

Boston College  
Department of Economics  
Spring Semester, 2002-2003

EC 233 - History of Economic Thought

Instructor: Professor F. M. McLaughlin  
Office: Administration Building 492  
Office Hours: MWF 10 to 10:45; MW 3 to 4; and by appointment  
Class Meetings: MWF at 1:00 p.m.  
Place: Carney 106

Required Texts:

Smith, A., Wealth of Nations, L. Dickey, ed., Hackett, 1993, [WN below].

History of Economic Thought Course Pack, [contains all other assigned readings].

Scope of the Course

Although this course will survey topics in the history of economic thought from the ancient Greeks through the modern period, substantial emphasis will be given to Adam Smith and the history of English classical economics in the century following the publication of Smith's Wealth of Nations in 1776.

Notes:

Grades will be based on two one-hour examinations given during the course of the semester, and a comprehensive final in the examination period. Each of the two in-course examinations will count for 30 percent of the final grade. The final examination will count for 40 percent. Examinations will be based on the material covered in class and the material contained in the two course texts.

Students should be present on scheduled examination dates. Make-up examinations will not be given except at the request of the Dean, and only when the absence is for serious reason.

According to the academic regulations published in the Arts & Sciences Catalogue students are expected to attend class regularly, take tests and submit papers and other works at the times specified in the course syllabus. Students who are absent on the day of a previously announced test are not entitled, as a matter of right, to make up what was missed, and professors may include as part of the semester's grades, marks for the quality and quantity of students' participation in class.

Economic Thought in Ancient Greece: January 13 and 15.

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, [Ostwald translation], Bobbs-Merrill, 1962, Bk. V, Chs. 2 to 5, pp.115-128, Course Pack, pp. .  
\_\_\_\_\_, The Politics of Aristotle, [Barker translation], Oxford University Press, 1958, Bk. I, Chs. 8 to 11, pp. 18-32, Course Pack, pp.

Economic Thought in the Scholastic Era: January 17 and 22.

DeRoover, Raymond, "The Concept of the Just Price: Theory and Economic Policy," Journal of Economic History, Dec. 1958, pp. 418-38, Course Pack, pp. .

\_\_\_\_\_, "Scholastic Economics: Survival and Lasting Influence from the 16th century to Adam Smith," Quarterly Journal of Economics, Vol. 69, pp. 161-190, Course Pack, pp. .

Notes on Noonan, John T, The Scholastic Analysis of Usury, Harvard, 1957, Course Pack, pp. .

Economic Thought in the Mercantilist Period: January 24.

Smith, Adam, Wealth of Nations, Hackett [abridged], 1993, pp.117-152.

The Economics of Physiocracy: January 27 and 29.

Smith, Adam, Wealth of Nations, Hackett, [abridged], 1993, pp. 152-166.  
Gide, Charles, "The Physiocrats," in Charles Gide and Charles Rist, A History of Economic Doctrines, D.C. Heath, 1948, ch. 1, pp. 21-68, Course Pack, pp. .

Adam Smith: Economic Theory: January 30 and February 3

Smith, Adam, Wealth of Nations, Hackett, [abridged], 1993, pp. 3-83.

Adam Smith: Economic Policy: February 5 and 7

Smith, Adam, Wealth of Nations, Hackett, [abridged], 1993, pp. 83-210.

Adam Smith: An Assessment: February 10 and 12.

Stigler, George, "The Successes and Failures of Professor Smith," Journal of Political Economy, Dec. 1976, pp. 1199-1213. Course Pack, pp.

Dickey, Lawrence, Appendix I in Smith, Adam, Wealth of Nations, Hackett, [abridged], 1993, pp. 213-219.

\_\_\_\_\_, Appendix III in Smith, Adam, Wealth of Nations, Hackett, [abridged], 1993, pp. 226-242.

Rashid, Salim, "Adam Smith's Interpretation of The History of Economics," Quarterly Review of Economics and Business, Autumn, 1987, pp. 56-69, Course Pack, pp. .

Rosenberg, Nathan, "Some Institutional Aspects of the Wealth of Nations," Journal of Political Economy, Dec. 1960, pp. 557-570. Course Pack. pp. .

Dickey, Lawrence, Appendix II in Smith, Adam, Wealth of Nations, Hackett, [abridged], 1993, pp. 220-225.

\_\_\_\_\_, Appendix IV in Smith, Adam, Wealth of Nations, Hackett, [abridged], 1993, pp. 243-249.

Tribe, Keith, "Adam Smith: Critical Theorist?" Journal of Economic Literature, June 1999, pp. 609-632, Course Pack, pp. .

Hour Exam: February 14

The Economics of Thomas Robert Malthus: February 17

Notes on the Population theory of Malthus, Course Pack, pp. .

Dorfman, Robert, "Thomas Robert Malthus and David Ricardo", Journal of Economic Perspectives, Summer, 1989, V. 3, No.3, pp. 153-164. Course Pack, pp. .

Robbins Lionel, "Malthus as an Economist," Economic Journal, Vol. 77, June, 1967, pp. 256-261, Course Pack, pp. .

The Economics of David Ricardo February 19, 21 and 24

Stigler, George, "The Ricardian Theory of Value and Distribution," Journal of Political Economy, June, 1952, pp., 187-207. Course Pack, pp..

\_\_\_\_\_, "Ricardo and the 93% Labor Theory of Value", American Economic Review, Vol. XLVIII (June, 1958), pp. 357-367. Course Pack, pp..

Checkland, S.G., "The Propagation of Ricardian Economics in England," Economica, New Series, Vol. 16, No. 61 [Feb. 1949], pp. 40-52. Course Pack, pp..

The Economics of John Stuart Mill February 26 and 28

Taylor, Overton, "John Stuart Mill: Economics and Political Economy, in Overton Taylor, "A History of Political Economy (McGraw Hill, 1960, Ch. 10 pp. 247-270. Course Pack, pp. .

The Economics of Karl Marx February 10 and 12

Schumpeter, Joseph, "Marx the Economist," in Joseph Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy, Harper, N.Y., N.Y., 1976, Ch. 3, pp. 21-44. Course Pack, pp..

The Advent of Marginal Analysis February 14, 17 and 19

Hutchison, T.W., "The 'Marginal Revolution' and the Decline and Fall of English Political Economy," History of Political Economy, Fall, 1972, pp. 442-468. Course Pack, pp..

Henry, John F., "J.B. Clark and the Marginal Product: an Historical Inquiry into the Origins of Value Free Economic Theory," History of Political Economy, V. 15, Fall, 1983, pp. 375-389. Course Pack, pp..

Hour Exam March 21

Leon Walras and General Equilibrium March 24

Friedman, Milton, "Leon Walras and His Economic System," American Economic Review, V. 45, Dec. 1955, pp. 900-909. Course Pack, pp..

The Problem of Capital and Interest March 26 and 28

McLaughlin, Francis, "Schumpeter's Theory of Econ. Develop." Course Pack, pp..

Historical and Institutional Criticism March 31 and April 2

Notes from Paul McNulty on the History of American Labor Economics." Course Pack, pp..

Dorfman, J., "The Role of the German Historical School in American Economic Thought," American Economic Review, May, 1955, pp. 17-28. Course Pack, pp..

Persky, Joseph, "The Neoclassical Advent: American Economics at the Dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century," The Journal of Economic Perspectives, Winter 2000, pp. 95-108, Course Pack, pp..

The Economics of Alfred Marshall April 4 and 11

"Alfred Marshall," in Keynes, J. M., Essays in Biography (Harcourt, Brace and Company: New York, 1933), pp. 150-266. Course Pack, pp..

The Economics of John Maynard Keynes April 23 and 25

McLaughlin, "Keynes' Challenge to the Classics," Course Pack, pp..

The Monetarist Counter-Revolution April 28

Johnson, Harry G., "The Keynesian Revolution and the Monetarist Counter-Revolution," American Economic Review, May 1971, pp. 1-14. Course Pack, pp..

Final Examination