"The business of America," United States President Calvin Coolidge famously declared during the Roaring Twenties, "is business." Although Coolidge's pronouncement remains subject to challenge from numerous vantage points, commercial enterprise has played an extraordinarily important role in shaping American politics, society, and culture since the country’s founding. This course analyzes the historical development of business in the United States during the nineteenth, twentieth, and early twenty-first centuries. In addition to providing a broad overview of such crucial processes as the emergence of an integrated, national marketplace, the growth and development of the modern corporation, the impact of governmental policy on the business environment, and the globalization of American enterprise, the class will also intensively examine two additional themes: 1) the sources and consequences of fundamental innovations in business strategy, especially in marketing; and 2) the shifting relations between large-scale employers and the members of their workforces.

REQUIRED BOOKS FOR PURCHASE  
(Available at The Regulator Bookshop, on 9th Street, just down the block from Francesca’s.)


A copy of each of these books is also available on reserve at Lilly Library. There are also nine Harvard Business School case studies assigned throughout the term, which cost $3.95 each. You will find instructions about how to download these case studies in the Course Information section of the Blackboard site for this course. Other readings are available through the course web page, or through databases accessible through the library homepage. The documentaries assigned for the class will also be available on reserve at Lilly Library.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This "Writing in the Disciplines" and “Research” intensive course meets Monday and Wednesday in lecture, with a Friday section. During the first six weeks of the term, when we will survey the broad outlines of business history in America from the revolutionary era through the present, the Monday and Wednesday classes will involve a mix of lecture and discussion. For the remainder of the course, when we will be examining two thematic units through individual case studies, the Monday and Wednesday classes will incorporate an even greater substantial degree of discussion. Thus it is extremely important that you complete reading assignments before coming to class, that you read carefully, and that you come ready to
participate. Students who read and participate generally report that they get a great deal out of the course.

Other requirements include: a short memo; an in-class test at the beginning of the sixth week; at least two polished contributions to class discussion boards; a 15-page research paper, including a prospectus and a first draft; and a final examination.

HONOR CODE

We expect you to abide by the rules and regulations of the Duke Honor Code in this course. You will have plenty of opportunity to share ideas, and even some of your research work with other students. But your research paper should credit other scholars or other students when you rely on their insights, language, or findings; and your exams should reflect your own conclusions. When you turn in a paper or an exam, we expect you to attest that you have abided by the Honor Code in completing the paper or test. For detailed information on the Duke Honor Code and Community Standard, please see http://www.integrity.duke.edu/ugrad/honorcode.html

COMPONENTS OF CLASS GRADE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual Report Memo</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Test</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Prospectus</td>
<td>3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Draft of Research Paper</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Draft of Research Paper</td>
<td>27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
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COURSEINFO WEBSITE

As mentioned above, this course has a Blackboard Courseinfo website, which is integral to the class. On it you will find:

* the syllabus and grading policy;
* pdf files for many of the readings from texts other than those required for purchase;
  discussion questions, and occasionally video clips and images;
* guidelines for all assignments and examinations;
* access to the course's discussion boards;
* access to your grades;
* class announcements (though I tend to use email for this purpose);
* a mechanism for submitting papers to your section leader or to me;
* and much, much more.

You can gain access to the site through the main Duke Courseinfo page, at: https://courses.duke.edu/

SECTIONS

| Sect. 01 | Friday, 10:05-11:30 | Carr 229 | Patrick McElwee |
| Sect. 02 | Friday, 11:40-12:55 | Bell Tower W 113 | Vanessa Freije |
| Sect. 03 | Friday, 1:15-2:30   | Carr 106  | Paige Welch     |
I. OVERVIEW

Aug. 30 Approaches to American Business History

Sept. 1 The Process of "Creative Destruction"
McCraw, American Business, 1-12 [1-9 in 1st edition]
William Cronon, Nature's Metropolis, 207-259 [Coursesite]

Sept. 2 The Business Environment before the Large Corporation
Porter, Rise of Big Business, 1-45
“A Career of Industry: With Some Account of Hats and Hatting,” Godey’s Lady Book and Magazine 49 (1854): 149-56 [American Periodicals Series Online (hereafter APSO)]

Sept. 3 The Business of American Slavery [Discussion Board]
Diary of Bennet Barrow (1838-1841), Selections [Coursesite]
Joseph Acklen, “Rules in the Management of a Southern Estate” (1856-57) [Coursesite]

Sept. 4 Business, Government, and the Myth of Laissez Faire
Porter, Rise of Big Business, 43-75

Sept. 10 Railroads and the Challenges of Corporate Management [Discussion Board]

Sept. 13 Introduction to Research Papers I -- Crafting Good Research Questions
Historical Resources on the Worldwide Web

Please look over the “Guide to Research Papers” and "List of Research Topics" before coming to class

Sept. 15 Documentary Viewing in Class: The Richest Man in the World: Andrew Carnegie
Get started on reading for Friday

Sept. 17 The Rise of Big Business [Discussion Board]
Porter, Rise of Big Business, 75-120
Sept. 20  Anti-Trust in Historical Perspective


Sept. 22  Creating the Multinational Corporation  [Discussion Board]


Alfred Sloan, My Years with General Motors (1963), 313-39  [Coursesite]

Sept. 24  Creating the Multidivisional Corporation  [Discussion Board]


Sept. 27  Conglomerates and the Great Merger Movement of the 1960s


Sept. 29  Deconglomeration, Globalization, and the Imperatives of Corporate Management at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century

McCraw, American Business, 184-211


Oct. 1 Turning Points in Twentieth-Century Business  

Oct. 4 Corporate Annual Reports: Windows on the Evolution of Corporate Strategy 
Annual Reports, American Telegraph & Telephone, 1938, 1940 
Annual Reports, Deere & Company, 1948, 1950 
Annual Report, Du Pont Corporation, 1958 
Annual Report, International Telephone and Telegraph, 1970 
[all available through Proquest Historical Annual Reports] 

See Coursesite for details on this class and the associated writing assignment, which must be submitted through the digital dropbox by 5:00, Oct. 3.

Oct. 6 IN-CLASS TEST

Oct. 8 Introduction to Research Papers II – SECTIONS MEET IN PERKINS LIBRARY’S RARE BOOK READING ROOM

Oct. 9-12 Fall Break

II. INNOVATION AND CREATIVE DESTRUCTION IN THE MARKETPLACE

Oct. 13 John Jacob Astor and the Challenges of Intercontinental Management 

Oct. 15 R. G. Dun, John M. Bradstreet, and the Legitimation of Modern Credit Reporting  
[Discussion Board] 
"Mercantile Agencies," *Milwaukee Sentinel*, Jan. 17, 1852, 3 [America’s Historical Newspapers] 
"Beauties of the Credit System," *Circular*, Aug. 14, 1856, 120 [APSO] 
"Bankruptcy in the Year 1858," 8 *Bankers' Magazine* (1858): 637-42 [APSO] 

Oct. 18 Getting Going on Research 
Work Sessions in Special Collections or Perkins Computer Area
Oct. 20  Imagining the Department Store  [Discussion Board]


Oct. 22  The Rise of Mail-Order  [Discussion Board]

Documents from Sears, Roebuck & Co., 1889-1919 [Coursesite]
Optional Viewing: "Mr. Sears' Catalogue" [Video on Reserve at Lilly]

Oct. 25  H. J. Heinz and Brand Creation  [Discussion Board]

Late Nineteenth-Century Advertisements from Processed Food Companies [Coursesite]

Research Prospectus due via email submission to your T.A. or Prof. Balleisen, 3:00 P.M., Oct. 26

Oct. 27  The Shake-out in the Early Automobile Industry

Collection of Early Automobile Advertisements [Coursesite]

Oct. 29  No Sections -- Individual Meetings to Discuss Research

Nov. 1  The Promise and Pitfalls of Exporting “American Business” to Twentieth-Century Europe  [Discussion Board]

Christopher McKenna, *The World’s Newest Profession: Management Consulting in the Twentieth

Milton Moskowitz, “Sun Hardly Ever Sets on J. Walter Thompson,” Advertising Age, March 9, 1959, 2 [Coursesite]


Nov. 3  Michael Dell and the Custom-Made Computer  [Discussion Board]

Nancy Koehn, Brand New: How Entrepreneurs Earned Customers Trust from Wedgewood to Dell (Cambridge, 2001), 257-306 [Coursesite]


Nov. 5  Chain Stores in the Twentieth Century  [Discussion Board]


Nov. 8  Remaking the World of Healthcare: Columbia/HCA at the Turn of the 21st Century  [Discussion Board]

Balleisen, Scenes from a Corporate Makeover


Nov. 10  Remaking the World of Mortgage Finance: Innovation and Crisis in the Era of Deregulation  [Discussion Board]

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=laot_Eomr3s
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ha0cq7LkQ2w&NR=1

Countrywide Bank Television Ad, circa 2006
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uk5Op5lsZgo

Casa America Mortgage Company Ad, circa 2007
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e1cnYybGo5w

Total Integrity Mortgage Company Ad, circa 2007
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQfUijQOGa5Y&feature=related

CBS Sixty Minutes; “House of Cards,” May 25, 2008 (14 minutes)
http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/01/25/60minutes/main3752515.shtml

Joseph Stiglitz, “The Fall of Lehman Brothers,” Big Think, Sept. 15, 2008 (6 minutes)
http://www.bigthink.com/business-economics/12714
Nov. 12  Continuing Research Work

Work Sessions in Special Collections or Perkins Computer Area

III. DYNAMICS OF LABOR MANAGEMENT

Nov. 15  Craft, Slave, and Factory Workers in the early 19th Century


Nov. 17  The Rise of "Scientific Management"

Video Clip, "A Job at Ford's" [Coursesite]

Nov. 19  Company Towns in the Late Nineteenth Century


Nov. 22  The Limits of Welfare Capitalism in Interwar America

Video Clip, "The Killing Floor"

FIRST DRAFT OF RESEARCH PAPER DUE with submission through digital dropbox, Nov. 23, 7:00 p.m.
There will be individual meetings to discuss your drafts scheduled throughout the week of Nov. 29th

Thanksgiving Break

Nov. 29  Labor Relations at RCA, I

[Discussion Board]
Dec. 1  The Price of Peace at General Motors, 1935 to 1950

Editorials, Business Week, March 20, April 10, 1937
C. E. Wilson, "Five Years of Industrial Peace" (1950)
Alfred Sloan, My Years with General Motors, 390-406 [all readings available through the Coursesite]

Dec. 3  Labor Relations at RCA, II  [Discussion Board]

Cowie, Capital Moves, 73-151, 201-209

Dec. 6  Nike and the Sweatshop Campaign  [Discussion Board]

[Lexis-Nexis – General News, Major Papers]

Dec. 8  Taking Stock/Review -- Lecture

Dec. 10  Taking Stock -- Optional Section Review Sessions

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER due at 5:00 on Dec. 10, through the Digital Dropbox

FINAL EXAM – Dec. 14, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.