

INTA/ECON 4740

Seminar in (International) Political Economy

Fall 2024

TR 9:30-10:45

Habersham 136

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Office hours: by appointment.

Course Description:

This course synthesizes students' knowledge of economics and international affairs via the creation of an original research project with an emphasis on an applied or practical policy component. Each student will develop a rich understanding of how to formulate and execute original, policy-relevant research, as well as assess the work of others. The aspiration is that students will produce an original analytical or policy paper suitable for an academic or policy conference on a contemporary issue in economics and international affairs.

Intended learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- demonstrate knowledge of theories of international affairs and apply them in analyzing events and outcomes in world affairs;
- select and apply appropriately at least one widely used quantitative or qualitative social science research method;
- demonstrate the ability to consume diverse empirical research studies in order to evaluate their research and policy implications; and
- use written and oral communication to demonstrate knowledge and to make cogent arguments.

Course Text:

Lisa A. Baglione, *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science*, 4th ed. (Sage, 2020).

Additional resources are available on Canvas (c) or through the library (l).

Statement on inclusiveness

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Students enrolled in the course have the following responsibilities: (1) to submit four short written assignments and present drafts of them in class; (2) to complete a research paper of 5,000 words (excluding notes and references) on a significant problem, issue or puzzle in economics and international affairs; (3) to present the research project orally; (4) to create a poster presenting the research; (5) to present the research of another student; and (6) to participate actively in class discussions, including group discussions of peers' work. Drafts of assignments are to be posted to the appropriate discussion on Canvas by the deadline specified in the syllabus. Students who do not post their work by the deadline without an acceptable excuse will not be allowed to attend the relevant workshop and will not receive feedback. The draft paper will not be graded, but failure to submit a good faith effort will result in a two-letter grade penalty on the final paper.

Assignments	Date due	Maximum points possible	Share of total
1) Research question overview	9/5	100	5
2) Preliminary literature review	9/17	200	10
3) Research design	10/1	200	10
4) Data report	10/10	200	10
Draft paper	11/8	0	0
Discussant remarks	11/12 or 11/14	200	10
Presentation	11/19 or 11/21	200	10
Poster	12/3	100	5
Paper	12/10	500	25
Participation	continuous	300	15
TOTAL		2000	100

Late assignments will NOT be accepted, except for medical or personal emergencies.

Extra-credit (25 points for a serious effort) (up to 2 assignments may be submitted)

Write a reflective summary (500 words max) of an approved public talk. Due by email within a week of the event.

Grading

Grade	Points	Descriptors
A	20 19 18	Exceptionally good performance demonstrating a superior understanding of the subject matter, a foundation of extensive knowledge, and a skillful use of concepts and/or materials.
B	17 16 15	Good performance demonstrating capacity to use the appropriate concepts, a good understanding of the subject matter, and an ability to handle the problems and materials encountered in the subject.
C	14 13 12	Adequate performance demonstrating an adequate understanding of the subject matter, an ability to handle relatively simple problems.
D	11 10 9	Minimally acceptable performance demonstrating at least partial familiarity with the subject matter and some capacity to deal with relatively simple problems, but also demonstrating serious deficiencies.
F	<9	Did not demonstrate familiarity with the subject matter, nor the capacity to deal with simple problems in a manner recognizable to the consensus of mainstream academic practitioners within the field.

Final grades:

> 1800	A
1500-1799	B
1200-1499	C
900-1199	D
<900	F

Grade Change Policy

Simple computational or clerical errors should be brought to my attention immediately. Legitimate requests for grade changes are welcome and encouraged. You should, however, resist the temptation to file a frivolous request just hoping to “get lucky”. Approach a grade change request as if arguing a legal case: you should have strong and convincing arguments and evidence to support your request. Be aware that appeals to the practices of other professors do not constitute good argument or evidence. Note also that grade changes requests can result in re-grades either up or down (or left unchanged). That is, if the greater scrutiny demanded by a grade change request reveals your assignment to deserve a lower grade than previously awarded, then the lower grade will be assigned.

Special Accommodations

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a documented disability are required to register with the Georgia Tech Office of Disability Services (<https://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/>).

Class participation and conduct

You are expected to participate actively in all classes and to attend in-class sessions unless you have a compelling reason not to do so. Feeling ill is a compelling reason. If you feel ill, please stay home and let me know.

Course participants will treat each other with respect. Constructive questioning and criticism are encouraged. Personal attacks and insults will not be tolerated. The rule of thumb here is that critical comments and questions should be maturely phrased in a manner that encourages constructive and open debate. They should **not** be phrased as insults, threats, or in a manner that shuts down discussion.

Honor Code and Plagiarism Policy

“I commit to uphold the ideals of honor and integrity by refusing to betray the trust bestowed upon me as a member of the Georgia Tech community.”

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. For information on Georgia Tech's Academic Honor Code, visit <https://policylibrary.gatech.edu/student-life/academic-honor-code>.

Plagiarism is defined, for the purposes of this class, as: copying, borrowing, or appropriating another person's work **and** presenting it as one's own in a paper or oral presentation, deliberately or by accident. The submission of AI-generated work without extensive revision constitutes plagiarism. In order to avoid being charged with plagiarism, if you use the words, ideas, phrasing, charts, graphs, or data of another person or from published material, then you must either: 1) use quotation marks around the words **and** cite the source, or 2) paraphrase or summarize acceptably using your own words **and** cite the source. Any student suspected of plagiarizing will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Course overview

1.	8/20	Introduction	
2.	8/22	What am I trying to do?	Mark a past paper
3.	8/27	Research Question I: What makes a good research question?	Present a topic of interest
4.	8/29	Research Question II: Workshop	Draft research question overview by noon on 8/28 (on Canvas)
5.	9/3	Literature Review I: Introduction	
6.	9/5	Literature Review II: Summary and synthesis exercise	Research question overview by start of class (by email)
7.	9/10	Literature Review III: Workshop	Draft preliminary literature review by noon on 9/9 (on Canvas)
8.	9/12	Research Design I: Data sources	
9.	9/17	Research Design II: Design and Qualitative Methods	Preliminary literature review by start of class (by email)
10.	9/19	Research Design III: Quantitative Methods	
11.	9/24	Research Design IV: Workshop	Draft research design overview by noon on 9/23 (on Canvas)
12.	9/26	Faculty presentation I	
13.	10/1	Data collection I: Pitfalls to avoid	Research design by start of class (by email)
14.	10/3	Data collection II: Workshop	Draft data report by noon on 10/2 (on Canvas)
15.	10/8	Pulling it all together – the logic of presentation	
16.	10/10	Creating a poster	Data report by start of class (by email)
17.	10/15	No class – Fall Recess	
18.	10/17	Faculty presentation II	
19.	10/22	Virtual 1-2-1 sessions (if needed)	
20.	10/24	Being a discussant	
21.	10/29	Preliminary analysis workshop I	Preliminary analysis due by 9 am on 10/28 (on Canvas)
22.	10/31	Preliminary analysis workshop II	
23.	11/5	1-to-1 sessions (required)	
24.	11/7	1-to-1 sessions (required)	
	11/8	Draft papers due by noon (on Canvas)	
25.	11/12	Draft paper discussion I	Discussant remarks
26.	11/14	Draft paper discussion II	Discussant remarks
27.	11/19	Presentations I	
28.	11/21	Presentations II	
29.	11/26	Virtual 1-2-1 sessions (if needed)	
30.	11/28	No class –Thanksgiving	
31.	12/3	Poster session	
	12/10		Final papers due by noon by email

Detailed Course Outline

8/20 **Introduction**

This class will introduce the course and expectations. It will also illustrate the importance of explicit and rigorous social scientific analysis.

8/22 **What am I trying to do?**

This class will examine sample past student papers to give you a clearer sense of what your final output should look like. You should read ALL 3 papers, but you will be assigned one to grade using the rubric available in Canvas.

Mark assigned past paper using the final paper rubric

Past papers

- “Can Carbon Taxes Do It All?”
- “Economic Hardship and Civil Unrest in Latin America”
- “Degrees and Dollars: How Education Reduces Inequality”

8/27 **Research Question I: What makes a good research question?**

In this class we will start the crucial process of identifying good research questions. Using topics of interest to students, this class will explore the difference between a topic and a research question and begin to identify potential questions.

Assignment: Each student will **present an issue concerning economics and international affairs**, explaining why she/he/they think it is interesting.

Reading

Baglione, Chapters 1 and 2.

If you think you might want to write a policy paper, see the PowerPoint guidance in Canvas (under Readings). Also take a look at the United Nations Development Program’s occasional papers (available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/search-papers>) or the World Bank’s policy research working papers (available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/research/brief/world-bank-policy-research-working-papers>).

8/29 **Research Question II: Workshop**

Working in groups students will discuss each other’s draft questions helping to reframe and sharpen them.

Assignment – One-page Research Question Overview (due by noon on 8/28 on Canvas).
Prepare a one-page overview that includes:

- your research topic
- why it is important (theoretically, empirically, or in terms of policy relevance)
- your specific research question, and
- a rough idea for how you intend to go about answering it (meaning your research design and justification thereof).

If you do not post your question overview by the deadline, you will not be allowed to participate in the discussion and will not receive feedback.

9/3

Literature Review I: Introduction

This class will introduce the purpose of literature reviews, paying particular attention to how they can inform and contextualize a research project.

Reading

Baglione, Chapters 3 and 4.

Young, A.R. (2021), *Supplying Compliance with Trade Rules* (Oxford University Press) pp. 1-13. (c)

“Citation and Reference Style Guide” Taylor and Francis (c)

9/5

Literature Review II: Summary and synthesis exercise

To write a good literature review, you need to be able to read the existing secondary literature critically and to identify connections and tensions among arguments. This class will give students an opportunity to practice these critical skills. Read the relevant sections for an in-class activity. For each piece identify:

- the research question,
- the author(s) argument/answer,
- the key variables of interest, and
- the methodology used.

Research question overview due (email to instructor by start of class)

Readings

Kaempfer, W. H. and Lowenberg, A. D. (1988), “The Theory of International Economic Sanctions: A Public Choice Approach,” *The American Economic Review*, 78/4, 786-93. Only pages 786-7 and 792-793. (I)

Dashti-Gibson, J., Davis, P. and Radcliff, B. (1997), “On the Determinants of the Success of Economic Sanctions: An Empirical Analysis.” *American Journal of Political Science* 41/2: 608–618. Only pages 608-611. (I)

Ang, A. U.-J., and Peksen, D. (2007), “When Do Economic Sanctions Work? Asymmetric Perceptions, Issue Salience, and Outcomes.” *Political Research Quarterly* 60/1: 135–145. Only pages 135-136 and 141-143. (I)

Bapat, N. A., Heinrich, T. Kobayashi, Y. and Morgan, T. C. (2013), “Determinants of Sanctions Effectiveness: Sensitivity Analysis Using New Data.” *International Interactions* 39/1: 79–98. Only pages 79-80, 84-85, but take a look at Table 1 (81-3). (I)

Jeong, J. M., and Peksen, D. (2019), “Domestic Institutional Constraints, Veto Players, and Sanction Effectiveness.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63/1: 194–217. Only pages 194-196 and 201-202. (I)

9/10

Literature Review III: Workshop

Working in groups students will discuss their preliminary literature reviews.

Assignment – Preliminary literature review draft (due by noon on 9/9 on Canvas).

Describe the existing scholarship and the debate(s) related to your research question. Structure the literature according to arguments (answers to your question). Be sure to

explain how your project relates to the literature (e.g., Are you filling a gap or resolving a disagreement? What concepts, cases, or methods might you explore? Are they different from what currently exists?). Include at least FIVE (5) highly relevant sources.
 If you do not post your literature review by the deadline, you will not be allowed to participate in the discussion and you will not receive feedback.

9/12 **Research Design I – Data, Sources, and Observations**

This class will be led the Economics subject librarian Charlie Bennett, who will introduce you to the range of primary data sources available through Georgia Tech's library.

9/17 **Research Design II: Design and qualitative methods**

This class will introduce research design through an exercise. It will begin to discuss research techniques.

Preliminary literature review due by start of class (by email). Include at least TEN (10) highly relevant sources.

Readings

Baglione, Chapters 5, 7, and pp. 189-202.

Young, A.R. (2021), *Supplying Compliance with Trade Rules* (Oxford University Press) pp. 48-51 (c)

If you need a refresher, see:

Franco et al. *Introduction to Political Science Research Methods: An Open Education Resource Textbook*. June 5, 2020. Chapter 5 and Sections 7.1 and 7.5. Available at: <https://ipsrm.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IPSRM-1st-v-June-29-2020.pdf>

9/19 **Research Design III: Quantitative methods**

This class will continue to discuss research techniques. Be prepared to discuss how you would apply the approaches discussed in this and the previous class to your project.

Reading

Baglione, pp. 202-210.

Franco et al. *Introduction to Political Science Research Methods: An Open Education Resource Textbook*. June 5, 2020. Chapter 8. Available at: <https://ipsrm.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/IPSRM-1st-v-June-29-2020.pdf>.

9/24 **Research Design IV: Workshop**

In groups students will constructively discuss each other's research designs.

Assignment -- draft research design overview (2 pages) by noon on 9/23 (on Canvas)

- Restate your research question
- Spell out your argument and identify the plausible alternatives
- Indicate the method(s) appropriate to evaluating that data and the reasons for your choice. Be specific. E.g., If you are using case studies, explain how you will

select your cases. If you are conducting a regression analysis, specify which type of regression analysis you will be doing.

- Describe the data you will use and why (what information do you need for which variables).

If you do not post your research design by the deadline, you will not be allowed to participate in the discussion and you will not receive feedback.

9/26 **Faculty presentation I**

Associate Professor Alberto Fuentes will present his research on global development.

10/1 **Data collection I: Pitfalls to avoid**

This class will discuss information collection and aggregation.

Research design summaries due (email to instructor before class)

Reading

King, G., Keohane, R.O. and Verba, S. (1994). *Designing Social Inquiry* (Princeton University Press), pp. 23-8; 46-9; 51-3; 151-8 (c)

10/3 **Data collection II: Workshop**

In groups students will discuss their information needs and any challenges they anticipate in getting that information.

Assignment: Draft data report by noon on 10/2 (on Canvas).

For each variable (not just the explanandum) specify:

- How you will measure/assess it
- Where you found the information necessary for the assessment
- Whether you will need to manipulate the information to make it useable (e.g, normalize it, use change over time, average or median; code/evaluate qualitative information) and explain why that is analytically appropriate.

Note if you have not been able to find any information you need and where you have looked. How might you work around that absence?

If you do not post your data report by the deadline, you will not be allowed to participate in the discussion and you will not receive feedback.

10/8 **Pulling it all together – the logic of presentation**

This class will cover the transition from the logic of discovery to the logic of presentation and considerations for the overall structure of the final paper. This class will discuss the more micro aspects of writing a research paper, including the effective use of visuals, quotations and citations. We will also discuss effective oral presentations.

Reading

Baglione, Chapters 6 and 9.

10/10 **Creating a poster**

Vince Pedicino, the Nunn School's Director of Academic Programs, will discuss how to design a poster for a research project.

Data report by start of class (by email)

10/15 **No class – Fall Recess**

10/17 **Faculty presentation II**
Assistant Professor Carly Potz-Nelson will present her research on international finance.

10/22 **Virtual 1-2-1 sessions** (if needed)

10/24 **Being a discussant**
This class will introduce the role of the discussant and will focus on providing constructive feedback.

Reading

Economic Scholars Program, "Tips on Being a Good Discussant." Available at:
<https://www.dallasfed.org/~media/documents/educate/events/esp/tipsdiscussant.pdf>

10/29 **Preliminary analysis workshop I**
Half of the students will present the preliminary findings of their analyses. The presentations will be 10 minutes followed by 5 minutes Q&A.

Assignment: ALL students must post the slides of their presentations to Canvas by 9 am on 10/28.

Be sure to:

- Remind everybody of your research question
- Explain your choice of methodology
- Report the preliminary findings from your analysis. Make the presentation as effective for your purposes as possible.
- Identify any problems you have encountered. Explain how you have or might overcome them.
- Relate your preliminary findings to the existing literature.

If you do not post your preliminary analysis by the deadline, you will not be allowed to participate in the discussion and you will not receive feedback.

10/31 **Preliminary analysis workshop II**
The other half of the students will present the preliminary findings of their analyses.

11/5 **Virtual 1-to-1 sessions** (required)

11/7 **Virtual 1-to-1 sessions** (required)

11/8 **Draft papers due by noon** (on Canvas)

11/12 **Draft paper discussion I**
Each student will be assigned a **paper to discuss**. She/he/they will present the paper (7 minutes). The author will then respond (3 minutes), followed by general discussion (5 minutes). All students are expected to read all papers. Half the papers will be discussed in this class session.

11/14 **Draft paper discussion II**
The other half of the **papers will be discussed**.

11/19 **Presentations I**

Half of the students will present his/her/their project. The presentations will be 10-15 minutes each followed by Q&A. Presentations must be uploaded to the appropriate discussion in Canvas by 9am the day of the presentation.

11/21 **Presentations II**

The other half of the students will present his/her/their project. The presentations will be 10-15 minutes each followed by Q&A. Presentations must be uploaded to the appropriate discussion in Canvas by 9am the day of the presentation.

11/26 **Virtual 1-2-1 sessions** (if needed)

11/28 **No class – Thanksgiving**

12/3 **Poster session**

Students will present their research in (virtual) poster form. Students will have 5 minutes each to present their posters. Posters must be uploaded to the appropriate discussion in Canvas by 9 am on 12/3.

12/10 **Final papers due (email to instructor by noon)**