1. Please comment on the individual instructors with regard to effectiveness and attitude toward students:

Strengths

- This was a wonderful class. I think that the course effectively provided a grounding in research in economic history (though it was not confined to Europe, a fact which I don't find problematic at all so much as just a bit strange given the title of the course, but anyway). I think that the discussion slides were the most effective tool that I've ever had in a class for forcing me to give a close reading to the assignments. I really appreciated them. In addition, I found that the instructor really fostered a good community amongst students. When it came time for final research proposals, I think it was clear that we all were invested in the projects of others and so took the time to make thoughtful comments.
- Very good course, Ran clearly cares deeply about the material and his students' progress in the program.
- Dr. Abramitzky's focus, from the first day on, appeared to be on the creation of an environment encouraging discussion among the students. Consequently, we ended up with a set of class discussions which were very open and informative.
- Great Course!
- Probably the most interesting course I have taken in the grad econ sequence. Great choice of topics which were presented in such a way to spur future research ideas. Ran is an amazing teacher and it is evident that he cares about the material and more importantly that he cares about students. He is one of the most effective teachers in the department. If only all econ professors were like him.
- Receptive, intelligent, and helpful. Willing to adapt the course to student needs and interests. Passionate about the material.
- The instructor REALLY demonstrated concern about whether students were learning. Also, he encouraged the formation a good environment for good intellectual discussion about the designated papers. I want to thank the instructor for his kind personal attitude towards the students.
- Ran showed great concern about how students could best benefit from the class. He wanted to make sure that things were tailored specifically to our needs and interests. He was very available to meet and go over concerns, questions, and research topics outside of class. Ran also showed great flexibility in the design of the course, making accommodations and changes when needed and promptly responding to any concerns voiced by students.

Suggestions for Improvement

- I know that we had an experimentation phase after the midterm evaluation regarding whether discussion would come before or after the presentation, and whether the presentation would begin or end the class. I have to say that having discussion after the presentation seemed to work better, though I know that a minor problem was that the presenter (rather than the discussant) had more in-depth knowledge of the paper and so seemed better able to lead discussion. Even with this minor problem, I think having discussion afterward ended up being more effective. I thought that the loose design for the three slides (good, bad, research OR whatever 3 slides you wanted) was good - it gave people flexibility, while also providing a basic template if they didn't have some creative inspiration. And finally, I think that it did sometimes make sense to have the student presentation first since it tied into the lecture from the previous class.
- None - Ran is awesome.
- Ran's attitude toward teaching is exemplary. I was very comfortable in the class.

2. Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses, if any, of the textbook(s) and reading(s). What materials were most and least valuable? Why?

Strengths

- I really enjoyed almost all of the readings. I had a slight preference for those that attempted to explain something interesting in history that had a historical component as opposed to those that tried to test an economic model using historical data for empirical convenience or some sort of better identification. Of course, I recognize that both types of papers are valid, and it is useful to know about both. I simply had a personal preference for one type over the other. I think some of my favorite papers were (1) the estimation of the labor market value criminality (such a simple, clean straightforward paper; (2) AJR's Reversal of Fortune (simply because it is so unbelievably clever) (3) the Soviet mathematician paper (in part because the finding seemed
counter to some theory, but also because it was nice to see a work in progress).

- Very interesting papers and a good step to independent research!
- All the papers that we read were interesting.
- The strengths of the readings was their breadth. In a very short period of time, I was able to get a useful grasp on the types of questions that are interesting to economic historians.

Suggestions for Improvement

- No suggestions.
- I did wonder why we read some papers in a certain section rather than other papers which were listed on the syllabus. I wish we had read some of Ran's stuff as well. He explained it in class but it would have been nice to have his work be one of the major readings for a few of the days.
- One could add a discussion about how economists and historians can work together. What are the strengths and methods of each discipline, and how can they complement each other? What is each discipline interested in, and how can we exploit these different research approaches to produce new approaches, methods, and questions? In this regard, I would suggest assigning a few readings during the beginning of the course that are concerned specifically with how economists and historians work together (on a more theoretical level); what their relationship has been over the past years; and where the discipline of economic history is headed in the coming years. Related to this, it would be interesting to include some more authors who work primarily as historians. Almost all the readings for this course were authored by scholars who were trained as economists. There is, however, also a great deal of work done by researchers whose primary training is as historians.

3. Please comment on assignments and exams (difficulty, length, frequency, usefulness, and their success at testing conceptual understanding rather than recall):

Strengths

- I think that reading one paper per class was a very appropriate reading load. I found that I really had the chance to engage with the paper, rather than (if I were reading 3 or 4) simply try to get the main point and move on. And again, the discussion slides were such a good commitment device. Keep doing those.
- Great.
- The assignments were just right. Creating presentations for each paper discussed pushed me to really think about each of the papers presented.
- I think the 3-slide thing is great! :) 

Suggestions for Improvement

- No suggestions.
- We discussed this in class, but I would tweak the order in which presentations are done in class just a little bit. Sometimes, there seemed to be significant overlap between the main presenter and the discussion leader. I am not sure how to fix this problem exactly, but I think it would be worth taking another look at how this structure could be improved to avoid redundancies in the presentations.

4. Do you have any additional comments on the course over-all?

Strengths

- Fantastic course. Very little should change. I will highly recommend the course and instructor to my academic colleagues.
- Dr. Abramitzky was both insistent upon rigor and simultaneously emphatic upon openness and a safe environment for all the students. He consistently conveyed a very student-oriented attitude, and I benefited greatly as a student and researcher from his class.
- Great course - probably the best course overall in the grad econ department; it is well organized and interesting, students are pushed to learn, explore, and discuss new ideas and the professor is amazing.
- A great part about the course was how I was able to survey a great amount of work in economic history. However, this turned out to be a drawback as well, as we progressed between topics fairly quickly.

Suggestions for Improvement

- I would say that the lecture section of class was really great, and I learned a lot. However, sometimes I felt like it was a little rushed. And I know (I know!) that there was a lot to cover, and the instructor's enthusiasm for the material was contagious, but having just a little more time to ask questions, and perhaps have the professor
prompt us with questions, get us to think a little more during the lecture phase, could have been preferable. But again, this is really a minor quibble. I really enjoyed the course as-is.

- Make Ran teach more courses. :)
- I am not sure! It is a very difficult balance to make. Perhaps topics could receive different emphasis according to the make-up of the students in the class (economists, historians, etc)