

Introduction to International Economics

ECON 0500

- Term: Summer 2022
- Location: Web-Based Class
- Lectures: Recorded and uploaded to Canvas each Saturday at noon.
- Weekly Review Session (optional): Wednesdays 5 pm to 6.30 pm (ET)
- Instructor: Guillermo Román Lezama Pérez (he/him/his)
- Email: gul30@pitt.edu
- Office: 4514 Wesley W. Posvar Hall
- Zoom Room (for Review Sessions): <https://pitt.zoom.us/j/95290503007>

Office Hours

- Office Hours: MF 10-11.45 AM (In-Person or by Zoom and only by appointment)
Tu 2-3.30 PM (In-person or by Zoom, open without appointment).
- Office Hours Appointments: <https://calendly.com/guillelezama/office-hours>
- Zoom Room (for Office Hours): <https://pitt.zoom.us/my/guillermo.lezama>

Course Description

How do we measure countries' exchanges with the rest of the world? Why do countries not produce everything they consume? How do countries differ on what they trade or the FDI they receive? Which policies have governments enacted to promote/discourage trade and foreign investment? The course addresses questions like these by presenting and discussing the economic principles and policy options that shape relationships between countries.

The course is divided into three main sections: International Finance, International Trade, and International Economic Issues. The first section provides a macroeconomic perspective on international transactions. The second section explores the microeconomic theory and implications of trade policy. The final section uses the macro and micro analytical tools from the previous sections to assess several major topics facing the global economy, including trade agreements, economic development, immigration, and foreign direct investment. Using real-world data, we will also look at how countries differ on multiple dimensions of their external sector.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to: i) describe and explain the key variables that shape the relationship between countries; ii) identify and outline the main domestic positive and negative effects of a higher degree of the internationalization of an economy; iii) apply models to evaluate the changing conditions on international markets and government policies and their impact on international business; iv) analyze trade and national accounts data from well-known sources.

Course Outline, Requirements, and Activities.

This course is an asynchronous, web-based class. The course combines lecture videos, weekly review sessions, quizzes, homework assignments, a group project, and two exams. The course will be formatted to perform activities asynchronously. Students are expected to watch the lectures and the review session each week at home. The instructor will upload the lectures, assignments, and other resources following a week-by-week schedule (see the Course Schedule below). Activities that require submission will have due dates. Please review the syllabus carefully.

- Lectures consist of short videos (5-15 min.) that the instructor will upload for you to see whenever you prefer. There will not be a meeting time for lectures. Lectures will be uploaded every Saturday at noon.
- For each lecture video, there will be a short quiz to check whether you understand the main concepts in that lecture.
- Each Wednesday at 5 pm, I will hold a live review session of that week's videos. Attendance is optional. This session will be held on Zoom. The primary purpose is to summarize the week's content and that you ask any questions you may have. This meeting will be recorded and uploaded.

The total length of videos, the time you should spend on a quiz, and the live review session's length for a specific week will be approximately 6.5 hours (the time an in-person course is assigned for lectures in a week). The course is designed such that both the lecture content and the exercises in quizzes and assignments are important. That is why students are expected to watch lectures and answer the corresponding quizzes. They are also expected to ask any questions they may have from the interaction with the readings and the lecture. At the end of the week, they should submit their homework assignment where they put into practice the content of the lecture and the readings.

Assignments

Quizzes (10%)

For each lecture video, there will be a short quiz so you can check whether you understood the main concepts in that lecture. Quizzes will be available to submit for two weeks after the lecture was uploaded (except for Week 6's; see Course Schedule).

Weekly Homework Assignments (20%)

Each week, a homework assignment will be available for you to submit. It will consist of multiple-choice questions, exercises, and discussion questions. Homework assignments will be available from Saturday at noon to Friday at midnight.

Group Project (20%)

In the project, students should follow directions to download and present data about three countries. Students should also answer questions regarding the mentioned data. There will be three submissions (every two weeks: end of weeks 2, 4, and 6). Submissions will consist of a data file (preferably .xls) and a 2-page length of answers. During weeks 3 and 4, each group should meet with the instructor to discuss the feedback on the first submission. At the end of the course, each group will record a 5-10 minutes presentation summarizing the three assignments. Groups could be of 3 students max. Individual submissions are also allowed. Groups' composition and the choice of two countries should be submitted by July 2nd at 11 PM. Detailed guidelines will be provided on Canvas.

Exams

Midterm (25%)

A midterm will be held at half the course. The midterm will be available from Friday, July 15th at noon to Sunday, July 17th at noon. Once the midterm is opened, students will have a limited time to finish it (1-2 hours, TBD).

Final (25%)

A final exam will be held at the end of the course. The final exam will be available from Thursday, August 4th at noon to Saturday, August 6th at 11 pm. Once the final is opened, students will have limited time to finish it (1-2 hours, TBD).

Both exams are open notes. However, students are expected to not discuss their answers with other students or anyone else. Please review the Academic Integrity section of this syllabus.

Grading Policy

- 20% Weekly Homework. Your lowest homework assignment grade will be dropped in the calculation of the final grade.
- 10% Quizzes. When calculating the final grade I will drop 20% of the quizzes, dropping those where you got the lowest grade. The exact number of quizzes considered will be determined before the day of the midterm. Half of the points of each quiz are assigned to the attempt to answer all questions.
- 25% Midterm.
- 25% Final.
- 20% Group Project. 5% for each submission and 5% for the video.

The course will use the following grade boundaries:

A+: 97 - 100	A: 93 - 96	A-: 90 - 92
B+: 87 - 90	B: 83 - 86	B-: 80 - 82
C+: 77 - 80	C: 73 - 76	C-: 70 - 72
D+: 67 - 70	D: 63 - 66	D-: 60 - 62
F: 59 and below		

Only grades that end in .5 or above will be rounded up.

Late Submissions: Because your lowest quiz scores and your lowest homework assignment will be dropped, no make-up quizzes or homework assignments will be accepted. Also, homework assignments and exam model answers will be uploaded one minute after the deadline, so neither late assignments nor exams will be accepted. In extreme circumstances where you cannot participate in your group or submit the exam, please email me as soon as possible and provide appropriate documentation when available. For special accommodations, see the section "Disability Services".

Textbook and Readings

Most of the readings will be assigned the following textbook:

- Thomas Pugel, International Economics, 17th edition (or earlier), McGraw-Hill.

However, course material will include subjects that are not covered in the text. Therefore, additional short readings and videos will be posted to Canvas. The book is going to be available at the Pitt Library for loans.

Canvas and Communication

Course information and grades will be posted on the Canvas course website. It is the responsibility of each student to check Canvas and your Pitt email account regularly to stay current with course information. To avoid being overwhelmed with email notifications from Canvas, I recommend that you adjust your notification preferences at the account or course level (<https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Student-Guide/How-do-I-set-my-Canvas-notification-preferences-as-a-student/ta-p/434>). Make sure that you enable notifications for course announcements so that you do not miss any time-sensitive updates.

Please use direct email rather than the Canvas Inbox to contact me. Direct email is more reliable and more likely to get a quick response.

Calendar

Topics and Reading Assignments

A more detailed reading list will be posted on Canvas for each unit.

Academic Integrity

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the Academic Integrity Guide for an overview of the topic. For hands-on practice, complete the Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial. This course follows a zero-tolerance policy on all forms of academic dishonesty. All assignments will be checked for plagiarism using automated software.

Regarding all homework assignments, the group project, and exams, it is not acceptable to post on any of these sites with specific assignment-related questions or otherwise ask anyone to create or give you an answer to any part of an assignment. Any online resources used should be briefly attributed (e.g., a footnote noting the URL).

Week	Units	Activities (at the end of the week)
Week 1 (6/26-7/2)	Units 0, 1, and 2	Homework 1. Group's composition.
Week 2 (7/3-7/9)	Units 3 and 4	Homework 2. Group Project 1st. submission. Quizzes of Week 1.
Week 3 (7/10-7/16)	Unit 5 and Midterm	Homework 3. Quizzes of Week 2. Schedule a meeting with the instructor (groups).
7/15 to 7/17 (noon)		Midterm
Week 4 (7/17-7/23)	Units 6 and 7	Homework 4. Group Project 2nd. submission. Quizzes of Week 3.
Week 5 (7/24-7/30)	Units 8 and 9	Homework 5. Quizzes of Week 4.
Week 6 (7/31-8/6)	Units 10 and 11	Group Project 3rd. submission. Video. Quizzes of Week 5. Quizzes of Week 6.
8/4 to 8/6 (11 pm)		Final

Unit	Unit Title	Pugel Chapters
Unit 0	Introduction	1
Unit 1	National Accounts and the Balance of Payments	16
Unit 2	The Foreign Exchange Market	17
Unit 3	International Finance and Exchange Rates determination	18, 19 (Partial) and 20
Unit 4	Open Macro Economy	21 (Partial)
Unit 5	Traditional Trade Theory	3, 4, 5 and 7
Unit 6	Empirical Evidence and Alternative Theories	6
Unit 7	Tariffs and Non-Tariffs Barriers	2, 8 and 9
Unit 8	Strategic Trade Policy	10 and 11
Unit 9	Institutions and Agreements	12
Unit 10	Development	14 and 21
Unit 11	International Factor Movements	15

Disability Services

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, visit the Civil Rights & Title IX Compliance web page. I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, please contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or e-mailing titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu. Reports can also be filed online. You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).