture topics as the need arises. Each lecture will begin with a brief parliamentary-style “Question Time,” during which you may ask questions about anything that is on your mind—what you’ve been reading, my lectures, course requirements, current events, etc.

SEPTEMBER 3-5 (WEEK 1) – HISTORY

LECTURES

Sept. 3 – Introductions, orientation
Sept. 5 – What do historians do and how do they do it?

DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Will meet this week for orientation.

ASSIGNED READINGS

• Begin Fulcher and Arnold chapters for next week.

SEPTEMBER 10-12 (WEEK 2) – CAPITALISM

LECTURES

Sept. 10 – What is the history of capitalism? (No. 1 due)
Sept. 12 – Alternative methodological approaches: questions and sources

DISCUSSION SECTIONS


WRITING ASSIGNMENT

• No. 1 due in lecture on Sept. 10: Summary of Arnold’s main points (max. word count: 200). Make this as concise and accurate as possible. Please bring a copy of the reading and of your summary to sections for your own reference during the discussion.

PART I

SEPTEMBER 17-19 (WEEK 3) – PROPERTY

LECTURES

Sept. 17 – *What* can be owned and what does it mean to *own* something?
Sept. 19 – **Who** can own property?

**DISCUSSION SECTIONS**

- Excerpt from *The Present State of the British Court...* (1720) on the Commissioners of Trade and Plantations (141-142).

**WRITING ASSIGNMENT**

- No. 1 will be returned in lecture on Sept. 17.

---

**SEPTEMBER 24-26 (WEEK 4) – MARKETS**

**LECTURES**

Sept. 24 – Constructing a new political economy

Sept. 26 – A proliferation of markets

**DISCUSSION SECTIONS**


**WRITING ASSIGNMENT**

- **No. 2 due in lecture on Sept. 24:** Analysis (max. word count: 300) of the chapters by Tadman and Johnson, both of which deal with the buying and selling of slaves. How do their approaches (questions, methodologies, sources) differ? Do their conclusions contradict or complement one another?
OCTOBER 1-3 (WEEK 5) – CAPITAL

LECTURES

Oct. 1 – Corporations and securities markets

Oct. 3 – Everyday sources of antebellum capital and credit

DISCUSSION SECTIONS


• Daniel Raymond, Thoughts on Political Economy (Baltimore: Fielding Lucas, Jun'r., 1820), 425-433 (ch. 10, "Corporations").


WRITING ASSIGNMENT

• No. 2 will be returned in lecture on Oct. 1.

OCTOBER 8-10 (WEEK 6) – TECHNOLOGY

LECTURES

Oct. 8 – The material world of the mid-18th century

Oct. 10 – 19th-century technological revolutions

DISCUSSION SECTIONS


• James Swan, "Address on the Question for an Inquiry into the State of Agriculture, Manufactures and Commerce (1817)," in ibid., pp. 225-240.


WRITING ASSIGNMENT

• No. 3 due in lecture on Oct. 8: Analysis of the readings (max. word count: 200), focused on the distinction between primary and secondary sources and their relationship to one another.
OCTOBER 15-17 (WEEK 8) – LABOR

LECTURES
Oct. 15 – What was so revolutionary about “industrial” labor?
Oct. 17 – High fixed costs and the peculiar new competition

DISCUSSION SECTIONS
  a. Read the “Introduction,” “Context,” and “Conclusion” pages (= secondary sources).
  b. In the “Evidence” (= primary sources) section, read Evidence No. 20. After you’ve read it, look at the two versions posted on Learn@UW. Does the form in which you encounter this primary source affect your perception of it?
    ii. Same story but the full page image from ProQuest
  c. Browse the other “Evidence.”

WRITING ASSIGNMENT
- No. 3 will be returned in lecture on Oct. 15.
- The question for the mid-term paper will be handed out in lecture on Oct. 17.

INTERLUDE

OCTOBER 22-24 (WEEK 7) – WRITING HISTORY

LECTURES
Oct. 22 – What does it mean to write like a historian? Style and substance
Oct. 24 – Workshop on using evidence: what do we make of it?

DISCUSSION SECTIONS
- Sections will focus on the mid-term paper (max. word count: 1,250), which is due Oct. 29.
- Review assigned readings and your notes on lectures and discussions to date.
- Review Rampolla, especially ch. 4, “Following Conventions of Writing in History.”

WRITING ASSIGNMENT
- Mid-term paper (max. word count: 1,250), due in lecture on Oct. 29.
PART II

OCTOBER 29-31 (WEEK 9) – PROPERTY

LECTURES

Oct. 29 – Owning innovation: patents, trademarks, and copyrights in American history

Oct. 31 – Who owns America? Changes in property holding in the 20th century

DISCUSSION SECTIONS


WRITING ASSIGNMENT

- Due in lecture on Oct. 29: Mid-term paper (max. word count: 1,250).
- Scheduling “heads up”! The mid-term papers will be returned in lecture on Nov. 12. If you wish, you may consult with your TA on needed improvements, revise your mid-term paper (max. word count: 1,250), and resubmit in lecture on Nov. 26.

NOVEMBER 5-7 (WEEK 10) – MARKETS

LECTURES

Nov. 5 – Creating a national market – a long and arduous process

Nov. 7 – The changing structure of regulation and promotion

DISCUSSION SECTIONS

- Supreme Court decision in DEAN MILK CO. v. CITY OF MADISON, WIS., et al., 340 U.S. 349, decided January 15, 1951 (at http://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/340/349; see also the link on Learn@UW).
NOVEMBER 12-14 (WEEK 11) – CAPITAL

LECTURES

Nov. 12 – The rise of the managerial corporation

Nov. 14 – Capital since the 1970s: proliferation, fragmentation, and expansion

DISCUSSION SECTIONS


WRITING ASSIGNMENT

- The mid-term papers will be returned in lecture on Nov. 12. If you wish, you may consult with your TA on needed improvements, revise your mid-term paper (max. word count: 1,250), and resubmit in lecture on Nov. 26.

NOVEMBER 19-21 (WEEK 12) – TECHNOLOGY

LECTURES

Nov. 19 – From (human) computers to (electronic) computers

Nov. 21 – A new technological revolution?

DISCUSSION SECTIONS


WRITING ASSIGNMENT

- No. 4 due in lecture on Nov. 19: Synthesis (max. word count: 200) of this week’s readings.
NOVEMBER 26-28 (WEEK 13) - THE POST-WWII POLITICAL ECONOMY

LECTURE

Nov. 26 – The macro-political context
Nov. 28 – Thanksgiving holiday

DISCUSSION SECTIONS

• Will not meet this week

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

• Optional revision of mid-term paper is due in lecture on Nov. 26.

DECEMBER 3-5 (WEEK 14) – LABOR

LECTURES

Dec. 3 – The changing nature of work
Dec. 5 – Changes in the location of work

DISCUSSION SECTIONS


WRITING ASSIGNMENT

• No. 4 will be returned in lecture Dec. 3.
• Practice exercise (no. 5) for the final exam in lectures: A question will be handed out in lecture on Dec. 3; at the beginning of lecture on Dec. 5, you will have five minutes to write your mini-essay.

DECEMBER 10-12 (WEEK 15) – A NEW CAPITALISM?

LECTURES

Dec. 10 – Capitalism reconfigured? From the 1970s through the turn of the 21st century
Dec. 12 – Wrap up
DISCUSSION SECTIONS

- A sample of competing interpretations of present-day capitalism and its future:

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

- Mini-essays from the in-lecture practice and revised mid-term papers will be returned in lecture on Dec. 10.
- The essay question(s) for the final exam will be handed out in lecture on Dec. 10.

EXAM WEEK

Monday, Dec. 16 – Review session, 10:00-11:30 a.m. (location TBA)
Tuesday, Dec. 17 – Optional early exam, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. (location TBA)
Thursday, Dec. 19 – Scheduled final exam, 7:45-9:45 a.m. (location TBA).