While the history of American economic growth has been impressive, it has not always been uniform. After the American Revolution, states in the North gradually abolished slavery while states in the South strengthened the institution. Between 1860 and 1880, incomes in the American South fell relative to the rest of the country, not catching up to national averages until late in the twentieth century. On top of regional inequality, discrimination and segregation prevented African-Americans from participating fully in the economy. This course will focus on the history of the Southern economy and its relationship to national patterns. We will discuss how economic theory and data can be used to understand topics such as slavery, the Civil War, segregation, and the Great Migration.

Class Schedule and Assigned Readings

1) Introduction and Institutions
   - Stanley Engerman and Kenneth Sokoloff, “Factor Endowments, Inequality, and Paths of Development Among New World Economies”
   - Optional: David Galenson, “The Rise and Fall of Indentured Servitude in the Americas”
2) Economics of Slavery
   - Gavin Wright, selections from Political Economy of the Cotton South
3) Political Economy of Slavery
   - Gavin Wright, selections from Slavery and American Economic Development
4) Boundaries of the Plantation Economy
   - Claudia Goldin, “Urbanization and Slavery: The Issue of Compatibility”
   - Optional: David Weiman, “Urban Growth on the Periphery of the Antebellum Cotton Belt”
5) Civil War
   - Claudia Goldin and Frank Lewis, “The Economic Costs of the American Civil War: Estimates and Implications”
6) Reconstruction and the Economy After the Civil War
   - Melinda Miller, “The Righteous and Reasonable Ambition to Become a Landholder’: Land and Racial Inequality in the Postbellum South”
7) Agriculture
   - Fabian Lange, Alan Olmstead, and Paul Rhode, “The Impact of the Boll Weevil”
8) Discrimination and Violence
Course Assignments

Final Exam: 30%
Critical Essays: 40% (2 essays, 20% each unless second paper is better, in which case it will count for 30% and the first for 10%)
Participation: 15%
Primary Source Essay: 15%

Critical Essays: 5-6 page critical evaluation of an assigned reading. Due before class when paper is discussed. Late papers cannot be accepted. First paper due by lecture 4.

Participation: All readings will be posted on the course website. Students are expected to come to class having read and prepared to discuss the assigned readings for the day.

Primary Source Essay:
Throughout the history of the South, observers have described and commented on economic conditions in the South. While these observations are often valuable, they can also be misleading. For this assignment, you will choose one of the primary sources provided. Identify the economic claims the author makes as well as the evidence (there may be none) that the author uses to support his/her claim. Choose one of the claims and suggest a way to test this claim. Describe possible data sources which could be used. 1-2 pages.

Attendance: Due to the accelerated pace of summer courses, no unexcused absences can be allowed.

Academic integrity is an important component of a college education. You are encouraged to discuss assignments with each other, but should write your papers individually. The papers in this class do not require outside sources, but you must make it clear if your papers include any ideas which are your own. If you are uncertain whether something is plagiarism, please ask me.