Course Overview

This is a lecture survey course in Canadian economic history covering the period from 1914 to the beginning of the twenty-first century. Its purpose is to ensure that students acquire a solid, factual familiarity with the outline of Canadian economic development. The emphasis is on the structure of the Canadian economy and how it has changed over time.

Course Prerequisites:

- recommended second year standing
- foundation knowledge of Canadian history
- good writing skills; especially prose and essay structure
- ability to read and synthesize a wide selection of assigned readings

Course Format:

There will be one three hour lecture session a week, to be held on Monday between 6:05 and 8:55 p.m. I welcome students to make use of my office hours. Let me stress that I am here to help you. Please do not be shy in approaching me.

Grades:

There will be one essay or test and one final examination in this course. Your final grade will be comprised of the following components.

Discussion group participation................................................................. 15%
Essay or test.............................................................................................. 35%
Final examination (two hours)................................................................. 50%

Please note the following conditions governing this marking scheme:

(1) The “all or nothing” rule applies in this course. That is, failure to do any one assignment/examination means a failure for the whole course. You can fail any one component and survive, but you cannot fail to do any one component.

(2) All essay work must be typed.
(3) All late essays, especially those presented without an explanation for their lateness, will be penalized. There is an essay mailbox outside the history office (PA #400) where you may leave your essays. They will be date stamped when removed from the box.

(4) Poor writing (i.e. structure, spelling, grammar, footnoting, etc.) will be reflected in the marking. Each term you will receive a written report on your essay which will commend its strengths and highlight areas for improvement. The History Department offers students a handout entitled “Notes on the Writing of Essays or Papers in History.” This is available on request in Patterson Hall, Room #400.

Discussion Groups

There will be three discussion groups. We will debate and discuss a series of questions relating to the class material. Some of the questions will appear on the exam. You will be marked on your participation.

Suggested Reading:

The textbook we will be using for this course is K. Norrie, D. Owram and J.C. Emery, A History of the Canadian Economy. This book should be useful in giving those unfamiliar with the contours of Canadian economic history a chronological centre line through the course. Other books and pamphlets have been placed on reserve. I will draw your attention to these as their applicability to the course materializes.

Reference Works:

For background and essay preparation the following books will prove invaluable:

The Canadian Encyclopedia (4 volumes. Reference: FC23. C36) is superb for checking facts and certain themes (e.g. economic history, economic nationalism, crown corporations)

The Historical Atlas of Canada, vols. I, II and III. These excellent works offer provocative depictions of all aspects of Canadian life, but in particular there are plates in all the volumes on economic development.


R. Pomfret, The Economic Development of Canada (Scarborough, Nelson, 1993). This work offers a good introduction to some of the major debates in Canadian economic history.

W.T. Easterbrook and H.G.J. Aitken, Canadian Economic History (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1956). This book is strong on the nineteenth century, but sharply flawed by its staples emphasis in dealing with the twentieth.

D. McCalla, Perspectives on Canadian Economic History (Toronto, Copp Clark Pitman, 1987). This collection of essays challenges the Innisian proposition that Canadian economic growth has been “cyclonic” and unbalanced - propelled by leading, export oriented sectors.

R. Neill, The End of National Policy: Canadian Economic Development 1500-1990 (Department of Economics, Carleton University). The work offers the most unique interpretation of Canadian economic history since Innis’s The Fur Trade in Canada (1930).

N.B. All of the above reference and theme texts will contain excellent leads for your essay preparation. Consult the index and/or bibliography of each work.
Lecture Schedule

Please note that every week I will distribute a page-long list of keywords and concepts pertinent to that week’s lecture. The list will also suggest reading for the week.

September 14: Introduction

September 21: Canadian Economic History: Theories and Reflections

September 28: World War I and the Canadian Economy, 1914-1918

October 5: Uneven Growth, 1919-1929/ Discussion group #1

October 12: Decade of Discord: Depression and Defensive Expansionism, 1929-1939

October 19: The Economic Impact of World War II, 1939-1945

October 26: In-class Test

November 2: The Economic Impact of World War II, 1939-1945 (part II)/ Discussion group #2

November 9: Reconstruction and the Keynesian Revolution, 1945-1957/ Essay due

November 16: Economic Developments During the Tenth Decade, 1957-1967/ Discussion group # 3


December 7: Review