



## University at Buffalo

# PSC 391: Trade Wars and International Trade Law

Fall, 2021 (Number of Course Credits: 3)

**MW Lectures: In-Person at Talbert Hall 115, 1:50-2:40pm;**  
**F Discussion: Remote Asynchronous**

<b>Instructor</b>	<b>Email</b>	<b>Office Location &amp; Hours</b>
Jieun Lee	jlee286@buffalo.edu	Park 503, By appointment
<b>Teaching Assistant</b>		
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### 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 presentation (30%)**: You will be responsible for leading a seminar-type discussion virtually during the course of the semester. To prevent the spread of coronavirus, the discussion will be conducted remotely and asynchronously. The presenters 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 single discussion question** to be answered by the class (in the form of "weekly reaction to discussion question below") for their participation points. Your presentation grade will be determined by the class (20) and the instructor (10). The presenters for the week must have their presentation idea approved by me ahead of time and send me their draft slides via email by **Tuesday 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 **Wednesday 11:55pm** of that week. I will distribute your final slides to the class on the Friday of that week.
2. **Weekly reaction to discussion question (25%)**: Each Friday, I will post the group presentation slides on UBLearn. The class will be asked to **1) evaluate the group presentation** (5) and to **2) provide their reaction to the discussion question** raised by the presenters (20) on UBLearn. Your responses must be submitted by **11:55pm of each Saturday**. Late submissions will be penalized 1 point per day. Note that the presenters of the week are not required to submit their weekly reaction on the week they are 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 **December 11 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
<b>Week 1</b>	Intro to international trade <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- World trade trends</li> <li>- Benefits and costs of trade</li> <li>- Policies that encourage/discourage trade</li> </ul>	Sign up for a group presentation.	First come first served.
<b>Week 2</b>	Understanding trade balances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Balance of payments accounts</li> <li>- U.S. trade deficits</li> <li>- Resurgence of mercantilism</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 2 group presentation	September 11, Saturday 11:55pm
<b>Week 3</b>	Why and how trade gets politicized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Theories of trade preferences and political mobilization</li> <li>- Protectionism</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 3 group presentation	September 18, Saturday 11:55pm
<b>Week 4</b>	U.S. trade features and policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Domestic institutions of trade</li> <li>- Trade policies of the U.S.</li> <li>- Trump trade policies</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 4 group presentation	September 25, Saturday 11:55pm
<b>Week 5</b>	Understanding the rise of China <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Economy, trade, military, R&amp;D, geopolitics, etc.</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 5 group presentation	October 2, Saturday 11:55pm
<b>Week 6</b>	China trade features and policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Domestic institutions of trade</li> <li>- Trade policies of China</li> <li>- China's global engagement</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 6 group presentation	October 9, Saturday 11:55pm
<b>Week 7</b>	China trade war I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- China shock</li> <li>- Trump China tariffs</li> <li>- Impact of China tariffs</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 7 group presentation	October 16, Saturday 11:55pm
<b>Week 8</b>	China trade war II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- U.S. producers' reaction</li> <li>- Other domains of the trade war</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 8 group presentation	October 23, Saturday 11:55pm
<b>Week 9</b>	Intro to international trade institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Why we need them</li> <li>- Emergence of the GATT/WTO</li> <li>- Evolution and impact</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 9 group presentation	October 30, Saturday 11:55pm

Week	Topic	Assignments	Deadline
Week 10	Trade measures and dispute settlement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WTO functions</li> <li>- WTO administered protection</li> <li>- Dispute settlement mechanism</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 10 group presentation	November 6, Saturday 11:55pm
Week 11	U.S. and the WTO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trade leadership in early years</li> <li>- U.S. WTO performance</li> <li>- WTO and Trump</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 11 group presentation	November 13, Saturday 11:55pm
Week 12	China and the WTO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- China's accession to the WTO</li> <li>- China's WTO performance</li> <li>- Special treatment against China</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 12 group presentation	November 20, Saturday 11:55pm
Week 13	Thanksgiving break	No assignment	
Week 14	WTO special topics I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Developing countries</li> <li>- Regional Trade Agreements</li> <li>- Agriculture</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 14 group presentation	December 4, Saturday 11:55pm
Week 15	WTO special topics II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environment, TBT, SPS</li> <li>- Intellectual property</li> </ul>	Reaction to Week 15 group presentation & final paper	December 11, Saturday 11:55pm

### Grading Chart

Letter Grade	Points	Letter Grade	Points	Letter Grade	Points
A	94-100 points	B-	80-82 points	D+	65-69 points
A-	90-93 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 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.

## 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).

## 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