Course Outline -------------- Fall 2013

ECONOMICS 316S

The Development of Modern Economics

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"Nobody can separate the `internal' history of science from the `external' history of its allies. The former does not count as history at all. At best it is court historiography, at worst Legends of the Saints. The latter is not history of `science', it is history." (Bruno Latour, The Pasteurization of France, p. 218.)

This seminar in the history of economics concerns the ways, and the history of how, a broad and varied set of approaches and practices early in the 20th century evolved, by late in the 20th century, to a single mainstream, now called neoclassical economics or some such variant, and a variety of marginalized discourses mostly critical of neoclassical economics.

The course will meet twice a week, the first day as a seminar, the second as a tutorial. There will be required material to be read each week for the once a week seminar meeting. All required reading is in either a) the paperback The Ordinary Business of Life (OBL) by Backhouse, b) E-reserve at the course’s Sakai site, or linked to “Resources” on the course’s Sakai site.

Each week each student will prepare a one to two page typed response to that week’s non-textbook readings, to be turned in at the end of the seminar meeting. Those responses will be the basis for the seminar discussion. 30% of each student’s course grade will be based on those weekly response papers, and participation in the seminar discussion. Additionally, as befits a course with “R” and “W” designations, students will undertake a research project, which will result in a final paper or web document. Students work in pairs on that project. Resources will include the Social Science Citation Index, JSTOR (the online searchable data base of economics journals), Silver Platter and other tools, particularly archival materials in the Economists’ Papers Project.

In Fall 2013 the class project will explore the public role of economists. Pairs of students – a co-author writing team - will work together on the research project using published materials, interviews, archival sources, and so on. For Fall 2013 each pair will examine the public career of one of several economists who played interesting roles in public affairs in the first half of the 20th century: Kenneth J. Arrow, Calvin Bryce Hoover, Martin Bronfenbrenner, Frank W. Fetter, Franco Modigliani, and Arthur I. Bloomfield. These economists’ papers are all available in the Economists Papers Project. It is
my intention to make sure that very successful projects can be developed, via independent study in Spring 2014, into honors papers to secure graduation with distinction in economics. The paper grade will constitute 70% of each student’s final course grade.

I will work closely with you, functioning as your research director, to facilitate development of the project. I will meet with each co-author pair at least every second week in tutorial sessions in my office so that I may assess your progress and guide the work that remains to be done. These consultations will specifically involve working with you on successive drafts attending to the structure and argument and language, in short the rhetoric, of the final document as is appropriate for a course that carries the "writing" designation. Your attendance at the seminars and the tutorials is required. Unapproved absences will result in a “0” for the participation grade.

The final paper will be turned at the Registrar’s final examination time for the course.

Seminar discussions are based on common readings to be done by all class members before the seminar:

**Week 1. First Class Meeting. Information session; discussion of class project, reading responses, class resources, etc.**


**Week 4. Business Cycles.** Required Reading: Chapter 10 (OBL); Chapters 3 & 4 in Mary S. Morgan’s *The History of Econometric Ideas* (1990). (e-reserve) {Background Reading: (business cycles); Judy L. Klein’s *Statistical Visions in Time* (1997); Kyun Kim’s *Equilibrium Business Cycle Theory* (1988).}


Week 8. **The Modern Economist: Engineer or Expert?** Required Reading: Mary Morgan’s “Economics” in Porter’s and Ross’ Cambridge History of Science Volume 7 (e-reserve); and Chapter 6 of Michael Bernstein’s A Perilous Progress (e-reserve).

Week 9. **The Economics Profession in the U.S., Britain, and France.** Required Reading: Introduction and Chapter 1 of Marion Fourcade’s Economists and Societies: Discipline and Profession in the United States, Britain, and France 1890s to 1990s (2009) (Sakai Resource)).

Week 10. **Economics among the Social Sciences.** Required Reading: Backhouse and Fontaine’s “Introduction: Contexts of Postwar Social Science” (Sakai Resource).


Week 12. **Heterodoxies.** Mata’s “Migrations and Boundary Work: Harvard, Radical Economists, and the Committee on Political Discrimination”.


Week 14. **Extra Tutorials on Final Paper**