

17.422

Field Seminar in International Political Economy

SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR:

Prof. Nazli Choucri

COURSE MEETING TIMES

Lectures: 1 session / week, 3 hours / session

COURSE CONTENT

This field seminar in international political economy covers major theoretical, empirical, and policy perspectives. The basic orientation is disciplinary and comparative (over time and across countries, regions, firms), spanning issues relevant to both industrial and developing states. Special attention is given to challenges and dilemmas shaped by the macro-level consequences of micro-level behavior, and by micro-level adjustments to macro-level influences.

The first part of the course is on basic concepts and theoretical foundations, and covers assumptions and implications. The focus is on core economic principles and structural approaches, positive international political economy, and institutional approaches — leading to the articulation of complexity and introducing ‘globalization’ perspectives and contentions. The goal is to understand how theory is framed and ‘works’, the potential inferences and the contentions. The second part of the course draws on the theoretical foundations by ‘using’ concepts to examine a set of specific international exchanges, and related structures and processes. These include sources of ‘demand’, technology advances and the ‘new’ knowledge economy, trade and finance, firms and global markets. The third part converges on interactions of globalization and localization, political economy of the Internet and new e-markets and the fundamentals of ‘sustainability’ that question some of the core assumptions discussed in the first part of the course and ‘utilized’ in the second. The course concludes with analyses of select international institutional innovations.

COURSE REQUIREMENT

There are two major course requirements:

First is the nature and extent of class discussion and participation (40% of final grade).

Second is a choice of (a) take home final exam (b) one research paper – long paper, or (c) three short review essays covering the individual parts of the course (60% of final grade).

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Alt, James E., and Kenneth A. Shepsle, eds. *Perspective on Positive Political Economy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
2. Axelrod, Robert, and Cohen, Michael D. *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier*. New York: Basic Books, 2001.
3. Barzel, Yoram. *Economic Analysis of Property Rights*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
4. Choucri, Nazli, ed. *Global Accord: Environmental Challenges and International Responses*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993.
5. Frieden, Jeffry A., and David A. Lake. *International Political Economy: Perspectives on Global Power and Wealth*. 4th ed. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.
6. Gilpin, Robert. *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001.
7. North, Douglass C. *Structure and Change in Economic History*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1981.

CALENDAR

LEC #	TOPICS
Core Principles and Contending Perspectives	
1	Foundations of International Political Economy
2	Economic and Structural Approaches
3	Positive International Political Economy
4	New Institutionalism
5	Growth, Complexity and Globalization
Uses of Theory and Empirical Analysis	
6	Population, Labor and Structures of Demand
7	Knowledge, Technology and Competitiveness
8	Natural Resource and Environmental Assets
9	International Trade, Finance and Capital Mobility
10	Firms and Market Interactions
New Trends in Theory and Analysis	
11	e-Factors and the Internet
12	Complexity and Sustainability
13	Globalization and Institutional Innovation