American economic history is the most exciting and interesting course that you can take as a college student! I look forward to working with each of the twenty students enrolled in this course!

COURSE GOALS: Our goals for students in this course include, but are not limited to:

- Achieving **basic literacy in American economic history**, i.e., each student is able to identify and discuss cogently major trends and events in American economic history;

- Fostering **critical thinking** by demonstrating the ability to apply economic reasoning to historical stylized facts and policy problems;

- Applying **quantitative reasoning** using appropriate equations and graphs to illustrate theoretical and policy problems in American economic history;

- And developing the expertise needed to effectively **communicate your reasoning** to others in writing and in oral presentations.

REQUIRED TEXTS


• Articles from professional economics journals, the *New York Times*, the *Economist*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

*Government and the American Economy* and *The Economics of the Great Depression* are both available at the University of Hawaii bookstore or via major on-line book retailers, e.g. Amazon.com, Barnesandnoble.com. *Government and the American Economy* is available on the kindle.

**CLASS WEB PAGES AND ECONOMIC HISTORY WEB PAGES**

The syllabus, other class documents, handouts, articles, and updates are posted on the class website at [https://laulima.hawaii.edu/portal](https://laulima.hawaii.edu/portal).

Check out [http://eh.net](http://eh.net), the leading web site in the field of economic history. It’s a good way to find data and new sources for your papers!

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

- Paper (Book Review) & In-Class Panel 20%
- Three Short History and Policy Essays 30%
- Attendance and Participation 10%
- Final Examination (May 13—12-2 pm) 40%

**ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS**

It is expected that students will attend ALL classes; be familiar with assigned readings prior to class; have reserved the scheduled class times to attend class and have not double-booked the time. Students who miss (unexcused for sickness or approved University events/travel) more than **FOUR** classes will have their attendance and participation grade marked down by 1% for each additional class missed. If you are missing more than **FOUR** classes, you are going to have problems passing the class—period. Please see me to discuss any extended absences.

Students are expected to participate in class discussions of assigned readings. Throughout the semester, the instructor will assign students to prepare presentations for the next class or to serve on panels to discuss the assigned readings and other topics.
BOOK REVIEW

Each student will choose a book on the current financial crisis and recession from a list handed out in class and write a 6-7 page review of the book. I will hand out several examples of excellent book reviews and make three five-minute presentations regarding essentials of reviewing a book. The book review is due to a student peer reviewer on April 1; the peer review is due on April 8; the final book review is due on April 14. Late assignments will be marked down by 1/3 of a grade per day (A to A-, etc.). Student panels will discuss these books in class on April 26, 28, and May 3.

THREE SHORT “HISTORY AND POLICY” ESSAYS

Can we learn from history? I’ll let you be the judge. Students write three short (5 page) essays considering what light, if any, a particular episode in U.S. economic history can shed on a contemporary policy issues. Students must meet with me to review the first draft of essays one and two prior to handing in their final draft. The first draft of essay three will be reviewed by a peer partner from the class.

Essay One. The land boom and financial Crash of the 1830: Are there lessons for today’s policymakers? First draft due on February 3. Final draft due on February 15.


Essay Three. and 1960s? First draft due on April 25; send to assigned peer reviewer. Peer review due on April 28. Final draft due on May 3.

MIDTERM EXAM

The midterm exam must be taken in class on the assigned date. It is scheduled for 3-4:30 pm on April 21 in our usual classroom.

QUESTIONS? PROBLEMS? NEED TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT?

Please leave a phone or e-mail message if you need to make an appointment! If you are having problems with the course, come see me as soon as possible to discuss how to get back on track!

E-mail: lacroix@hawaii.edu
Phone: (808) 956-7061.
STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible.

REQUIRED READING ASSIGNMENTS

The instructor reserves the right to change (add/delete) required readings as the semester progresses. Newspaper articles from New York Times web site will be assigned periodically. Early in the semester, plan to visit the Times web site and obtain a user name and password. The site is free; go to http://www.nytimes.com.

LECTURE CALENDAR AND READING LIST

We will be starting with readings from Government and the American Economy. A lecture calendar and schedule of readings will be handed out the first day in class. Want to get a head start? Bored over Christmas break? Read chapters 1-6, 10, 11, and 13 in Government and the American Economy.

First day of class is January 11 and last day of class is May 5. No class on Monday, January 18 or Monday, February 15 or during spring break (March 20-28).