

George Mason University
Department of Economics
Economics 385: International Economic Policy
Spring 2024

Syllabus and Reading List

Instructor: Zane Mullins

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Class Meetings: Weekly recorded lectures

Course Description

The goal of this course is to familiarize you with the salient issues involving international trade and economic policy. This course will be roughly equal parts economic theory and history. The first half of the course will focus on topics related to international exchange, such as trade policy and barriers to trade. The second half will involve more macroeconomic and monetary topics.

This course does not count as an elective for the economics major and is intended for students with little to no background in economics. The first three weeks of class will be mostly focused on the review of economic principles, which will be important to know as we progress through the course.

Communication

The best way to contact me will be at my George Mason email address. I will also be happy to make myself available for Zoom meetings.

Grade Requirements:

Midterm (25%)

Final (30%)

Homework (30%, 7 total)

Essay (15%)

Each week, you will be expected to do the assigned readings and watch the recorded lectures. There will be homework due every other week throughout the semester. Every homework will be due at midnight on Sunday of the respective week. For example, the first homework will be due on the Sunday of our second week of class (January the 28th), and every two weeks after that. The homework assignments will be posted on Blackboard and will contain a variety of short-answer and multiple-choice questions. Each homework will directly pertain to the content covered in the previous two weeks.

I will offer synchronous discussion sessions if there is sufficient demand. These sessions will be informal and attending them is completely optional. However, it will be a good opportunity for

you to ask questions regarding the course material for the week. They will be recorded so students unable to attend can view them later.

Towards the end of the semester, there will be a 4-5 page paper (12 point font, double-spaced, 1 inch margins) that will count for 15% of your grade. I will offer a list of prompts, although you may write about whatever topic you wish if you clear it with me beforehand. The paper will present an opportunity for you to be evaluated on the thoroughness and quality of your economic analysis.

The exams will also be administered on the course Blackboard page. A lockdown browser will be used for the midterm and final exams.

Grading Scale

| Grade | Range | GPA |
|-------|--------|-----|
| A+ | 100-97 | 4.0 |
| A | 96-93 | 4.0 |
| A- | 92-90 | 3.7 |
| B+ | 89-87 | 3.3 |
| B | 86-83 | 3.0 |
| B- | 82-80 | 2.7 |
| C+ | 79-77 | 2.3 |
| C | 76-73 | 2.0 |
| C- | 72-70 | 1.7 |
| D | 69-60 | 1.0 |
| F | 60 > | 0.0 |

Assigned Readings

In Defense of Globalization, Jagdish Bhagwati

The Globalization Paradox, Dani Rodrik

These two texts form the backbone of the course. They present an interesting dichotomy that we will use to analyze the political and economic aspects of international economic policy.

COURSE POLICIES

1. George Mason University Honor System and Honor Code

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. Plagiarism (statements from Mason Web Site) Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. <http://mason.gmu.edu/montecin/plagiarism.htm#plagiarism> Please familiarize yourself with the Honor System and Code, as stated in the George Mason University Undergraduate Catalog. When you are given an assignment as an individual, the work must be your own. Some of your work may be collaborative; source material for group projects and work of individual group

members must be carefully documented for individual contributions. <http://mason.gmu.edu/montecin/plagiarism.htm>

2. Class Registration

Students are responsible for verifying the accuracy of their own schedules. Students need to check Patriot Web regularly to verify that they are registered for the classes that they think they are. This is particularly important since students are no longer dropped for nonpayment. Faculty may not allow a student who is not registered to continue to attend class and may not grade the work of students who do not appear on the official class roster. Deadlines each semester are published in the Schedule of Classes available from the Registrar's Web Site registrar.gmu.edu. After the last day to drop a class, withdrawing from this class requires the approval of the dean and is only allowed for nonacademic reasons. Undergraduate students may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.

3. Accommodations for students with disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. The need for accommodations should be identified at the beginning of the semester and the specific accommodation has to be arranged through the Office of Disability Resources. Faculty cannot provide accommodations to students on their own (e.g. allowing a student extra time to complete an exam because the student reports having a disability).

4. Late-Work Policy

Late assignments will have 10% of the grade deducted per day late. I am happy to grant extensions, but it must be in advance of the due date.

5. Technology Statement

This course requires the use of Microsoft PowerPoint for weekly lectures, and Microsoft Word for homework and essay submissions. Any discussion sessions will take place on Blackboard Collaborate Ultra, which is located on the course Blackboard Page. Students are expected to acquire the requisite software to operate the Respondus Lockdown Browser, which will be used on the midterm and final exams.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

Week 1- Ancient Economic Policy, Mercantilism, Enlightenment Europe, Absolute and Comparative Advantage

Rodrik Introduction and ch.1

Bhagwati ch.1

Week 2- Thinking Like an Economist Pt.1

Rodrik ch.2

Bhagwati ch.2

Homework due Jan 28th.

Week 3- Thinking Like an Economist Pt.2

Week 4- Tariffs, Quotas, National Income Accounting

Bhagwati ch.12

Homework due February 11th.

Week 5- Monopoly, Infant Industry Protection, Trade Disputes

Rodrik ch.3, ch.9

Bhagwati ch.5, ch.6, ch.7, ch.9, ch.10, ch.11. ch.16

Week 6- The Political Economy of International Trade, Institutions, and Exchange

Bhagwati ch.17

Homework due February 25th.

Week 7- Midterm

Week 8- Money and Banking

Homework due March 10th.

Week 9- Exchange Rate Regimes and Currency Areas. Case Studies: The International Gold Standard, Bretton Woods, and the European Union

Rodrik ch.4

Week 10- Forex Market, Interest Rate Arbitrage, Purchasing Power Parity, Mundell-Fleming Intro

Rodrik ch.5

Homework due March 24th.

Week 11- Mundell-Fleming Continued

Week 12- Financial Crises

Rodrik ch.6

Bhagwati ch.13, ch.14

Homework due April 7th.

Week 13- Deficits and Debt

Rodrik ch.7, ch.8

Bhagwati ch.18

Week 14- The Globalization Trilemma. The Clash Between Authoritarianism and Democracy. Can International Institutions Prevent Entropy? Case Studies: EU, GATT, WTO

Rodrik ch.10, ch.11, ch.12,

Bhagwati ch.15

Homework due April 21st.

Some Important Dates:

First day of class: 01/16

Midterm due: 03/03

Spring Break: 03/04-03/10

Final exam due: 05/05