



University at Buffalo

PSC 348: Trade Wars and International Trade Law

Spring, 2023 (Number of Course Credits: 3)

MW Lectures: In-Person at Talbert Hall 115, 12:00-12:50pm;
F Discussion: Remote Asynchronous

Instructor

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Office Location & Hours

Park 503, By appointment

Teaching Assistant

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Park 414, By appointment

Course Description

This course will take an interdisciplinary approach toward understanding current trade wars and the world trading system based on studies of economics, political science, and international trade law. You will learn what international trade policy is about, why it becomes politicized, and how trade policies are formulated in the U.S. and China and used against each other. Another important component of this course is to study how current trade policies are governed by international agreements and laws. Along the way, we will explore current trade trends and how they affect consumers, workers, firms, and industries in the U.S. and other places. You will also learn about domestic and international trade institutions more generally, and trade-related topics on the environment, labor, intellectual property, and more.

Learning Outcomes

Students will develop a broad understanding of current trade controversies and apply theoretical and analytical tools to examine real world cases.

Outcome	Method of Assessment
Demonstrate an understanding of the economic, political, legal background of the current U.S. trade war with China	Student presentation, weekly discussion and assessment.
Demonstrate proficiency in interpreting graphs, charts, and tables relating to international trade relations	Student presentation, weekly discussion and assessment.
Identify the ways in which international trade has been politicized and mis-conceptualized	Student presentation, weekly discussion and assessment.
Analyze how trade-related measures are governed under international trade agreements and WTO principles	Student presentation, weekly discussion and assessment.
Analyze major trade disputes under the WTO	Student presentation, weekly discussion and assessment.

Texts & Materials

Students with serious interest in the topics are encouraged to refer to the following reading materials which will not be fully covered in class:

- Liang, Guoyong and Haoyuan Ding, *The China-US Trade War*. Routledge, 2021. Book available online via University Libraries.
- Barton, John H., Goldstein, Judith L., Josling, Timothy E., & Steinberg, Richard H., 2008. *The Evolution of the Trade Regime: Politics, Law, and Economics of the GATT and the WTO*. Princeton University Press. Book available online via University Libraries.

Students are also advised to regularly keep up with current developments in international trade. Useful sources include the Financial Times, The Economist, the Council on Foreign Relations, CRS reports, and the World Trade Organization website (<http://www.wto.org>).

Course Requirements

The final course grade will be determined based on a mixture of written assignments, group discussions, and class participation.

1. **Group case study (30%)**: You will be responsible for leading one seminar-type discussion during the course of the semester. For this, you will create **PowerPoint slides** of the following content: **1) a brief summary** of the assigned week's class materials, **2) an in-depth case study** of a real-world example that reinforces the assigned week's lessons, and **3) a few discussion questions** to be answered by the class (for their participation points). Your presentation grade will be determined by the class (20), your groupmates (5), and the instructor (5). Presenters of the week must have their presentation idea approved by me ahead of time and send me their draft slides via email by **Monday 11:55pm** of the presenting week. I will provide feedback on your draft, which I expect you to incorporate into your final slides. You will also upload your final slides to 'Group Presentation' in UBLearn by **Tuesday 11:55pm** of the presenting week.
2. **Weekly virtual assessments (25%)**: Each Friday by class time, I will post the weekly assessment under 'Weekly Course Materials' in UBLearn. Each weekly assessment has a total of 25 points. 10 points is achieved by evaluating the quality of that week's group presentation and discussion. Another 15 points is achieved by answering some questions assessing your understanding of the course material covered during lecture that week. **Responses must be submitted by 11:55pm of that Friday**. Late submissions are not acceptable unless excused by the instructor ahead of time. No submission will result in zero points for that week. The average of all weekly assessments will be used to determine your final grade. Note that presenters are not required to submit their weekly assessment on the week of presenting.
3. **Attendance and participation (15%)**: Students are expected to attend and actively participate in class discussions during the Monday/Wednesday in-person lectures.
4. **Final paper (30%)**: There will be a single final paper that is due on **May 12 at 11:55pm**. Details about the assignment will be announced later in the semester. Late submissions will be penalized 1 point per day.

Course Schedule

Note that I reserve the right to change the following schedule (e.g., contents, due dates for assignments) in order to accommodate student learning or other unforeseeable events. Announcements will be made if changes become necessary.

Week	Topic	Assignments	Deadline
Week 1	Course introduction and group assignment for weekly presentations	Group sign-up	Feb 1, Wednesday in class
Week 2	Intro to international trade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definitions - World trade trends - Benefits and costs of trade - Policies that promote and discourage trade 	Virtual assessment on Week 2 lecture and group presentation	Feb 10, Friday 11:55pm
Week 3	Politicized international trade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theories on trade preferences - Theories on political mobilization 	Virtual assessment on Week 3 lecture and group presentation	Feb 17, Friday 11:55pm
Week 4	U.S. trade features and policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic institutions of trade - Trade policies of the U.S. - Trump administration and trade 	Virtual assessment on Week 4 lecture and group presentation	Feb 24, Friday 11:55pm
Week 5	Understanding the rise of China <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economy, trade, military, R&D, geopolitics, etc. 	Virtual assessment on Week 5 lecture and group presentation	March 3, Friday 11:55pm
Week 6	China trade features and policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic institutions of trade - Trade policies of China - Xi administration and trade 	Virtual assessment on Week 6 lecture and group presentation	March 10, Friday 11:55pm
Week 7	US-China trade war I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - China shock - Trump China tariffs - Impact of China tariffs 	Virtual assessment on Week 7 lecture and group presentation	March 17, Friday 11:55pm
Week 8	Spring break (no class)	No assignment	
Week 9	US-China trade war II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pandemic and the trade war - U.S. producers' reaction - Other domains of the trade war 	Virtual assessment on Week 9 lecture and group presentation	March 31, Friday 11:55pm
Week 10	Intro to international trade institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why we need them - Emergence of the GATT/WTO - Evolution and impact 	Virtual assessment on Week 10 lecture and group presentation	April 7, Friday 11:55pm

Week	Topic	Assignments	Deadline
Week 11	WTO laws and dispute settlement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WTO laws - WTO administered protection - Dispute settlement mechanism 	Virtual assessment on Week 11 lecture and group presentation	April 14, Friday 11:55pm
Week 12	U.S., China, and the WTO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - China's accession - Key statistics - Trump and the WTO 	Virtual assessment on Week 12 lecture and group presentation	April 21, Friday 11:55pm
Week 13	Intellectual property rights (IPR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definitions - Importance to the U.S. and China 	Virtual assessment on Week 13 lecture and group presentation	April 28, Friday 11:55pm
Week 14	International laws on IP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WTO TRIPS - Current issues 	Virtual assessment on Week 14 lecture and group presentation	May 5, Friday 11:55pm
Week 15	Wrap up & final paper	Final paper	May 12, Friday 11:55pm

Grading Chart

Letter Grade	Points	Letter Grade	Points	Letter Grade	Points
A	93-100 points	B-	80-82 points	D+	65-69 points
A-	90-92 points	C+	77-79 points	D	60-64 points
B+	87-89 points	C	73-76 points	F	< 60 points
B	83-86 points	C-	70-72 points		

Course Policies and Campus Resources

Course Website

The website for this course is on UBLearn. I will be posting class announcements, materials, and required readings on the website. Student assignments are also to be submitted through UBLearn. If you have any trouble accessing UBLearn or any of the course materials, please let me know right away.

Emails

Including the course number in the subject line (e.g., "PS 348 Question about group presentation") will ensure that I get to your emails sooner.

Academic Integrity

I take academic integrity very seriously. Cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cite others' work appropriately and do not submit others' work as your own. Students must be familiar with and abide by the university's policies and procedures on Academic Integrity, available at the following link: [Academic Integrity https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/integrity.html](https://catalog.buffalo.edu/policies/integrity.html).

Grade Disclosure

All personal information concerning students' performance in this course is governed by federal privacy legislation, known as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). No grades or status information can be provided to students by phone or email. All grades will be posted on UBLearns.

Accessibility Resources

If you have any disability which requires reasonable accommodations to enable you to participate in this course, please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources in 60 Capen Hall, 716-645-2608 and also the instructor of this course during the first two weeks of class. The office will provide you with information and review appropriate arrangements for reasonable accommodations, which can be found on the web at: <http://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/accessibility.html>.

Sexual Violence

UB is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and stalking. If you have experienced gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), UB has resources to help. This includes academic accommodations, health and counseling services, housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and assistance with reporting the incident to police or other UB officials if you so choose. Please contact UB's Title IX Coordinator at 716-645-2266 for more information. For confidential assistance, you may also contact a Crisis Services Campus Advocate at 716-796-4399.

Mental Health

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. These might include strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, health concerns, or unwanted sexual experiences. Counseling, Health Services, and Health Promotion are here to help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn more about these programs and services by contacting:

Counseling Services:

120 Richmond Quad (North Campus), 716-645-2720
202 Michael Hall (South Campus), 716-829-5800

Health Services:

Michael Hall (South Campus), 716-829-3316

Health Promotion:

114 Student Union (North Campus), 716-645-2837