

International Trade - Economics 240A

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Overview of the course

This is the first module in the graduate trade sequence. We will cover the "basics" of international trade theory. I will do my best to cover both the classic models, along with the new classics, especially as they relate to the theory of the firm. Your goals should be two fold. First, learn the classic models and why they are classic. Second, learn to be creative with these models. This is probably more important. They are classic because they are insightful, and that they are adaptable as our knowledge of the world economy progresses.

Grading and Expectations

The grading breakdown by percentage will be as follows:

- Participation - 10
- Homework - 30
- Exam - 30
- Paper - 30

The homework will be directly related to lecture. I have not decided how many to assign, and the timing of assignments will not follow any schedule. Some of the time I will ask you to derive explicitly things that I do not in class. Other times I will adjust the setup of basic models so that you can see where things go. Again, the goal is to learn how to use these tools in a variety of settings. You may work together in small groups, but if I see answers that are ridiculously similar, the questions will get harder. If there is cheating outright, zeros will be given and academic misconduct penalties will be enforced.

The exam will be in-class, prior to the end of the semester. This is to leave time to write a paper. It is currently scheduled for **Monday, November 24th**.

As for the paper, I would like you to write a concise literature review in your area of interest, and how it relates to one of the core models presented in-class. This paper will be due on **Tuesday, December 9th**. Please meet with me prior to November 1st to discuss a topic.

Finally, I expect everybody to contribute during classtime discussions. Ask questions whenever you have them. Make comments whenever you have them. If I'm wrong, bring it up. Also, I will ask questions, sometimes to specific students (hopefully at random), and expect answers that leave no doubt that you've attempted the reading. There are two reasons why I include a participation grade. First, regardless where you end up after you receive your masters or Ph.D, you will be expected to participate in discussions. Better to learn now rather than on the job (when it can make a huge difference). Also, you will meet people who are very aggressive in how they speak up. You should learn how to respond appropriately to them, and one place to start is by discussing with your classmates.

Office hours and Final Thoughts

Office hours are by appointment. Email me at acspearot@gmail.com to schedule a time. If you have urgent concerns that require immediate attention, stop by 453 E2.

Finally, relax and enjoy the class. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions for the course, do not hesitate to bring them up. This course is for you to learn more than it is for me to teach. If it is not working for you, let me know, and I'll make every effort to make things better.