Course Description:

This course examines the changes that have occurred over the course of U.S. history in the way innovation is organized and financed. Topics include the operation of the U.S. patent system, the emergence of a market for technology over the course of the nineteenth century, information problems associated with the governance and finance of innovative firms, the rise of corporate R&D in the early twentieth century, the decline of American competitiveness in 1970s and ‘80s, and the wellsprings of the “new economy” of recent years.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Students are expected to read the assigned articles in advance of the date for which they are listed and come to class prepared to discuss them. This is extremely important. Class participation will count for 25 percent of the grade. Most participation in discussions will be voluntary, but I will also call on a certain number of students (selected randomly from the class roster) each day.

There will be a midterm examination (in class on April 27) and a final examination (June 12, from 6:30-9:30PM). The midterm will count for 30 percent of the grade and the final 45 percent, though I reserve the right to adjust the proportions in individual cases to reflect substantial improvement.

All readings are available through the List of Links page of the course website: http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/06S/econ106h-1/

To access the readings off campus via a dsl or other similar connection, you will need to set up a proxy server. Instructions on how to do this are available from: http://www.bol.ucla.edu/services/proxy/

Schedule of Lectures and Assignments:

Week 1

Apr. 4  Introduction to the Course

Apr. 6  The Patent System and the Democratization of Invention

Week 2

Apr. 11 Constructing and Contesting Patent Rights


Apr. 13 The Emergence of a Market for Technology


Week 3

Apr. 18 Networks of Innovation


Apr. 20 Technological Hubs


Week 4

Apr. 25 Regulating Innovation on the Railroads


Apr. 27 Midterm Examination
Week 5

May 2  Dilemmas in Organizing Entrepreneurial Firms


May 4  The Rise of a Market for Industrial Securities


Week 6

May 9  The Visible Hand of Management


May 11 Managing Innovation within the Large Firm


Week 7

May 16 Strengths and Weaknesses of the U.S. National Innovation System


May 18 From Conglomerates to Leveraged Buyouts

Week 8

May 23 Learning from Toyota


May 25 Silicon Valley


Week 9

May 30 Venture Capital and the Revival of the Market for Technology


June 1 No Class

Week 10

June 6 Looking Backward and Forward


June 8 Review

June 12 Final Exam (6:30-9:30PM)

Office Hours:

Prof. Lamoreaux
9268 Bunche
x 50225
email: lamoreaux@econ.ucla.edu

Wed., 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM
Thurs., 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM
(or by appointment)

Feel free to email me if you have a personal problem. However, if you have a question about the course material or about an assignment, please post the question on the discussion board on the course website (http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/06S/econ106h-1/). I will answer your question on the discussion board so that all members of the class can benefit from the information.