

Suggested topics for term papers – YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO COME UP WITH YOUR OWN TOPIC!

(Please note that some of the topics below have probably been beaten up to death so there is little room for contribution.)

Week 1: Growth

1. How did Botswana become a growth miracle?
2. A comparative analysis of growth factors in _____ and _____: Can they explain most of the growth differences?
3. Growing like China: a comparative analysis of the developments in the growth factors in _____ and in China since _____.
4. Enjoying the resource bonanza without being cursed: economic reforms and prosperity in competitive resource rich countries
5. Can k , h and a explain most of the growth in _____?
6. Different cultures, different growth: a comparison of growth patterns in _____ and _____
7. Different religions, different growth: a comparison of growth patterns in _____ and _____
8. How is geography related to growth (if it is related at all)?
9. If k , h and a explain growth, what explains collapse?
10. Growth-generating luck: the case of _____
11. Is _____ converging to the US and why?

Week 2 and Week 3: Business and Consumption

1. Why did the Malthusian Trap persist till the end of the 18th century?
2. Why did the Industrial Revolution happen in England at the end of the 18th century?
3. Modern episodes of Great Divergence: What defines a growth miracle today?
4. What is the role of productive efficiency in shaping the First Industrial Revolution?
5. Contemporary Industrial Revolutions: How do they compare with the one from the 18th cent?
6. Is 3-D printing the steam engine of the 21st century?
7. The change in Consumption since the onset of the first Ind. Revolution.
8. How did the demographic transition help raise living standards in Europe?

9. What are the main attributes of the Great Divergence?
10. A critical approach to exogenous growth theories: do they explain the IR?
11. A critical approach to the multiple equilibria theories: do they explain the IR?
12. A critical approach to the endogenous growth theories: do they explain the IR?
13. How did human capital contribute to the Industrial Revolution?
14. Was the Ind. Revolution a gradual process or a true revolution?
15. How did the differences between 18th century China and England contribute to the Industrial Revolution?
16. If China had colonies in the 17th century...
17. Is China taking off on its own Great Divergence?
18. Is China colonizing Africa? (And if yes, why?)
19. Production efficiency gains over time and industrial revolutions
20. The role of government policies in shaping industrial take-offs
21. Productive reorganization in the 19th century US and US industrial dominance in early 20th century
22. Industrial and labor force expansion in the US since 1800.
23. Structural changes in US industry between 1860 and 1910.
24. How did the structural changes in US industry affect consumption patterns
25. Why US population moved into towns during the 19th century?
26. International Trade Structure and Growth in the US since 1850.
27. How did advertising begin?
28. From home production to the department store to the shopping mall: a brief history of shopping
29. A brief history of consumer protection
30. Federal Income Taxation and growing military power of the US
31. Measures of social prosperity in the US and elsewhere in the 1920s: a comparative approach
32. Was socialism possible in the US?
33. Was a Soviet-like revolution politically sellable in the 1920s in the US?
34. Consumer credit, consumption and investment in the US in the 1920s.

35. How did the end of free immigration in the 1920s induce technological progress in the US?
36. Consumer well-being and decline in worker unionization in the 1920s
37. Early real-estate booms and busts
38. Fiscal policies in the US in the 1920s and today
39. How is monetary policy today different from the monetary policy in the 1920s?
40. Automobile consumption and industrial expansion in the 1920s
41. Human capital accumulation in the 20th century US (and elsewhere)
42. What fuelled the stock market boom of the 1920s?
43. Why did US manufacturing experience a relative decline to services after the WWII?
44. Is labor correlated with output after WWII?
45. What explains the decline in manufacturing labor after WWII?
46. Structural changes in the US GDP after WWII
47. What explains the decline in agricultural labor after WWII?
48. The rise of services after WWII
49. GDP growth and consumption growth after WWII
50. Life expectancy and GDP growth after WWII
51. From the lines for free food in the Great Depression to the iPhone lines after the Great Recession: the changing patterns of consumption during the 20th century

Week 4: Government

1. The structure of government expenditures in 19th century ____ (a country of choice)
 2. The change in structure of government expenditures of (country X) till the WWII.
 3. Political economy of the changing structure of government expenditures in _____ (country X, or a group of countries) in _____ (a time period of choice)
 4. Does the political orientation of the incumbent government affect the structure of government expenditures in 20th century _____ (a country of choice)
 5. A comparative analysis of the welfare state in ____ and ____ during _____
 6. Are authoritarian regimes spending more on social expenditures than democracies?
 7. Can everyone win if everyone spends less?: the strengths and weaknesses of austerity
 8. The evolution of the welfare state in Europe after the WWII
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9. Is the old welfare state in Europe dead?
 10. Is US moving to a EU-like welfare state?
 11. The future of the welfare state in Europe and the US
 12. Is central planning the answer to preventing depressions?
 13. Similarities and differences in Roosevelt's *New Deal* and Obama's *Change*
 14. Does regulatory capture slow down economic growth?
 15. Deregulation and privatization: Are they supposed to increase growth, and how?
 16. Why socialism was politically sellable in the East but not in the West?
 17. How does the bias towards capital investment in socialism hamper growth in the long-term?
 18. How do price controls during socialism encourage inefficiencies?
 19. Why socialist countries did not develop their service sectors?
 20. How did the soft budget constraints during socialism encourage inefficiencies?
 21. Central planning and the lack of technological advancement?
 22. A comparative analysis of the responses to the productivity slowdown in the US, Western and Eastern Europe
 23. The prohibition in the 1930s US and the dry regime in the 1980s Russia: similarities and differences.
 24. Are the Washington Consensus reforms supply-side policies?
 25. The political economy of Washington Consensus reforms in the beginning of the 1990s
 26. Are the Doing Business reforms supply-side policies?
 27. Did Nordic countries collapse the Nordic model to save themselves?
 28. Economic reforms in _____ since the 1970s: What are the expected effects?
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29. Did _____ (a reform of choice) in _____ (a country of choice) since the 1970s affect economic growth, and how?

Week 5: Money

1. Do hyperinflation episodes move the economy back to barter?
 2. The evolution of money in _____ (a country of your choice)
 3. What did the US ``central banks'' before the FED do wrong to die off?
 4. The emergence of central banking: a comparative perspective
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5. The emergence of deposit insurance: a comparative perspective
6. The economics of financial mergers and acquisitions in _____ during _____
7. Money supply and inflation: the case of _____
8. Money, prices, and growth in the US post-bellum era: why did the economy grow with declining prices?
9. The origins of the dual-banking system in the US
10. Advantages and disadvantages of being a state VS being a national bank in the 19th century US
11. The business cycle and interest rates in _____ during _____
12. Interest rates and recessions: a comparative perspective
13. Monetary policy tools during the Great Recession: a comparative perspective on US, Europe and China
14. How did the FED discover the open market operations (OMO) and how it made the OMO a main policy tool?
15. Why interest rates move down during and after wars?
16. Why was inflation targeting introduced?: The case of _____ in comparative perspective

Week 6: Labor

1. Production and labor force growth in _____
 2. Labor productivity growth: a comparative perspective
 3. Why employment grew slower in agriculture than in services in the 19th century US?
 4. Structural changes of employment in the 20th century: the case of _____
 5. Why the slower structural change of employment in _____ than in _____
 6. Labor productivity and real wage growth in the 19th century _____
 7. Labor productivity, real wages and unionization in _____
 8. Labor productivity, real wages and unionization: a comparative perspective
 9. Labor demand and immigration to the US in the 19th century
 10. Relative wages in the US and _____: explaining the exodus to the US
 11. Business cycles, labor demand and emigration-immigration cycles
 12. Why did Europeans Emigrate to the US in the 19th and early 20th century?
 13. Emigration to the US from _____ and _____: a comparative approach
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14. Is human capital investment rewarded more over time?
15. The skill premium in _____ and _____ during _____: a comparative approach
16. Demand for schooling and returns to education in _____ during _____
17. How did slaves improve economic efficiency in the 19th century US?
18. Is slavery free labor?
19. Political support for democracy in southern US states: an economic approach
20. Slavery and economic growth in the US: exploring state and time variation
21. The price of a slave and US business cycles: were slaves assets just like any other?
22. Factors changing the labor participation of women in _____ during _____
23. Factors changing the labor participation of men in _____ during _____
24. Gender differences in labor force participation: a tale of two economic systems
25. Wage discrimination at the workplace: is it declining in _____?
26. Factors affecting wage discrimination in _____ during _____
27. Suffrage and growth: how does the timing of voting rights affect growth and why?

Week 7: Resources

1. Dutch disease: the case of _____ and _____
 2. Dutch disease contagion?: a comparative approach
 3. Do resource-rich countries become less democratic?: Revisiting Sachs and Warner (1995)
 4. Why resource-rich countries go bankrupt?: the case of _____ and _____
 5. A comparative approach on government borrowing and spending in resource-rich countries
 6. Market-oriented reforms in resource-rich countries: are they slower than elsewhere and why?
 7. Resource discoveries and civil wars: are ethnically diverse nations more prone to conflict than homogenous ones, and why?
 8. National Resource Funds: a story of money management in comparative perspective
 9. Episodes of resource discoveries and *ex-post* changes in political systems
 10. Why not subsidize the losers from discovering a point resource?
 11. What did Botswana do that everyone else did not do at the time?
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12. Why some countries reformed early while others delayed market-oriented reforms?: A political economy perspective

13. The origins of supply-side policies in the US

14. Oil-shocks, business cycles and policy responses: How are the 1970s different from today?

Week 9: Institutions

Total so far: 148 topics

Please visit the class website for further ideas on your term papers, class presentations, and more:

<http://home.cerge-ei.cz/pstankov/teaching/ehistf14.htm>

Thanks,

P. Stankov