



HIST 364: History of American Business

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Course Overview

This course will examine the history of business in the United States from the time of the country's founding until the present, with a particular focus on the twentieth century. In addition to tracking important changes in the national economy, corporate structure, and business activity, we will also explore the development of a capitalist economy, the rise of big business, consumption, the relationship between business and labor, and the changing role of business as a social and cultural institution in America. Although many of us may be experienced in thinking about contemporary business practices and culture, the overriding goal of this course will be to engage with the *history* of American business enterprise and to think about how American business has changed over the course of the last two centuries.

Required Textbook

One textbook is required for this course:

- Stanley Buder, *Capitalizing on Change: A Social History of American Business* (2009), ISBN 978-0807832318

You can purchase this text from Friday Center Books & Gifts in person, [online](#), or by faxing or mailing in the [book order form](#).

The other readings for the course will be available via electronic reserves on the UNC Libraries website.

Library Services and Resources (including e-reserves)

Students enrolled in Carolina Courses Online have access to the UNC Library System. Visit [Distance Education Library Services](#) to access a wide array of online services and resources including e-reserves, online databases, online journals, online books, and live help with research and library access. Most online resources require you to log in with your Onyen and password. If you have any trouble finding the resource that you need or logging in to a resource, you can contact the library through the contact information at [Distance Education Library Services](#). You can chat live about your problem, or send an email to request assistance.

Assignments and Grades

This course seeks to develop your skills of discussing and writing analytically. While reading assignments will help you contextualize and interpret historical evidence, writing assignments will hone your proficiency in crafting clear, reasoned, and well-documented arguments about the history of business in America. You will have several different assignments that require you to think historically about American business enterprise.

Discussion forum participation	50 percent
Midterm essay	20 percent
Final essay	30 percent

Grade Distribution

A = 90-100	
B+ = 87-89.89	
B = 80-89.89	----- B = 84 – 86.89
	B- = 80-83.89
C = 70-79.89	
D = 60-69.89	
F = 69.89 or below	

Discussion Forum Participation

The discussion forum is the place where your thoughts and questions about the material will be valuable for your classmates—some of your classmates may answer your questions and others may debate the answers. This course depends on your participation. Learning takes place best

in dialogue with others, and since this course takes place in cyberspace, we need this forum to replace all the ways in which students normally interact with each other in the classroom.

As individuals, each member of the class will draw different lessons from the readings, my lesson notes, and the discussion forums. You will invent your own interesting and memorable ways to think through and remember what we are learning. The entire class will benefit from your thoughts.

Discussion forum grading criteria

Each week I will assign you a discussion forum grade based on the following criteria:

Participation: you must do all of the following:

- **Participate at least two times each week on two separate days** to receive a grade for that week.
- **Start one conversation, or thread, yourself.** (A thread is a substantial question or comment that begins a new line of discussion that is unrelated to previously posted messages.)
- **Respond to at least one post submitted by a classmate.** This will ensure that the discussion forum remains interactive and that it is not inundated with contributions at the last minute.

Length: *The thread you initiate and your response post must each be **at least 300 words long and no more than 500 words long**.* Failure to meet these minimums will result in lowered discussion forum grades.

Timeliness: You cannot make up for absences on the discussion forum by posting to forums for previous weeks.

Citations: In your postings, use specific quotations and illustrations from the readings (to show that you've done the reading). Give page number citations in a parenthetical citation so the rest of the class can find where you got your ideas and quotations. Here is an example of a parenthetical citation:

The invention of moveable type was a technological advance that helped spread the ideas of the Protestant Reformation (Chambers, p. 276).

Due dates: *Post your initial thread by Wednesday at 5:00 pm, and your response to a classmate no later than midnight on Sunday at 11:30 PM.* Remember you must make your required posts on different days. Each student may be graded for only one post per day.

Overall:

- two high-quality postings by the due dates = A

- two good-quality postings by the due dates = B
- two average-quality postings by the due dates = C
- two poor-quality postings by the due dates = D
- less than two postings = F.

To participate or engage in the forum means that you offer your own comments and insights and also respond thoughtfully to others. It does not mean that you just agree with someone without putting any thought into it. It means to respond in a meaningful way—to make what you say valuable to the class. The discussion forum is different from the easy give-and-take of the classroom setting, but this sort of structured interaction is absolutely necessary for this course to truly be the equivalent of three fifty-minute class periods per week.

Note that two engagements with each discussion forum are the *minimum*! One of the benefits of the discussions is that you can begin posting before you finish reading, as questions or comments occur to you. Not all your postings must be somber and explanatory. Sometimes, you might just ask a question and explain why you think it is important. Note something that stood out to you, and try to articulate why it stood out to you. Take advantage of the format. Assume we will benefit from your reactions to the course material.

It's *your* discussion forum. The discussion forum is your forum, your space to air your thoughts and ideas. I will respond to questions and comments on your discussion forum once or twice a week.

Discussion forum starter questions: Each lesson contains “Discussion Forum Starter Questions.” These are for you to use to get your ideas flowing or simply to get the conversation rolling. You are not required to use these questions.

Exam Essays

You will write two 1,500-word essays in this course that will count as your midterm and final exams. The essay topics will become available in the “Exams” section seven days prior to their due dates. Use only the materials assigned in this course in crafting your essays. (In other words, no outside sources are required or permitted.) If your contributions to the discussion forum will help support your argument, by all means integrate this work into your essays and cite it. **Be certain to cite all your sources** (and the page numbers) for quotes, information, or ideas.

Visit the [UNC Writing Center's website](#) for excellent advice on all aspects of preparing, writing, and polishing your assignments. You may even submit your essay to the Writing Center online, and a tutor will read and return your draft with comments (typically within one to three days). Of course, if you're in Chapel Hill, you can meet with a Writing Center tutor in person.

A note on length and formatting requirements: I assign length requirements by the number of words (1,500) because of the multiple ways of formatting a essay that are now available to anyone with a word processor. (If you are using Microsoft Word 2007 or 2010, the number of words is visible on the status bar at the bottom of the screen.) You will find that there are roughly 275–300 words per page if that page is double-spaced with 12-point type and standard Microsoft Word margins of 1.25 inches. Note: The 1,500-word limit does *not* include the cover page or Works Cited list.

You must cite the sources of ideas that are not your own. Use parenthetical references (Chambers, 2) to cite your sources, and include a Works Cited page at the end of your essay. Please download and print any online sources so you can cite page numbers.

Your essay must have a **cover page** that includes:

- your name
- the date
- the essay question number
- the essay title
- the following sentence indicating that you have abided by the UNC **Honor Code**: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.”

How to turn in your essays: Save your essay exams as Microsoft Word documents (either .doc or .docx) and submit them in the “Exams” section of Sakai. If you do not have Microsoft Word, please save your file as an .rtf file.

Late policy: Essay exams are due by 11:30 pm on the due date noted on the Schedule. You will lose up to a full letter grade for every 24-hour period for which your exam is late. I will accept exams submitted earlier than the due date. **No late essays will be accepted for the final exam.**

Hints for Success

Here are some hints for doing well in this course:

1. **Read each lesson carefully.** In each lesson, I provide a short introduction to the topics for the week, highlighting some of the main themes you will want to consider while reading the texts. The lessons also contain questions to help guide your reading. Please do not answer these questions in a formal fashion (that is, don't send me your answers). However, you may certainly bring them up in the discussion forum if you like. These questions are there for you to ponder if you find them helpful.
2. **Read actively, not passively.** Think about the discussion and reading questions as you go along—and take notes! You will be reading a lot of different materials in this course. You

may want to keep a notebook to write down your thoughts and ideas and to note important passages (and page numbers) that you may want to include in your discussions or exams. In this vein, **I would also recommend downloading and printing the materials that you will read on electronic reserve.** That way you can also write notes in the margins and highlight important passages.

3. **Look ahead.** Some weeks require substantially more reading than other weeks. Plan your time accordingly.
4. **Participation in the discussion forum is required.** Keep the discussion in mind as you read so that you will easily come up with a contribution that will be useful to yourself and to the rest of the class.
5. **Visit the [UNC Writing Center's website](#)** and read their suggestions thoroughly. Do not fail to do this! It will make your life easier.
6. **Arrange access to a backup computer.** This is a computer-based class, so do not wait until the last moment. Back up your work and have a backup plan if your computer fails. Run a virus scan each week. *At no time whatsoever will I accept as a legitimate excuse the lack of a computer or a computer failure for late exams or late discussion participation.*

Academic Policies

By enrolling as a student in this course, you agree to abide by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policies related to the acceptable use of online resources. Please consult the [Acceptable Use Policy](#) on topics such as copyright, net-etiquette, and privacy protection. As part of this course, you may be asked to participate in online discussions or other online activities that may include personal information about you or other students in the course. Please be respectful of the rights and protection of other participants under the UNC-Chapel Hill [Information Security Policies](#) when participating in online classes. When using online resources offered by organizations not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill, such as Google or YouTube, please note that the Terms and Conditions of these companies and not the University's Terms and Conditions apply. These third parties may offer different degrees of privacy protection and access rights to online content. You should be well aware of this when posting content to sites not managed by UNC-Chapel Hill. When links to sites outside of the unc.edu domain are inserted in class discussions, please be mindful that clicking on sites not affiliated with UNC-Chapel Hill may pose a risk for your computer due to the possible presence of malware on such sites.

Honor Code

All work in this course, including participation in the discussion forum, falls under UNC's [Honor Code](#). **Plagiarism** is a serious offense and an Honor Code violation. All sources must be identified and referenced properly. You are responsible for informing yourself on what is and is not plagiarism. To make sure you understand plagiarism and how to avoid it, see the following resources:

- UNC Libraries' [Plagiarism Tutorial](#)
 - The Writing Center's information on understanding [plagiarism](#).
- Please contact me if you have any questions about plagiarism or the use of sources.

History 364: History of American Business Course Schedule

Dates	Lesson	Topic/Assignment
Jan 8-12	1	Introduction, Business in the Early Republic
Jan 13-19	2	The Market Revolution
Jan 21-26	3	The Origins of Big Business & Labor in the Gilded Age
Jan 27-Feb 2	4	Monopoly Capitalism
Feb 3-9	5	The Rise of Fordism
Feb 10-16	6	Progressivism and the Rise of Consumer Culture
Feb 17-23	7	The Return of Laissez Faire and the Crash
Feb 24		MIDTERM Released
Feb 24-Mar 2	8	The Great Depression and the New Deal
Sunday, Mar 2		Midterm Due by 11:30 PM
Mar 3-9	9	The New Deal Part II
Mar 10-16		Spring Break
Mar 17-23	10	The Post War Economic Boom & Postwar Labor Accord
Mar 24-30	11	Business Culture and Mass Consumer Culture
Mar 31-Apr 6	12	Hip Business and the Challenge to Mass Consumer Culture
Apr 7-13	13	Regulation, Deregulation, and the Decline of Labor in the 1970s and 1980s
Apr 14-20	14	Big Business in the 1980s and the New Conservatism
Apr 21-27	15	American Business at the Turn of the 21 st Century
Wed, Apr 30		Reading Day
Monday, May 5		FINAL Due by 11:30 PM