Syllabus

Global Perspectives on Enterprise Systems
ECON-GB.2190.U1

NYU Stern School of Business

Professor Walter A. Friedman

Summer Session August 2011

Course Description and Requirements

This course of reading, writing, lecture, and discussion considers aspects of the enterprise systems of Great Britain, Germany, Japan, and the United States. We will examine the political and economic dynamics these four successful, wealth-creating societies, paying special attention to impacts of government, entrepreneurship, management, and financial institutions.

The intellectual objectives of the course are to hone students’ abilities to think comparatively, over time and across cultural contexts. We will take time to consider the lessons we can learn from history and their application to nations and institutions in our own time.

Classes will be a mix of lecture, discussion of the assigned readings, and presentations. Attendance is essential. Short paragraphs on the assigned readings will be required for each class as a preparation for discussion. There will be a final take-home essay, distributed in the penultimate class session, which will be due one week from the end of the course.

Since there are reading and homework assignments due for the first class, it is important to do the reading sufficiently in advance. Please read for comprehension. Think about what the important themes are. Don’t get lost in the mass of detail.

Presentations: There will be group presentations assigned for each group of 5 to 8 students. The presentations will update the cases from Creating Modern Capitalism and discuss course-related themes. They will be discussed in the first meeting.

Course grades will rest mainly on the final essay, affected by the quality of class discussion, homework submissions, and presentations.

Note that this is a provisional syllabus and some of the readings and assignments may change.
Global Perspectives

Required texts


Thomas K. McCraw, ed., Creating Modern Capitalism: How Entrepreneurs, Companies, and Countries Triumphed in Three Industrial Revolutions (1996). (This is the main textbook for the course).


Class Schedule and homework assignments

Monday, August 15: 6:00 to 9:00 PM

Introduction and British Capitalism

Smith, Sylla, and Wright, “Diamond of Sustainable Growth;”

Creating Modern Capitalism, Introduction, Wedgwood, British Capitalism

Homework: Write one paragraph on each of the following questions: What is remarkable about Josiah Wedgwood’s business achievement? How did Britain come to dominate world markets in the First Industrial Revolution?
Wednesday, August 17: 6:00 to 9:00 PM

German Capitalism and the Mittelstand


*Creating Modern Capitalism*, German Capitalism, the Deutsche Bank

Homework: Write 2-3 pages: How did German economic development make such huge strides in the years from 1871 to 1914? What has been the "competitive advantage" of German businesses? What were the strengths and weaknesses of German Capitalism as the country moved from the Second to the Third Industrial Revolution?

Saturday, August 20: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

The United States, Mass Production and Salesmanship

*Creating Modern Capitalism*, Henry Ford and Alfred Sloan, American Capitalism, IBM

Homework: Write 2-3 pages: What are the hallmarks of Sloans’s strategy at GM? Why did United States become the leading economic power in the world by 1890? Why did so many very large, technologically sophisticated firms develop in America between 1870 and 1913? What made IBM a leader in its field?

* Presentations on Ford/GM, IBM, and the U.S. economy.

Monday, August 22: 6:00 to 9:00 PM

Japanese Capitalism and the Toyota System

*Creating Modern Capitalism*, Toyoda/Toyota, Japanese Capitalism
Homework: Write 2-3 pages: Toyoda/Toyota managed to capture markets from superior players in the textile machinery and auto industries. What knowledge was transferred from the company’s experience in one industry to the other?

* Presentations on the Toyota and the Japanese economy.

Wednesday, August 24: 6:00 to 9:00 PM

Finance and Forecasting

Friedman, “Forecasting the Great Depression.”

Hannah, “J.P. Morgan in London and New York”

Homework: 2-3 pages: What is the function of forecasting in the economy? Which of the forecasters made the most sense to you? Why did the author think Morgan had such different experiences in London and NY?

* Presentations on banking and forecasting.

Classroom Comportment

Classes will start on time, so please do not be late. Everyone is expected to turn off all cell phones and put away all laptop computers, and other distracting paraphernalia during class sessions. Please feel free to ask questions, to challenge the professor and one another, and to discuss your own ideas about the subject matter.  Participation is vital.

Everyone is expected to abide by the School’s new Code of Conduct, which is posted on Blackboard.

Instructor’s Biographical Information

Walter A. Friedman (Ph. D., Columbia University) is a historian at Harvard Business School, where he has taught the course Creating Modern Capitalism and cohosts the Business History Seminar. He has also taught in Harvard’s History Department. He is coeditor of Business History Review and a research fellow. His book, Birth of a Salesman: The Transformation of Selling in America (Harvard, 2004), traced the history of selling from the days of peddlers and traveling drummers to the development of modern, professional sales forces. In 2008, it was
voted by *Fortune* as one of eight must-read books on the subject of selling. He is currently writing a history of economic forecasting in the United States.