COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores the institutions underpinning modern economic and political development. My premise is that economic and political development relate to each other. In addition, my view is that institutions are the primary determinant of economic development rather than geography or technology or demography. These are more proximate causes. The readings will cover a wide range of institutional approaches. The analyses will cover many regions of the world. We will discuss both development and stasis. The course requires extensive input from the students. Considerable emphasis will be placed on participation in discussions and a demonstration of the mastering of the tools of economic history in evaluating materials in class and completing a research paper.

For every session a particular student will be the residual clamaint of the readings, i.e., when in doubt ask Justin or Rachel. A sign-up sheet is available if you have particular preferences. A major research paper is required and you will present the first draft in class.

Required Readings:

All readings on the syllabus are required. Links to selected readings as well as working papers can be found on my personal web page. Other articles are available through JSTOR. You need to buy the two books listed on page 4. If you wish more sources relevant to any area that we cover, please let me know and I can give you references.

Components of Grade:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residual Claimancy</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper – First Draft/Presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper – Second Draft</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Class Schedule:

Aug 25
Introduction

Aug 27, and Sept 1
I. Methods and Materials of Economic History


Sept 3 and 8
II. Property Rights

*Sept 10 – No Class*


Sept 15 and 17
III. Factor Endowments

Sept 22 and 29 IV. The Long Term Effect of Institutions on Growth

Sept 24 – No Class


Oct 1 and 6 V. Political Institutions and Development


Oct 8 and 13 VI. Violence and Development


Podcast with Douglass C. North:

Podcast with Barry R. Weingast on Econtalk:

Oct 15 and 20  VII. The U.S. Constitution, Land Policies and Development


Oct 22  VIII. Culture and Development


Oct 27 and 29  IX. Persistence of the Status Quo


Nov 3 and 5  X. How and Why Do We Make Choices?


Nov 10, 12, and 17  STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Nov 19 – No Class

Dec 1, 3, and 8  XI. Beliefs and Critical Transitions


Dec 10  What Have We Learned?

Finals Week  Paper Revisions Due