

Carleton University
Department of Economics
ECON 5603W: Topics in International Economics

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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Page: [Brightspace](#)

Lectures: Wednesdays, 11:35am-2:25pm

Location: 3038 Nicol Building

Course Description

This course provides an overview of applied econometric methods used in research on international trade, with a particular emphasis on canonical research designs.

Course Materials

There is no required textbook. A detailed list of recommended and required readings will be posted during the first week of class.

While there is no required textbook, the following books are useful references for students interested in examining topics related to empirical international trade:

- Feenstra, Robert C. 2016. *Advanced International Trade: Theory and Evidence*. Princeton University Press. Second Edition
- Angrist, Josh and Jorn-Steffen Pischke. 2009. *Mostly Harmless Econometrics: An Empiricist's Companion*. Princeton University Press.
- Cunningham, Scott. 2021. *Causal Inference: The Mixtape*. Yale University Press.
- Huntington-Klein, Nick. 2022. *The Effect: An Introduction to Research Design and Causality*. Chapman and Hall/CRC.

Evaluation

Student grades will be determined as follows:

Trade Liberalization Primer	(10%)
Paper Presentations (x2)	(20%)
Research Project	
Presentation	(20%)
Paper	(50%)

Trade Liberalization Primer

Each student will be required to give a short (5-10 slide) presentation on an episode of trade liberalization that has led to significant changes in trade/investment flows between countries (such as CUSTA/NAFTA/the China Shock/MERCOSUR/etc). The presentations should provide an overview of key details that are relevant for researchers, including: (i) important institutional details underlying the trade liberalization such as timing, players, and key political economy factors (3-4 slides), (ii) observed changes in trade policy/tariffs (1-2 slides), and (iii) key papers in the literature that have studied the effects of the liberalization (1-2 slides). Each student is required to present on a different episode of trade liberalization; episodes will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Presentations are tentatively scheduled for the start of class February 1, 2023. Slides should be submitted to me via email prior to the start of class on the date of the presentation. Late submissions of slides will result in a 10% reduction of the presentation grade. Presentations will be assessed both on the quality of the information presented, and the effectiveness of the presentation.

Paper Presentations

Each student will be required to give a two in-depth (45-60 minute) presentations on recent papers (published in the last five years) using empirical methods to examine topics related to international trade. Each presentation should highlight the paper's specific research question, provide context as to why it is important, and provide a detailed overview of the paper's data, research design and findings, with a particular emphasis on the strengths and weaknesses of the paper's empirical approach. The paper for the first presentation should use a research design based on difference-in-differences (DID), while the second should use a research design based on instrumental variables (IV). Each student is required to present on a different paper; papers will be allocated on a first-come-first-served basis. Presentation dates are tentatively scheduled as follows:

- Presentation 1 (DID): March 8, 2023.
- Presentation 2 (IV): March 29, 2023.

Slides should be submitted to me via email prior to the start of class on the date of the presentation. Late submissions of slides will result in a 10% reduction of the presentation grade. Presentations will be assessed both on the quality of the information presented, and the effectiveness of the presentation.

Research Project

Each student will be required to write and present an original empirical research paper on a topic related to international trade. Details are as follows:

- *Research Paper* (50%): Students will summarize the results of their research project in a 15-25 page (plus title page/references/appendices) paper. The paper should clearly specify the project's research question, discuss the contributions of the research to the relevant literature, provide a description of the data and empirical strategy, and discuss key empirical results. Students are also expected to provide detailed replication files (including a read-me file) that allow all empirical results to be reproduced from the initial data. Papers will be assessed on content/quality of information presented, and on the replicability of findings.
- *Presentaion* (20%): Students will also present the results from their research project to the class during the last two weeks of semester. Presentations will be 15-20 minutes, and should highlight the research question, the project's contribution to the literature, data/methods and key empirical results. Presentations will be assessed both on the quality of the information presented, and the effectiveness of the presentation.

Students are expected to discuss the topic of their research project with me no later than March 1, 2023. The final paper is due at 11:59pm on April 12, 2023, and should be submitted (with all replication files) via Brightspace. The research paper should be submitted as a .pdf file with 12 pt. font, 1 inch margins and 1.5 line spacing. Late submissions will not be accepted. Presentation slides should be submitted to me via email prior to the start of class on the date of the presentation. Late submissions of slides will results in a 10% reduction of the presentation grade.

Note: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Academic Integrity

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;

- handing in “substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.”

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

Student Mental Health

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

- **Emergency Resources (on and off campus):**
 - [Emergency Numbers](#)
- **Carleton Resources:**
 - [Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)
 - [Health & Counselling Services](#)
 - [Paul Menton Centre](#)
 - [Academic Advising Centre \(AAC\)](#)
 - [Centre for Student Academic Support \(CSAS\)](#)
 - [Equity & Inclusivity Communities](#)
- **Off Campus Resources:**
 - [Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region](#): (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550
 - [Mental Health Crisis Service](#): (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991
 - [Empower Me](#): 1-844-741-6389
 - [Good2Talk](#): 1-866-925-5454
 - [The Walk-In Counselling Clinic](#)

Statement on Pandemic Measures

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are **a number of actions you can take** to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you’re sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks: Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines: While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy Obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the [Pregnancy Accommodation Form](#).

Religious Obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the [Equity and Inclusive Communities website](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity

Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [Paul Menton Centre website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support.

Accommodations for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, see [the policy](#).

Course Copyright

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copyright protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including lecture notes, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Course Outline

Schedule is tentative and subject to change. Topics may be added or removed time permitting.

Week 01 - 01/11: Overview of Empirical Research in International Trade

Week 02 - 01/18: Data Sources

Week 03 - 01/25: The Experimental Ideal

Week 04 - 02/01: Regression Review

- Trade Liberalization Primer Presentations

Week 05 - 02/08: Regression Review (Cont'd)

Week 06 - 02/15: Difference-in-Difference Research Designs

No Lecture - 02/22: Winter Break

Week 07 - 03/01: Difference-in-Difference Research Designs (Cont'd)

Week 08 - 03/08: Difference-in-Difference Research Designs (Cont'd)

- Paper Presentation #1.

Week 09 - 03/15: Instrumental Variable Research Designs

Week 10 - 03/22: Instrumental Variable Research Designs (Cont'd)

Week 11 - 03/29: Instrumental Variable Research Designs (Cont'd)

- Paper Presentation #2.

Week 12 - 04/05: Student Paper Presentations

Week 13 - 04/12: Student Paper Presentations