

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History

*File*

Semester II Year 84-85

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
247	American Business History	Peters

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This survey course examines the role of business in the American economy from 1607 to the present, and will focus on the following 4 themes:

1. Structure of American business: competition, oligopoly, and the varied types of enterprises.
2. Organization of business: evolution of the multi-divisional decentralized corporation.
3. The changing government-business relationship: mercantilism, promotion, and regulation.
4. Public perception of business and its leaders: industrial statesmen, robber barons, and invisible men.

LECTURES

See attached syllabus for the twice-weekly topics. There is the possibility that discussion sections will be assigned.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMINATIONS

A mid-semester and a final. Both will be essay type. Students will also write up to a 10 page research paper analyzing American business.

GRADING SYSTEM

First exam, 25%; paper, 30%; final, 45%.

REQUIRED READINGS

See attached course outline. If there are discussion sections additional [short] readings will be assigned.

American Business History

Nathan Peters

Required Texts:

Keith Bryant, Jr. and Henry C. Dethloff, A History of American Business

Harold C. Livesay, American Made

J. Patrick Wright, On A Clear Day You Can See General Motors  
And Articles To Be Assigned

Recommended: Alfred Chandler, Jr. The Visible Hand

Week 1:

- a) Introduction To American Business History
- b) The European Background: Companies and Colonies

Week 2:

- a) Colonial Business: North and South
- b) Mercantilism and the American Revolution

Week 3:

- a) The Constitution and the Beginning of a National Economy
- b) Neutrality, War, and the American System of Manufactures

Week 4:

- a) Early Industrialization
- b) The Infrastructure: Financial Intermediaries and Transportation

Week 5:

- a) Northern and Southern Agriculture
- b) American Businessmen and the Civil War

Week 6:

- a) The First Big Business: The Railroad
- b) Robber Barrons or Industrial Statesmen ?

Week 7:

- a) First Merger Wave: New Methods Of Combination
- b) Response To Industrialization: Labor and Government

Week 8:

- a) Response Part II: Government and Progressives
- b) EXAM

Week 9:

- a) Business and Government Partnership: World War I
- b) The 20's: Automobiles and the Second Merger Wave

Week 10:

- a) The Stock Market Crash and the Origins of the Great Depression
- b) Business and the New Deal

Week 11:

- a) World War II and the Mixed Economy
- b) A Giant Among Nations

Week 12:

- a) Multinationals
- b) The Conglomerate: The Third Merger Wave

Week 13:

- a) Organization Man
- b) Management and Labor

Week 14:

- a) Where's the Competition ?
- b) The Failure Of American Business ?

Week 15:

- a) American Business Under the Reagan Administration
- b) Review

# University of Wisconsin-Madison

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January 2, 1985

## TEXTBOOK REQUIREMENTS SEMESTER II, 1984-1985

Nathan Peters  
History 247 - AMERICAN BUSINESS HISTORY

Anticipated Enrollment 75-100

### REQUIRED:

Keith Bryant, Jr. and Henry Dethloff, A History of American Business  
(Prentice Hall).

Harold C. Livesay, American Made (Little-Brown)

J. Patrick Wright, On a Clear Day You Can See General Motors, (Avon  
Books)

### OPTIONAL:

Alfred Chandler, Jr., The Visible Hand (PB) (Harvard University  
Press)

NP:abo

American Business History

History 247  
Spring 1985

Nathan Peters

Required Texts:

Keith Bryant, Jr. and Henry C. Dethloff, A History of American Business  
Harold C. Livesay, American Made  
J. Patrick Wright, On A Clear Day You Can See General Motors  
And Articles To Be Assigned

Recommended: Alfred Chandler, Jr. The Visible Hand

Week 1:

Jan. 21 - Introduction To American Business History  
Jan. 23 - The European Background: Companies and Colonies  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 1-36.

Week 2:

Jan. 28 - Colonial Business: North and South  
Jan. 30 - Mercantilism and the American Revolution  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 37-54.

Week 3:

Feb. 4 - The Constitution and the Beginning of a National Economy  
Feb. 6 - Neutrality, War, and the American System of Manufactures  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 55-59; Livesay, pp. 1-50.

Week 4:

Feb. 11 - Early Industrialization  
Feb. 13 - The Infrastructure: Financial Intermediaries and Transportation  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 60-72, 92-111, 217-223.

Week 5:

Feb. 18 - Northern and Southern Agriculture  
Feb. 20 - American Businessmen and the Civil War  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 74-91; Livesay, pp. 52-84.

Week 6:

Feb. 25 - The First Big Business: The Railroad  
Feb. 27 - Robber Barons or Industrial Statesmen?  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 112-130, 150-166, 317-329;  
Livesay, pp. 87-125.

Week 7:

Mar. 4 - First Merger Wave: New Methods of Combination  
Mar. 6 - Response To Industrialization: Labor and Government  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 168-183, 198-210, 223-240,  
253-259, 269-276; Livesay, pp. 126-158.

Week 8:

- Mar. 11 - Response Part II: Government and Progressives
- Mar. 13 - EXAM  
NO READINGS

Week 9:

- Mar. 25 - Business and Government Partnership: World War I
- Mar. 27 - The 20's: Automobiles and the Second Merger Wave  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 131-149, 184-193, 210-215, 285-290;  
Livesay, pp. 159-211.

Week 10:

- Apr. 1 - The Stock Market Crash and the Origins of the Great Depression
- Apr. 3 - Business and the New Deal  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 227-233, 276-283;  
Livesay, pp. 213-239.

Week 11:

- Apr. 8 - World War II and the Mixed Economy
- Apr. 10 - A Giant Among Nations  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 290-300

Week 12:

- Apr. 15 - Multinationals
- Apr. 17 - The Conglomerate: The Third Merger Wave  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 301-316; Livesay, pp. 241-266.

Week 13:

- Apr. 22 - Organization Man
- Apr. 24 - Management and Labor  
Read: Bryant and Dethloff, pp. 336-354, 259-267;  
Livesay, pp. 269-294.

Week 14:

- Apr. 29 - Where's the Competition?
- May 1 - The Failure of American Business?  
Read: Wright, Entire

Week 15:

- May 6 - American Business Under the Reagan Administration
- May 8 - Review