

# Econ 385: International Economic Policy

Instructor: Alexander W. Craig

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Office Hours: TBD, and by appointment

## Required Texts

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I have worked to find books that are available for free online or digitally through the GMU library. The last time I checked, these were such books, so you should not need to spend any money on them. If you would like to have copies of them, they are generally cheap when bought used from Amazon.

Coyne, Christopher. *Doing Bad by Doing Good: Why Humanitarian Action Fails*. Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 2013.

Deaton, Angus. *The Great Escape: Health, Wealth, and the Origins of Inequality*. Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013.

OpenStax, *Principles of Economics 2e*, <https://openstax.org/details/books/principles-economics-2e>

Powell, Benjamin. *The Economics of Immigration: Market-Based Approaches, Social Science, and Public Policy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

## Course Description

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This course will cover economic aspects of international issues, focusing especially on international trade, economic development, and foreign policy. We will also examine the political economy of these topics, asking why the incentives created by political systems produce the outcomes we see. Questions we will address will include things like “What happens to domestic consumers when imports are taxed?” and “Why are some countries poor despite having access to the same technology as rich countries?” Many of these issues are deeply morally important to many people, and thinking about their importance will factor into the class. However, only the descriptive portion of the material will be subject to grading.

## Evaluation and Grading

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Your grade will come from the following sources and weightings:

Weekly assignments – 10%

Midterm – 35%

Final project – 20%

Final Exam – 35%

None of the weekly assignments will be accepted late and any assignments not turned in on time will be given zero credit. Midterm exams turned in less than 24 hours late will incur a 25% grade penalty. Midterm exams will not be accepted more than 24 hours late. Due to the need to turn in final grades to the university in a timely manner, final exams will not be accepted late.

The weekly assignments will be participation grades wherein students can receive feedback on their understanding at low stakes. Only ten of the weekly assignments will count toward the final grade. The lowest scores will be dropped until the student has ten grades in this category. They will be made available in each week's folder on Blackboard.

All graded work will be turned in anonymously via Blackboard. Blackboard will track which student receives which grade and I will not know whose assignment is whose until all the submissions have been graded. I do this to prevent conscious and unconscious bias in grading and make students more confidence in submitting their work.

The final project will consist of a summary and review of a book on international economic policy. More details will be made available in instructions for the assignment on Blackboard.

The midterm and final exams will be open-note, open-book exams with appropriately challenging questions. Students will have at least five days to complete each exam.

I will not respond to emails about test or project grades sent less than 24 hours after grades have posted. After this 24 hour period, except in cases of clear error, I will respond to grade disputes by asking another instructor in the economics department to regrade that student's response to the disputed question. The student will receive the grade the alternate instructor gives them irrespective of whether it is higher than the original grade.

## **Class expectations**

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### **-Scheduling**

This class is slated to be online and fully asynchronous. This means the class material can be learned and all assignments can be performed according to your schedule, subject to a final due date. However, synchronous sessions for asking questions and getting feedback in real time will be available if students wish to take advantage of them. All synchronous class activities will be entirely optional.

### **-Syllabus**

This syllabus will function like the constitution for our class. I will do my best to adhere to the schedule and expectations contained herein. I have strived in writing it to make everyone's expectations for the class clear. If anything is unclear, please email me for clarification after reading the rest of the syllabus. I reserve the right to modify the syllabus as necessary, especially to modify the schedule to accommodate student interest in a given topic.

### **-Communication**

In addition to the synchronous Q&A sessions, students may post discussion posts in the thread for each week of the semester. I will occasionally check these for questions I can answer, and

students are encouraged to use this space to collaborate on learning the material, form study groups, suggest learning resources, etc.

## University Requirements

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### **-Honor Code**

Mason is an Honor Code university; please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated gravely. Academic integrity means, essentially, when you are responsible for a task you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work in an aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

### **-Privacy**

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. I will not respond to messages sent from or send messages to a non-Mason email address. This is to fulfill the legal requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### **-Accommodation**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact Disability Services at <http://ds.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through Disability Services and should be arranged early in the semester.

## Schedule

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The course will roughly follow the following outline, however there may be changes in the schedule of topics as the semester progresses. No later than each Monday I will make the reading, viewing, and listening materials available on Blackboard.

Week	Week of	Topic
1	Jan 25	Basic economic concepts
2	Feb 1	Basic economic models
3	Feb 8	International trade
4	Feb 15	Protectionism
5	Feb 22	Economic growth
6	Mar 1	Growth modeling
7	Mar 8	What causes growth?
8	Mar 15	Midterm Exam
9	Mar 22	Public choice
10	Mar 29	Political economy of trade

11	Apr 5	Political economy of development
12	Apr 12	Problems with aid
13	Apr 19	Problems with intervention
14	Apr 26	Immigration
15	May 3	Final Exam