

Fall 2025 Course Syllabus – International Trade Policy



Course PSCI 4396.008
Course Title International Trade Policy
Instructor Giuseppe Peressotti
Term Fall 2025: Tuesday, August 26 – Tuesday, December 09
Class Time Tuesday & Thursday: 08:30 AM - 09:45 AM, CB 1.106

Professor's Contact Information & Office Hours

Office Location GR 3.314
Email Address Giuseppe.peressotti@utdallas.edu
Office Hours Tuesdays & Thursdays: 09:50 - 10:50 PM (confirm by email); online meetings available at additional times based on need (**reach out to me**)

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive overview of international trade and trade policy, exploring the *Political Economy of Trade* through the combined lenses of economics and political science. Students will be introduced to core international trade models and engage with key policy debates. The course emphasizes both theoretical foundations and real-world applications, using historical and contemporary case studies. Topics include classical trade theories, protectionism and tariffs, the distributional consequences of trade, trade and development, the institutional framework governing global trade (e.g., WTO, trade agreements), and emerging issues such as digital trade and global supply chains.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

There are no formal prerequisites for this course, and students without a background in economics or political science are welcome and encouraged to enroll. However, as a 4000-level course, an initial understanding of foundational political and economic concepts is strongly recommended. These include, but are not limited to:

- Basic macroeconomic theory
- Foundations of international political economy
- Political economy principles
- Economic development theory

Students unsure of their background knowledge in these areas are encouraged to contact the instructor early in the semester or prior to enrollment.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze core international trade theories and apply them to real-world policy scenarios.
2. Evaluate the political and economic motivations behind trade policies such as protectionism, tariffs, and trade agreements.
3. Identify, evaluate, and synthesize academic, institutional, and policy sources to analyze trade-related scenarios and support policy recommendations.
4. Develop and defend evidence-based arguments on contemporary trade issues using both qualitative and quantitative materials.

Required Texts & Materials

The required materials for this class include the assigned textbook - Irwin (2020) - AND either a laptop, tablet, or mobile device to complete exams, assignments, and engage with the materials (the midterm and final will comprise long, written answers and will be administered through eLearning IN CLASS. Thus, bringing a laptop is heavily recommended).

Required textbook:

Irwin, Douglas A. 2020. Free Trade under Fire. Fifth edition. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

As the required textbook for this class, Irwin (2020) will be used as the main source for the weekly readings for most of the semester. A copy of the book is available online through the UTD library, and should be easily accessible.

Please note that on certain class topics, I will assign readings that do not come from the course textbook. These readings will be accessible on eLearning or through the library at no cost to you. In addition, I will share digital media (e.g. YouTube videos and podcasts) to supplement the textbooks. More specifically, two of the books I am recommending (and from which I will acquire a lot of the class materials) will be Krugman et al. (2023), and Guisinger (2017). You are NOT required to buy these books, but they will certainly allow you to further expand your knowledge on international trade.

Recommended textbooks:

- 1) *Krugman, Paul R., Maurice Obstfeld, and Marc J. Melitz. 2023. International Trade: Theory and Policy. Twelfth edition, global edition. Harlow, England: Pearson.*
- 2) *Guisinger, Alexandra. 2017. American Opinion on Trade: Preferences without Politics. New York: Oxford University Press.*

Course Schedule

Marked in Red, NO CLASS

Marked in Green, important deadlines

Week	Class	Date	Topic	Readings & materials (to be read/watched BEFORE class)	Deadlines (DL)
1	1	08/26	Class Introduction and Syllabus	Syllabus + Introduction (Irwin)	
	2	08/28	Introduction to International Trade: Historical Context	-	
2	3	09/02	Introduction to International Trade: The American Context	Ch. 1 (Irwin)	
	4	09/04	International Trade Theories: An Introduction	Ch. 2 (Irwin)	
3	5	09/09	International Trade Theories: The Ricardian Model	Ch. 3 (Krugman et al., on eLearning)	
	6	09/11	International Trade Theories: In-Class Lab	-	
4	7	09/16	International Trade Theories: The HO Model	Ch. 5 (Krugman et al., on eLearning)	
	8	09/18	International Trade Theories: What else is out there?	Extra material on eLearning	
5	9	09/23	Trade Policy – Protectionism and Tariffs	Ch. 3 (Irwin)	
	10	09/25	Trade Policy – Protectionism and Tariffs	Extra material on eLearning	
6	11	09/30	Trade Policy – Jobs and Workers	Ch. 4 (Irwin)	
	12	10/02	Trade Policy – Jobs and Workers	Extra material on eLearning	DL: Proposal final project/paper due at 11:59pm
7	13	10/07	Trade Policy – Fighting “Unfair Trade”	Ch. 5 (Irwin)	
	14	10/09	Trade Policy – Fighting “Unfair Trade”	Extra material on eLearning	
8	15	10/14	Midterm Review		
	16	10/16	MIDTERM		In-class midterm

9	17	10/21	Developing Countries and Open Markets	Ch. 6 (Irwin)	
	18	10/23	Developing Countries and Open Markets	Extra material on eLearning	
10	19	10/28	Regulating Trade – Trade Law and the WTO	Ch. 7 (Irwin)	
	20	10/30	Regulating Trade – Trade Law and the WTO	Extra material on eLearning	
11	21	11/04	Regulating Trade – Trade Agreements	Extra material on eLearning	
	22	11/06	Regulating Trade – Negotiations Lab	Extra material on eLearning	
12	23	11/11	The Political Economy of Trade: The Public	Ch. 2 (Guisinger)	
	24	11/13	The Political Economy of Trade: Interests in Trade	Ch. 3 (Guisinger) + extra material on eLearning	
13	25	11/18	Current Issues in Trade: Supply Chains	Extra material on eLearning	
	26	11/20	Current Issues in Trade: Digital Trade	Extra material on eLearning	
14	27	11/25	Fall Break		
	28	11/27	Thanksgiving holidays		
15	29	12/02	Current Issues in Trade	Extra material on eLearning	
	30	12/04	Presentation Day		In-class presentation of final project/paper
16	31	12/09	Final Review		
	32	12/11	No class (final moved to Tuesday)		
17	33	12/16	FINAL	In-class final	DL: final paper, 12/16 at 11:59pm

About classes

The course will follow the following general format: for most weeks, one new topic will be introduced following Irwin (2020) (or other uploaded chapters from the recommended books). In the first class of the week, we are going to lay down the theoretical foundations that will be necessary to tackle each individual issue. On the second class of the week, we are going to either: 1) further discuss the introduced topic and/or additional readings; 2) look at additional materials and/or case studies; 3) partake in specific activities related to the introduced topic. The class is

generally reading-heavy, which is offset by the fact that the assignment load is relatively lighter compared to other 4000-level classes. Discussions and questions are always welcome (and encouraged). Be sure to check on eLearning for additional readings and materials.

Grading Policy

- 1) Attendance and Participation: 20%
- 2) Midterm Exam: 20%
- 3) Proposal: 10%
- 4) Presentation: 10%
- 5) Final Paper/Project: 20%
- 6) Final: 20%

Attendance and Participation:

You will be awarded 10 percentage points for attendance and 10 for participation. Participation involves contributing to class discussions meaningfully and purposefully, asking relevant questions, and giving interesting comments. Thus, actively engaging with the class and your fellow students influences your grade. As per my attendance policy (below), you are allowed to miss up to 3 classes, no questions asked. I will take attendance through a QR code which you should scan during the first 5 minutes of class. Being late 3 times equals to 1 absence, so try to be in class ready to scan the code in due time. If you are late and miss the QR-code scanning period, just come forward and notify me after class.

Midterm Exam:

The midterm exam will be administered on October 16th, and will take place in-class for the first part (1), and online for the second component (2). You will be required to use your own digital device (laptop), as the exam will be administered through eLearning for ease of submission. It will comprise a variety of multiple-choice and short answers and will take place during class time (~90 minutes, from 8:30am). The first component (1) of the exam will be closed book, and no other tools/notes may be used. The second component (2), comprising a reflection essay, will be due by the end of the day, having a total of 2 hours to complete and submit it. For this section, students are allowed to check notes, lectures, and books. Other online resources are not permitted

The exam is worth 20% of your grade.

Final Exam:

The final exam will be administered on December 16th, and will take place in-class. You will be required to use your own digital device (laptop), as the exam will be administered through eLearning for ease of submission. It will comprise a variety of multiple-choice and short answers and will take place approximately during class time (~120 minutes, from 8:30am). The exam will be closed book, and no other tools/notes may be used. To be noted, unlike the midterm, the final exam does not comprise an online, take-home component.

The exam is worth 20% of your grade.

Final Paper/Project:

Each **student** (or group of students, depending on class size) will design and complete a research project related to international trade. The goal is to engage deeply with course materials and explore a specific topic of interest through independent research.

Students will:

- Submit a brief project proposal by October 2nd
- Deliver a presentation of their project (even if in-progress) on December 4th
- Submit a final paper (approx. 10–25 pages) by December 16th at 11:59pm

The project should demonstrate:

- Engagement with course theories and topics
- Critical analysis of a relevant issue in trade policy
- Use of appropriate academic and/or policy sources
- Clear and well-supported argumentation

Additional instructions, including a paper template and formatting guidelines, will be posted on eLearning.

The proposal (10%) and presentation (10%) will comprise 20% of the final grade, while the final paper will be worth another 20%.

Grading Scale:

A+ 97% - 100%	A 93% - 96%	A- 90% - 92%
B+ 87% - 89%	B 83% - 86%	B- 80% - 82%
C+ 77% - 79%	C 73% - 76%	C- 70% - 72%
D+ 67% - 69	D 63% - 66%	D- 60% - 62%

Course & Instructor Policies

Attendance, Punctuality & Participation

Consistent attendance and active participation are crucial for your success in this course and will factor into your final grade assessment. Attendance is defined as being present for the entirety of the class session, and it will be checked through a QR code which you should scan during the first 5 minutes of class. If you are late and miss the QR-code scanning period, just come forward and

notify me after class. However, please be advised not to abuse this system as being late 3 times will be considered as 1 absence. Leaving the class early could be considered an absence as well.

Participation will be evaluated based on the frequency and quality of contributions to class discussions. Each student is permitted three absences from class without needing to provide an explanation or inform the instructor.

Make-Up Exams

These will only be considered for instances of an emergency (e.g., documented death of immediate relative or student hospitalization), you have an official UTD-sponsored event that conflicts with the exam date, and I am contacted via email before 8am on the day the exam goes live (unless some documented event of force majeure prevents you to timely communicate the absence). UTD-related absences or religious holiday conflicts should be communicated to the instructor as soon as they are known, but preferably two weeks prior to exam day so we can make arrangements for the exam retake day and time. Documentation for all excused absences may be required.

Late Submissions

Assignments are expected to be submitted on the designated due date and in the specified format. Late submissions will incur a deduction of points from the assignment grade (expressed as total percentage points: 10% within 1 hour, 20% within 12 hours, 40% within 24 hours, 60% within 48 hours, 100% more than 48 hours).

Email Use

Whenever you contact me by email, you can expect an answer within 2 business days of your submission. If something urgent comes up, please add the URGENT tag in the email's subject.

UT Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. All official student email correspondence will be sent only to a student's UT Dallas email address and UT Dallas will only consider email requests originating from an official UT Dallas student email account. This allows the University to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of each individual corresponding via email and the security of the transmitted information. UT Dallas furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Office of Information Technology provides a method for students to have their UT Dallas mail forwarded to other email accounts.

Academic Ethics

Every member of the UTD community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. UTD may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts, or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work material that is not one's own. Scholastic dishonesty may involve, but is not limited to, one or more of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, use of annotated texts or teacher's editions, use of information about exams posted on the Internet or electronic medium, and/or falsifying academic records. While specific examples are listed below, this is not an exhaustive list and scholastic dishonesty may encompass other conduct, including any conduct through electronic or computerized means:

- Plagiarism is the use of an author's words or ideas as if they were ones' own without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to: failure to acknowledge a direct quotation.
- Cheating is the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination; collaborating with another student during an examination without authority; using, buying, selling, soliciting, stealing, or otherwise obtaining course assignments and/or examination questions in advance; copying computer or Internet files; using someone else's work for assignments as if it were one's own; or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of a course.
- Collusion is intentionally or unintentionally aiding or attempting to aid another in an act of scholastic dishonesty, including but not limited to, failing to secure academic work; providing a paper or project to another student; providing an inappropriate level of assistance; communicating answers to a classmate about an examination or any other course assignment; removing tests or answer sheets from a test site; and allowing a classmate to copy answers.

Class Materials

The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student Accessibility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Generative AI

The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot) is **allowed** to assist in preparing materials for class, except where explicitly prohibited (e.g., the midterm/final exam). However, all submissions must adhere to the following principles to ensure academic integrity:

- 1. Permitted Uses:**
 - Summarizing course concepts to deepen understanding.
 - Generating ideas or outlines for assignments.
 - Refining writing by improving clarity, grammar, or structure.
- 2. Prohibited Practices:**

- Copy-pasting AI-generated content into assignments without modification or critical review.
- Submitting unsourced or fabricated information as your own.
- Relying solely on AI for content creation, bypassing your own analysis.

3. Academic Standards:

- **Originality:** Your work must reflect personal insight, analysis, and understanding.
- **Relevance:** Submissions should align with class discussions and materials.
- **Accuracy:** Verify AI-generated information using credible sources.

4. Encouraged Approach:

Use generative AI as a **learning tool** to:

- Explore alternative perspectives.
- Enhance your own thinking and writing process through reflection and iteration.
- Focus on integrating AI insights into your unique contributions rather than relying on it to generate finished content.

5. Responsibility and Transparency:

Cite AI tools when they substantively inform your work. Submissions relying heavily on unverified or plagiarized AI content may be considered academic misconduct.

Generative AI can be a powerful resource for learning, but it must be used thoughtfully and responsibly to support your personal engagement with course materials. If you are unsure about acceptable use, please ask for clarification.

Re-grading

If you think your grade should be changed due to error, submit your work and a brief written explanation of your argument to me via email. Following re-evaluation, your grade may go up or down.

Comet Creed

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Technology Requirements

Each student is required to have access to a device that will allow for them to engage with course materials, whether this be a phone, laptop, or tablet (do consider that written answers will be required for the midterm/final, meaning that smartphones and tablets might not be enough). I understand how difficult it is to avoid using cellphones or scrolling online while in class. Out of respect to your peers/classmates and myself, I ask that you avoid this as much as possible, as well as silence your devices when entering class. If I observe that technology use is a distraction, I will point it out.

Free Speech and Intellectual Diversity

No individual is the same and all of you come from different backgrounds and hold different positions on a wide array of topics. It is okay to have different opinions and as your instructor, I encourage you to respect and be open to different perspectives, as well as feel comfortable with sharing your own personal point of view. UTD Policy Statement on Speech Expression and Assembly: <https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdsp5001>.

OSA Accommodations

Americans with Disabilities Act Statement: the University of Texas at Dallas will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the OSA office, located in AD 2.224 or call at 972.883.2098 to arrange for appropriate accommodations. If you are a student with OSA Accommodations that you will be using for the rest of the course, please reach out to me via e-mail as soon as possible so that I can make sure that I am meeting your needs.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty of any kind (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, sharing, copying, or cheating on exams and assignments) will not be tolerated. In accordance with UTD's Office of Community Standards and Conduct, misconduct may result in a failing grade for the course, suspension, or in some cases, expulsion. For more information, see:
<http://www.utdallas.edu/conduct/integrity/>.

Mental Health Services and Student Support Resources

I recognize the fact that students may experience anxiety and mental health challenges brought upon by life circumstances. As UTD students, you have mental health services available to you by telephone and on campus. Student Counseling Center Phone: 972-883-2575; location: Student Services Building SSB 4.600. Moreover, UTD provides numerous resources for students in need:

The Center for Students in Recovery helps students seeking recovery from substance and alcohol use, eating disorders, and other addictions and compulsive behaviors. They also help students affected by these issues or individuals exploring the impact of addictions or compulsive behaviors within their lives. Their mission is to provide a safe, supportive community to enable students to thrive both socially and academically while living in recovery. They are located in SSB 4.500, on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building. They can be contacted by calling 972-883-7320 or they can be reached by emailing them at recovery@utdallas.edu.

The Comet Cupboard is a UT Dallas food pantry initiative dedicated to helping students in need. The Comet Cupboard is located in MC 1.604, on the first floor of the McDermott Library, and can be contacted by calling 972-883-6613 or emailing cupboard@utdallas.edu.

Comet Cents provides financial literacy to students with the peer-to-peer model. This money management center provides one-on-one appointments and workshops throughout the semester.

Comet Cents works to help students improve their financial situation with topics such budgeting, credit card debit, investing and other personal finance areas.

[Intercultural Programs](#) provides a host of transition programs for international students and intercultural competency trainings for all students. They are located in SSB 3.6, on the third floor of the Student Services Building. Their phone number is 972-883-4528.

[The Student Counseling Center](#) offers confidential services to students either for individual appointments or as part of groups. Initial appointments must be made in person in the Student Counseling Center, which is located in SSB 4.600, on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building. Their main number is 972-883-2575 and the 24/7 Crisis Hotline is 972-883-8255 (972-UTD-TALK).

[The Student Health Center](#) (SHC) provides primary and preventative medical care to currently enrolled students who have paid medical fees and are attending classes. Currently enrolled students can obtain a wide variety of services, such as physicals, diagnosis and treatment of acute illnesses and injuries, general medical problems, gynecological problems, treatment of stabilized chronic illnesses, allergy injections, limited immunizations, x-rays, and ultrasound.

SHC staff of licensed medical providers is committed to keeping the UT Dallas community healthy and believes that health and wellness information complement the academic success of students. SHC is located on the fourth floor of the Student Services Building, SSB 4.700 and they can be reached by telephone, 972-883-2747, fax, 877-769-7514, or by email, healtcen@utdallas.edu.

[The Graduation Help Desk](#) is a one-stop resource within the Office of Undergraduate Education designed to help undergraduate students overcome obstacles to a timely graduation. The Graduation Help Desk supports undergraduate students, faculty and staff to develop solutions to complex academic and non-academic issues. This resource is equipped to promote all undergraduate students' success by helping them at any point during their academic careers from their arrival at UT Dallas until their graduation. Contact the Graduation Help Desk at graduationhelpdesk@utdallas.edu.

[The Student Success Center](#) (SSC) offers assistance to students in the areas of writing, mathematics, communication, multiple science fields, study skills, and other academic disciplines. These services are available through individual appointments, small group appointments, drop-in labs, workshops, and weekly reviews. All undergraduate students enrolled at UT Dallas are eligible to participate in these services. Not all courses will be supported by all services.

Please check the website at the beginning of each semester to find out which courses are supported by which services

In addition, students are expected to:

- know that this syllabus, including the course schedule, is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor;
- read additional related policy material at <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>.

Syllabus last updated on 12/01/2025.