

Topics in International Economics (ECO2304H)
Spring 2019

Instructor:

Daniel Trefler

Class Website: http://www.rotman.utoronto.ca/~dtrefler/files/Course_Materials.htm

Office Hours: Please see me immediately after the class or the tutorial. I am also happy to meet you by appointment in my office (Rotman 8064 – South Building)

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Prerequisite:

ECO2304 has ECO2300 as a pre-requisite.

The course is very suitable for both M.A. and Ph.D. students.

Course Description:

This course covers key topics of current interest (both to researchers and policy/media types). Topics covered include the new theories of (1) firm-level comparative advantage, (2) offshore outsourcing and multinational activities, and (3) the impact of international trade on domestic institutions. These theories and their empirical support will be carefully examined.

Each lecture will provide in-depth coverage of a key recent contribution; students will be expected to do the readings in advance. The educational goals of the course are: (1) to learn the above material, (2) to develop an ease with reading quickly through academic articles in the field, (3) to develop a clearer sense of what constitutes a good research topic, and (4) to bridge the gap between academic and policy work.

Trefler's teaching style is somewhat idiosyncratic. I teach through repetition of difficult concepts. Each week a key article will be assigned. Students are required to (1) answer a problem set dealing with mathematical preliminaries, (2) briefly read the article in advance of the lecture and submit a one-page summary, (3) attend a lecture about the article, (4) attend a tutorial to review the more technical aspects of the article, and (5) present to the class a related article that uses a similar framework.

Components of course and schedule:

- **(15%)** 5 problem sets on the Melitz model, the Melitz-Ottaviano model, the CES-Pareto model, the Eaton-Kortum model, and the Antras-Helpman model. These should be handwritten.
- **(12%)** Comments on 6 papers that are being taken up in class. E-mail them to me one hour before class (10:00 am), no exceptions. The comments will briefly summarize the paper and provide one or two brief insights in the form of a comment (favourable or critical) or a question about the paper. See the sample on the class website.
- **(3%)** Two brief creative research proposals.
- **(30%)** Mid-term test (during the Week 6 tutorial).
- **(20%)** 2 class presentations of published papers. Each presentation will be 20 minutes long and presented during the Friday tutorials. Each is worth 10%. M.A. students will be assigned easier papers.
- **(20%)** Group projects: Projects in recent years were (1) the impact of international competition on mobile phone rates and (2) the impact of Canadian mining on Mexican crime, public health, and public finance. Possible topics include:
 - China-US, Canada-US, or WTO tensions and solutions.

Readings:

- There is usually one required reading per week. Additional readings, not required, are listed with brackets [].

Part I. Firm Heterogeneity and International Trade

1. Introduction: Love of Variety; Empirical Evidence on Firm Heterogeneity (Week 1)

- [Bernard, Andrew B., J. Bradford Jensen, Stephen J. Redding, and Peter K. Schott, "Firms in International Trade," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Summer 2007, 21 (3), 105–130.]

Tutorial (Week 1): No tutorial. (Possibly a discussion of NAFTA negotiations.)

2. The Melitz Model (Week 2)

- Melitz, Marc J., and Stephen J. Redding, "Heterogeneous Firms and Trade." In *Handbook of International Trade*, edited by Elhanan Helpman, Gita Gopinath and Kenneth Rogoff. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2014. (Available on Melitz's website.)
- [Melitz, Marc J., "The Impact of Trade on Intra-Industry Reallocations and Aggregate Industry Productivity," *Econometrica*, November 2003, 71 (6), 1695–1725. If you look at this, read the annotated version on the class website.]

Tutorial (Week 2): Details of Melitz; Assign student presentations; Discuss group projects.

3. Empirics: Testing Theories; Causal Impacts of Exporting on Productivity (Week 3)

- Melitz, Marc J., and Daniel Trefler "Gains from Trade When Firms Matter," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 26(2) (Spring 2012):91–118.
- [Lileeva, Alla and Daniel Trefler, "Improved Access to Foreign Markets Raises Plant-Level Productivity ... for Some Plants," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, August 2010, CXXV (3), 1051–1072 and 1082-1087.]

Tutorial (Week 3): Student presentations (Round 1)

4. A Variable Markup Model (Week 4)

- Melitz, Marc J. and Giancarlo I. P. Ottaviano, "Market Size, Trade, and Productivity," *Review of Economic Studies*, 2008, 75 (1). Read the annotated version on the class website.

Tutorial (Week 4): Detailed review of Melitz and Ottaviano (2008).

5. Ricardian Models (Week 5)

- Eaton, Jonathan and Samuel Kortum, "Technology, Geography, and Trade," *Econometrica*, September 2002, 75 (5), 1741–1779. Read the annotated version on the class website.
- [Bernard, Andrew B. and Jonathan Eaton, Bradford Jensen, and Samuel Kortum, "Plants and Productivity in International Trade," *American Economic Review*, September 2003, 93 (4), 1268–1290.]

Tutorial (Week 5): Student presentations continued.

6. Ricardian Models (continued) (Week 6)

- Morrow, Peter and Daniel Trefler, “Rethinking Endowments-Based Comparative Advantage,” Get updated version from Trefler.

Tutorial (Week 6): Test

7. Networks and Trade – Guest lecture by Kevin Lim (Week 7)

- Lim, Kevin, “[Firm-to-Firm Trade in Sticky Production Networks](#)” Working Paper, January, 2017.
- **Tutorial (Week 7):** No tutorial

Part II. Multinationals, Offshore Outsourcing, and Incomplete Contracts

8. Introduction; Models with Complete Contracts (Week 8)

- Antràs, Pol, *Global Production: Firms, Contracts and Trade Structure*, Princeton University Press, 2016. Read pages 3–27 and 169–174.

Tutorial (Week 8): Group Project Discussion; Assign paper presentations

9. Multinationals and the Theory of the Firm – Incomplete Contracts (Weeks 9)

- Antràs, Pol and Elhanan Helpman, “Global Sourcing,” *Journal of Political Economy*, 2004, 112, 552–580. Read the annotated version on the class website.
- [Antràs, Pol, “Firms, Contracts, and Trade Structure,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, November 2003, 118 (4), 1375–1418.]
- **Tutorial (Week 9):** Student Presentations (round 2)

10. Multinationals and the Theory of the Firm (Continued) (Week 10)

- Antràs, Pol, *Global Production: Firms, Contracts and Trade Structure*, Princeton University Press, 2016. Read pages 217–234 and 255–261.
- **Tutorial (Week 10):** Student Presentations (round 2 continued)

Part III. Other Topics (Weeks 11)

11. International Trade and Domestic Institutions; Trade and Innovation (Week 11)

- Nunn, Nathan, and Daniel Trefler, “Domestic Institutions as a Source of Comparative Advantage,” forthcoming, *Handbook of International Trade* edited by Gopinath, Helpman and Rogoff (especially sections 1,2, and 5).
- [Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson, “The Rise of Europe: Atlantic Trade, Institutional Change and Economic Growth,” *American Economic Review*, June 2005, 95 (3), 546–579.]
- [Puga, Diego and Daniel Trefler, “The Dynamics of International Trade, Income Distribution and Domestic Institutions: A Death in Venice,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 2014, 129 (2), 753–821.]
- [Greif, Avner Greif, “History Lessons: The Birth of Impersonal Exchange: The Community Responsibility System and Impartial Justice,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2006, 20 (2):221–236.]
- [Dippel, Christian, Avner Grief and Daniel Trefler, “The Rents from Trade: Wages and Coercion in the Post-Abolition British Caribbean.” *NBER Working Paper*, January 2014, but read updated version on my website.]

Tutorial (Week 11): Review progress of projects

12. Presentation of Group Projects (Week 12)

- No readings

Tutorial (Week 12): No tutorial.

Deliverables

Problem sets are due by 10 am on the Monday of the due week. (These should be handwritten and delivered by email or under my door.) Summaries of assigned readings and creative research proposals are due by e-mail one hour before class. No exceptions!

Week 1: Introduction

- No tutorial this week.
- CES problem set assigned. Due by 10:00 am on the Monday of Week 2.
- Read Melitz (see the annotated version on the website) and write a one-page summary. Due by 10:00 am on the Tuesday of Week 2.

Week 2: The Melitz Model

- Tutorial this week on Melitz.
- Read Melitz and Trefler and write a one-page summary. Due by 10:00 am on the Tuesday of Week 3.
- Pareto-Melitz problem set assigned. Due by 10:00 am on the Monday of Week 3.
- Creative research proposal due 10 am on Monday of Week 3.
- In class assignment of student paper presentations (round 1). Presentations will be during the tutorials of Weeks 3 and 5.
 1. Bernard, Andrew B. and Stephen J. Redding, and Peter K. Schott, "Comparative Advantage and Heterogeneous Firms Comparative Advantage and Heterogeneous Firms," *Review of Economic Studies*, January 2007, 74 (1), 31–66.
 2. Chaney, Thomas, "Distorted Gravity: The Intensive and Extensive Margins of International Trade," *American Economic Review*, September 2008, 98 (4), 1707–21.
 3. Baldwin, Richard and James Harrigan, "Zeros, Quality, and Space: Trade Theory and Trade Evidence," *American Economic Journal: Microeconomics*, May 2011.
 4. Helpman, Elhanan, Marc Melitz, and Yona Rubinstein, "Estimating Trade Flows: Trading Partners and Trading Volumes," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, May 2008, 123 (2), 441–487.
 5. Caliendo, Lorenzo and Fernando Parro, "Estimates of the Trade and Welfare Effects of NAFTA," *Review of Economic Studies*, January 2015, 82(1), 1–44.
 6. Mayer, Thierry, Marc J. Melitz, and Gianmarco I. P. Ottaviano, "Market Size, Competition, and the Product Mix of Exporters," *American Economic Review* 2014, 104(2): 495–536.
 7. Arkolakis, Costas, "Market Penetration Costs and the New Consumers Margin in International Trade," *Journal of Political Economy*, forthcoming.
 8. Daniel Trefler, "The Long and Short of the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement." *American Economics Review* 94 (September 2004): 870-895.
 9. [Eaton, Jonathan and Samuel Kortum and Francis Kramarz, "An Anatomy of International Trade: Evidence from French Firms," *Econometrica*, September 2011, 79 (5), 1453–1498. (Hard)]

10. [Bernard, Andrew B., Stephen J. Redding, and Peter K. Schott, “Multi-Product Firms and Trade Liberalization, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, forthcoming. (Hard)]
11. [Fieler, Ana Cecilia, “Nonhomotheticity and Bilateral Trade: Evidence and a Quantitative Explanation,” *Econometrica*, July 2011:1969–1101. (Need to know Eaton-Kortum)]

Week 3: Empirics

- Tutorial this week on student presentations (round 1).
- Melitz-Ottaviano problem set assigned. Due by 10:00 am on the Monday of Week 4.
- Read Melitz and Ottaviano (see the annotated version on the website) and write a one-page summary. Due by 10:00 am on the Tuesday of Week 4.

Week 4: The Melitz-Ottaviano Model

- Tutorial this week Melitz-Ottaviano.
- Eaton-Kortum problem set assigned. Due by 10:00 am on the Monday of Week 5.
- Read Eaton and Kortum (see the annotated version on the website) and write a one-page summary. Due by 10:00 am on the Tuesday of Week 5.

Week 5: The Eaton-Kortum Model

- Tutorial this week on student presentations (round 1 continued).

Week 6: The Eaton-Kortum Model (continued) and Extensions

- Tutorial this week: **TEST!**
- Creative writing assignment. Due by 10:00 am on the Tuesday of Week 7.

Reading Week!

Week 7: Guest Lecture

- Read Antràs quickly for Week 8. No summary needed.
- Creative writing assignment due by 10:00 am on the Monday of Week 8.

Week 8: Trade with Incomplete Contracts

- Antras problem set assigned. Due by 10:00 am on the Monday of Week 9.
- Read Antras and Helpman (JPE, 2004) and write a one-page summary. Due by 10:00 am on the Tuesday of Week 9.
- Tutorial – **Group project proposals assigned. Projects will be presented in the class of Week 12.**
- Tutorial – Assignment of student paper presentations (round 2). Presentations will be during the tutorials of Weeks **9 and 10**.
 1. Antràs, Pol, Teresa C. Fort, and Felix Tintelnot. 2017. “[The Margins of Global Sourcing: Theory and Evidence from U.S. Firms.](#)” *American Economic Review* 107 (9): 2514-64.
 2. Alfaro, Laura, Pol Antràs, Davin Chor, and Paola Conconi. Forthcoming. “[Internalizing](#)

[Global Value Chains: A Firm-Level Analysis.](#)” *Journal of Political Economy*.

3. Antràs, Pol, and Alonso de Gortari. 2017. “[On the Geography of Global Value Chains](#)”.
 4. Antràs, Pol and Elhanan Helpman, “Contractual Frictions and Global Sourcing,” in Elhanan Helpman, Dalia Marin, and Thierry Verdier, eds., *The Organization of Firms in the Global Economy*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008, pp. 9–54.
 5. Ramondo, Natalia, and Andres Rodriguez-Clare, “Trade, Multinational Production, and the Gains from Openness,” *Journal of Political Economy*, April 2013, 121 (2).
 6. Helpman, Elhanan, Marc J. Melitz, and Stephen R. Yeaple, “Export versus FDI with Heterogeneous Firms,” *American Economic Review*, 2004, 94 (1), 300–316.
 7. Liu, Mengxiao, “Global Supply Chains without Principals,” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Toronto, 2017.
 8. Johnson, Robert C. and Guillermo Noguera, “Accounting for Intermediates: Production Sharing and Trade in Value Added,” *Journal of International Economics*, March 2012, 86 (2), 224-236.
 9. Sutton, John and Daniel Trefler, “Deductions from the Export Basket: Capabilities, Wealth and Trade,” *Journal of Political Economy*, 2016.
 10. Antràs, Pol, Mihir Desai and C. Fritz Foley, Multinational Firms, “FDI Flows and Imperfect Capital Markets,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, August 2009, 124 (3), 1171-1219.
 11. Manova, Kalina, “Credit Constraints, Heterogeneous Firms, and International Trade,” *Review of Economic Studies*, 2013, 711-744.
 12. Autor, David H., David Dorn, and Gordon H. Hanson, “Local Labor Market Effects of Import Competition in the United States,” *American Economics Review*, 2013.
- Other papers of interest:
 1. Helpman, Elhanan, “A Simple Theory of International Trade with Multinational Corporations,” *Journal of Political Economy*, June 1984, 92 (3), 451–471.
 2. Markusen, James R. and Anthony J. Venables, “The Theory of Endowment, Intra-Industry and Multinational Trade,” *Journal of International Economics*, December 2000, 52 (2), 209–234. (hard)
 3. Antràs, Pol, and Davin Chor, “Organizing the Global Value Chain,” *Econometrica*, 2013, 81 (6), 2127–2204.
 4. Costinot, Arnaud, and Jon Vogel, “Matching and Inequality in the World Economy,” *Journal of Political Economy*, 2010, 118 (4), 661–676.
 5. Fort, Teresa, “Technology and Production Fragmentation: Domestic versus Foreign Sourcing,” Working Paper, Tuck School of Business, December 2015.

Week 9: Trade with Incomplete Contracts (continued)

- Read Antràs. Write a one-page summary due by 10:00 am on the Tuesday of Week 9.
- Tutorial this week on student presentations (round 2).

Week 10: Trade with Incomplete Contracts (continued); The Impact of Institutions on Trade

- Tutorial this week on student presentations (round 2, continued).

Week 11: The Impact of Trade on Institutions

- Tutorial: Review project progress.

Week 12: Group Projects Presented in Class.

- No tutorial this week.