`GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
ECONOMICS 385-002
International Economic Policy
Spring 2026

Instructor Charles Remien
E-mail: Cremien@gmu.edu
Class Location: Planetary Hall | Room 126
Class Times: 1:30 PM – 2:45 PM | Monday & Wednesday
Office Location: Buchanan Hall D150, at the tables in the Econ Department
Office Hours: 3:00 PM to 4:30 PM | Monday & Wednesday

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Explain the economic way of thinking and **apply** it to core questions in international economic policy.

2. Analyze the economic case for and against free trade and **assess** the political economy of trade restrictions.

3. Use economic tools to **evaluate** key international policy issues, including immigration, demographic/fertility policy, and the institutions that support the international economic order

SYLLABUS EDITION STATEMENT

The instructor holds the right to revise the syllabus at any time throughout the semester. Should the syllabus be revised, a new edition of the syllabus will be uploaded to Canvas and to the instructor's GMU webpage.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to be mature enough to commit to reading assigned texts independently of class time. Time management is one of the most important skills taught in college and is expected of students in this class. Beyond reading, students are expected to have basic math skills sufficient to answer some exam questions using mathematical reasoning.

In addition, any assignments given in this class will be expected to be turned in on time. **There will be no late work or make-up grades accepted on assignments**. Students will be expected to submit their own work on assignments in accordance with the honor code.

Students are required to be respectful of their fellow students and the instructor while in the classroom. Respect, in this context, means a level of civility expected of adults and an understanding of the purpose of class time. **It is not appropriate to be needlessly disruptive or hostile during class time.** Disruptive students will be given a firm warning, then handled in accordance with university policy.

Questions are allowed in class; students must raise their **hand and wait to be called upon.** However, given that this is primarily a lecture class, more in-depth questions may need to be saved for office hours. Since office hours are directly after class, students who are told to save their questions for office hours during lecture are encouraged to write them down and bring them to the lecturer at the appropriate time.

AI POLICY

The instructor is aware that students commonly use AI. However, given the exams and assignments of this course, AI will not be particularly useful. Exams are taken in class without access to the internet, and assignments are meant to help students understand and learn. The doing of the homework is the whole point; having AI do it for you isn't going to help you learn. AI may help students study, but it shouldn't be a replacement for studying. AI in economics is known to mix up the schools of economic thought and also has a tendency to make up fake quotes from readings. So be very careful when asking AI for assistance studying, and don't let AI replace you studying, as you cannot rely on it to do your thinking for you.

GRADES

This class, like many others you will be taking in college, is primarily exam-based. Throughout the semester, you will be given a series of comprehensive exams to test your understanding of the material covered in the instructor's lectures and in the assigned readings.

The table below demonstrates how grades will be assigned in this class. **There will be no curve**. A student's final grade will be the grade they earn, and there will be no arbitrary favoritism. Grades will be distributed according to the table below.

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90% and above!
B	80%-89.9%
C	70%-79.9%
D	60%-69.9%
F	59.9% and below

Exams and Assignments

Exams will be taken in person, in class, with a pencil on Scantron and test paper. Students will be expected to answer their exams in pencil and bring their own scantrons on exam day. Exams are a mix of multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions (graphs), and potentially essay questions.

As the semester progresses, the exam weights will increase until the final exam. Given the nature of economics, each exam builds off of what was tested on the previous one, making them all somewhat cumulative. The final exam will be expressly cumulative, with some questions from all three previous exams in addition to newer material.

This class will also have assignments. In this class, assignments refer to small homework worksheets that are meant to test students' understanding of class topics and prepare them for their associated exam. Students will receive graded assignments before the associated exam and, therefore, should have time to learn from their mistakes. **This class does not accept late assignments or allow for makeup assignments.** Assignments will be given out in class or on Canvas and are due on the assigned date, as written at the top of the assignment. **To receive credit for an assignment, the assignment must be turned in on time, with the student's full name and G number written on the assignment.**

Category	Percentage
Total Assignment Grade	20%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	25%
Final Exam	35%

This course may have **extra credit**, consisting of questions on the exams. Extra credit questions in this class come in two flavors: either they are questions from optional material from the required readings/provided by the instructor via Canvas, or they are harder questions designed to reward students for acquiring a more in-depth understanding of class material. The instructor reserves the right to change how extra credit is given in this class throughout the semester, should he deem it necessary.

CANVAS

While this class will be in-person, students will be expected to use Canvas throughout the course. Extra credit materials or additional readings not located in the required texts will be available on Canvas or in the non-required readings section of this document.

If, for unforeseen circumstances, we are unable to have class in person in our assigned location, class will be held online via Zoom with announcements sent to students via email from Canvas. Should there be extreme circumstances, such as another pandemic, the class will not be cancelled and will continue on Canvas in one form or another.

Copies of assignments will be posted on Canvas. However, assignments are expected to be turned in in class on the assigned day. If, for some reason, class is unable to be held that day, assignments may be turned in earlier during office hours or online.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Title: **Globalization (B)**
Authors: Donald J. Boudreaux
Publisher: Greenwood Press
ISBN 13: 978-0313342134

Title: **Microeconomics: Private and Public Choice (GS)**
(16th edition is what I am using)
Authors: James Gwartney, Richard Stroup, Russell Sobel, and David Macpherson
Publisher: CENGAGE L
ISBN 13: 9781305506893

All required texts are available at the bookstore. Those who seek to purchase books from locations other than the bookstore are advised to ensure that the ISBN-13 numbers of the books they intend to purchase match those listed above. ISBN numbers change based on the edition of the book, so be very careful when buying from locations other than the bookstore.

Both of these books are **required reading** for the course, as **students will be unable to pass the course without having read the assigned sections** from each of them. Reading is additionally important in this course, as some sections of the assigned reading may not be discussed during the instructor's lecture, but all sections will be used in the creation of class exams.

In addition, online readings will be provided to the class, either as extra credit or as additional required readings, via Canvas.

Non-Required TEXT

For those students interested in the economics of immigration, the following graphic novel by Dr. Caplan has been listed as an optional reading for our week, where we discuss the economics of immigration. The questions covering immigration will be from the lecture only, but reading the book would help give a deeper understanding, and so the information for it is provided below.

Title: **Open Borders: The Science and Ethics of Immigration (C)**
Authors: Bryan Caplan
Publisher: First Second
ISBN 13: 978-1250316967

POLICY REGARDING AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING & PICTURES:

No video or audio recordings will be allowed in the classroom unless listed as a required disability accommodation. All photography without express instructor permission on a per-photo basis is also banned from the class.

STUDENTS NEEDING ACCOMMODATIONS:

George Mason University is committed to providing access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you need accommodations for this class, please visit http://ds.gmu.edu for detailed information about the disability services registration process. Then, after sending an Academic Accommodation Letter to my email, we can discuss your approved accommodations. *I am glad to make accommodations for students with disabilities.* Disability Services is located in the Student Union Building 1 (SUB 1), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu Phone: (703) 993-2474

It is critically important that students notify me properly, as described above, of their need for disability accommodations as soon as possible. I can only help students after being properly notified.

ALL OTHER COURSE POLICY STATEMENT

This course is conducted with all other course policies of George Mason University. For further information about these policies, students are recommended to read over the policies at https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/home/gmu-common-course-policies/.

WEEKLY READING LIST

Listed below is a list of assigned readings each week; students will be expected to read to keep up with the course. These readings are critically important to student understanding and success, and so it is very important to stay on top of the readings**. Readings with a * are explicitly extra credit for that exam.**

Week Number and Weekly Theme	Book Source	Chapter/Section	Page Numbers
Week 1 Introduction and Syllabus	**(GS)**	**Chapter 1**	**1-17**
Week 2			
Introduction to the Economic Way of Thinking	**(GS)**	**Chapter 2**	**18-40**
	Becker 1976	**(See Canvas)** *************************	**This entire paper is only 7 Pages Extra Credit for exam 1, will be required for the final exam**
Week 3			
Supply and Demand and an Introduction to Trade	**(GS)**	**Chapter 3**	**43-67**
	(B)	**Chapter 1**	**1-14**
Week 4			
Price Controls	**(GS)**	**Chapter 4**	**69-89**
	(B)	**Chapter 2**	**15-36**
Week 5			
Public Choice and Government			
	(GS)	**Chapter 5-6**	**93-129**
	(B)	**Chapter 3**	**37-51**
Exam 1			
Week 6			
Introduction to International Trade			
	(GS)	**Chapter 16**	**307-321**
	(B)	**Chapter 4-5**	**51-99**
Week 7			
International Trade Continued	**(B)**	**Chapter 6**	**99-116**
Week 8			

Economic Growth, Corruption, and Rent Seeking.			
	AJR paper	**(See Canvas)**	**Pages 1369-1373 only,**
Week 9			
Major International Economic Institutions	**(B)**	**Chapter 7**	**117-138**
Week 10			
Economics of Immigration	**Clemens (2011)**	**(see canvas)**	**Pg. 83-101** **Assigned but likely to also be a source of extra credit problems ********
	(C)	**(Non-Required Text section)**	**Optional (Not Tested): Entire Book**
Week 11			
The Family, Fertility, and Demographic Decline.			
	Becker 1960	**(See Canvas)**	**209-231**
	(GS)	**Special Topic 2**	**346-354**
	Make sure you take this time to catch up on any readings you feel behind in before Exam 2.		
Exam 2			
Week 12			
International Environmental Policy and Environmental Economics			
	(GS)	**Special Topics 10-11**	**431-450**
Week 13			
International Energy Economics			
	Cleary and Palmer (2022)	**See Canvas**	**All of it**
	Energy Information Administration link	**See Canvas**	**Review the 7 Factors that influence crude oil prices. The other 7**

			on petroleum products will likely be extra credit*****
Week 14			
The Current and Future State of the International Economic Order, and a Return to the Economic Way of Thinking			
	Becker 1976	**(See Canvas)**	**All 7 pages**
	O'Neil 2023	**(See Canvas)**	**All 5 pages**

Final Exam Date: Unless otherwise mentioned, the final exam will take place on Wednesday, May 6th, from 1:30 pm to 4:15 pm.