

**George Mason University**  
**International Economic Policy      ECON 385**  
**Wednesday, 7:20-10:00 p.m.**

**Instructor:** Dr. Ekaterina Brancato

**Office Hours:** By appointment only (contact me in advance by email or by phone)

**Email:** [Ekaterina.Brancato@gmail.com](mailto:Ekaterina.Brancato@gmail.com). This is the best way to reach me.

**Phone:** My phone number will be posted via blackboard message after the first week of classes (**PLEASE NO TEXT MESSAGES**, for record keeping purposes – email. *If you send a text message, assume that I will have **no** knowledge of contents*).

**Important note for students:** Mason uses only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students must activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important university information including messages related to this class. **All messaging through the blackboard will be sent to your GMU mail account.**

**Objectives/Course Overview:**

The objective of the course is to gain an understanding of how various international policies affect people in the U.S. and in the world today and to gain historical knowledge of the most important international policy developments. You will be introduced to common sense economics and the economic way of thinking first and then to the topics in international economics and trade. Emphasis will be placed on understanding the basic material presented in class and supplemented by reading assignments, on improving economic problem-solving skills, and on refining *the understanding* of international issues from an economic perspective.

Basic principles of international economics and globalization form the underlying theme of this course, touching on areas of trade, intellectual property, protectionism, income distribution, cultural diversity, development, and finance. *The course will emphasize the role of market institutions in the coordination of international economic activity.*

Class meetings will consist of lecture and discussion of assigned reading and related topics. *All assignments must be completed before class.* **This class involves a large amount of reading, analyzing information, and memorizing. The pre-requisite is ability to express your thoughts very well in English and ability to handle fairly complicated texts.**

**Text and Reading Assignments:**

***Required:***

*Common Sense Economics* by James Gwartney et al. [I highly recommend the latest (2010) edition, however, an earlier one would suffice with perfect class attendance]

*Globalization* by Donald Boudreaux

*The Armchair Economist* by Steven Landsburg (2012 edition)

*The Future and Its Enemies* by Virginia Postrel

***Recommended:***

*In Defense of Global Capitalism* by Johan Norberg and *From Subsistence to Exchange and Other Essays* by Peter Bauer

**Additional reading assignments** will be posted on blackboard periodically, usually a week in advance. If you are not in class, it is your responsibility to keep track of assignments and announcements. Some reading

assignments may be sent via email; it is still your responsibility to make sure that you are up-to-date on the reading. Email me if you are not sure.

**Grades: [YOUR EXAM AND FINAL GRADE ARE CALCULATED IN POINTS, ACCORDING TO THE SCALE ON THE RIGHT]**

Grades	% Weight
Exam 1	30%
Exam 2	30%
Exam 3	40%
Total	100%

Points	Grade
93-95 points	A
90-92 points	A-
87-89 points	B+
84-86 points	B
80-83 points	B-
77-79 points	C+
74-76 points	C
70-73 points	C-
64-69 points	D
Below 63 points	F

#### **EXAMPLE OF A GRADE CALCULATION:**

**EXAM 1 = 90 POINTS; EXAM 2 = 94 POINTS; EXAM 3 = 70 POINTS**

**FINAL GRADE=  $90 \times 0.3 + 94 \times 0.3 + 70 \times 0.4 = 27 + 28.2 + 28 = 83.2$  OR B- [B MINUS]**

#### **Exams:**

There will be three exams. Typically, the second and third exams are comprehensive. Exams are either in class – pencil and scantron – or via blackboard. You may not use any notes, text or any other supplemental materials during the exam.

#### **Attendance:**

Attendance is required and will be taken each class. Each unexcused absences will yield 1 point deduction from your total grade. Some of the exam material will be covered only in class. I reserve the right to distribute lecture power point slides and other supporting material only to those who attended and without any prior notice. I WILL do this if I see attendance going down.

**Honor Code:** Simply put, no cheating or plagiarism. When preparing your presentation, it is perfectly fine to incorporate works by others, as long as it is referenced properly and as long as there is an analytical part written exclusively by you. **When caught, your latest assignment or test will yield 0 points – no exceptions.**

**Disability Resource Center:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please notify me and contact the Disability Resource Center at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**Schedule of Classes**  
(May be amended throughout the course)

Date	Exams/Paper	Topics	Topics Amended
30-Aug	Lecture 1 Intro	Overview/ Basic Economic Principles 1	
6-Sep	Lecture 2	Basic Economic Principles 1	
13-Sep	Lecture 3	Basic Economic Principles 2	
20-Sep	Lecture 4	Basic Economic Principles 3	
27-Sep	Lecture 5	Basic Economic Principles 4	
4-Oct	Lecture 6	Intellectual History of Trade/Intro to International Markets (not part of exam 1)	
<b>11-Oct</b>	<b>1st exam</b>		
18-Oct	Lecture 7	Intellectual History of Trade/Intro to International Markets/Globalization	
25-Oct	Lecture 8	Globalization: Ideas and International Policies -- Hunting the Ghost of Exports	
1-Nov	Lecture 9	Emerging markets	
<b>8-Nov</b>	<b>2nd exam</b>		
15-Nov	Lecture 10	The U.S./The Eurozone/The EU	
22-Nov		BREAK Nov 22-26	
29-Nov	Lecture 11	Globalization: Economic Development/Aid	
6-Dec	Lecture 12	Future and Its Enemies: Determinism, Chaos Theory, Schumpeter and more	
<b>13-Dec</b>	<b>Final exam 7:30-10:00 p.m.</b>		