



Course information 2011–12

EC2096 Economic history in the 20th century

Economic history is a wide-ranging course which uses many economic concepts and theories which can help our understanding of economic changes including those that are occurring in the world at the present time. This course requires you to have – or to obtain as you study – a grasp of economic concepts. However economic history is different from economics because, like all history, we know what happened next and theories can be applied to real circumstances.

Prerequisite

None apply.

Aims and objectives

The objectives of this course are to show students:

- how the international economy developed between 1820 and 2000
- what inter-relationships there are between the development of the international economy and the development of national economies, referring in particular to Japan, Britain and the United States
- useful economic concepts that help understand real historical circumstances
- how economic choices and changes are constrained (i.e. are partly determined) by the circumstances of the time.

Essential reading

For full details please refer to the reading list.

The best book to buy for this course is:

A.G. Kenwood and A.L. Lougheed *The growth of the international economy, 1820-2000. An introductory text.* (London: Routledge)

Other books to consider are:

Eichengreen, B. *Globalising capital. A history of the international monetary system.* (Princeton University Press)

Foreman-Peck, J. *A history of the world economy since 1850. International economic relations since 1850.* (Harvester/Wheatsheaf, Hemel Hempstead)

Assessment

This course is assessed by a three hour unseen written examination.

Learning outcomes

At the end of this course and having completed the essential reading and activities students should have learnt:

- ✓ how economic growth is transferred from one economy to another
- ✓ how the nature of the international economy affects the transfer of economic growth
- ✓ what the benefits to economic growth and international trade of fixed versus fluctuating exchange rates are
- ✓ how relatively free capital mobility and controls on capital flows compare
- ✓ how the effects of relatively free labour mobility (migration) compare with the effects of controls on mobility
- ✓ why the ability of a country to 'catch up' the economic growth of other countries is affected by the 'social capabilities' (the underlying conditions) in the country
- ✓ how technical change affects the economy.

By the end of the course students should have acquired the following skills:

- ✓ techniques for using simple economic theory to explain how various factors led to economic growth
- ✓ the ability to construct economic reasons for historical events
- ✓ the ability to identify and select the sort of data that is needed to do this, and how to assess how much data is needed to make valid judgements.

Syllabus

This is a description of the material to be examined, as published in the *Regulations*. On registration, students will receive a detailed subject guide which provides a framework for covering the topics in the syllabus and directions to the essential reading.

This subject examines the interrelationships between the development of the international economy and the growth of national economies.

- The growth of the industrial world economy in the 20th century.
- International trade and economic growth in the early 20th century.
- The centre and the periphery.
- Labour and capital mobility, free trade and tariffs.
- Technology, industrial growth and industrial organisation in Britain, the United States and Germany.
- Britain's position in the international economy before 1914.
- The British Empire and the less developed countries.
- Why the international economy worked less well after the First World War. (Why fixed exchange rates could be maintained before 1914, but rarely afterwards.)
- The problems of the primary producing countries.
- The world economic and financial crisis, 1929–33.
- Depression, recovery and government policy in Britain, Germany and the United States.
- The war economies, 1939–45.
- The dollar in the international economy since the Second World War.
- Comparative growth rates in the major industrial countries.
- The effect of the EC.
- The successes and failures of economic management.
- The rise of the Japanese economy. (A comparison of motor vehicle production in the major economies as a case study.)
- De-industrialisation in Britain and the USA.
- The collapse of the Bretton Woods system and the international economy since 1973. The Oil Crises.
- Why some less developed countries (e.g. the NICs) have become major players in the international economy and not others.

Students should consult the *Programme Regulations for degrees and diplomas in Economics, Management, Finance and the Social Sciences* that are reviewed annually. The Prerequisites, Exclusions, and Syllabus are subject to confirmation in the *Regulations*. Notice is also given in the *Regulations* of any courses which are being phased out and students are advised to check course availability.