

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
BOULDER, COLORADO

Economics 4413  
International Trade

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<http://spot.colorado.edu/~markusen/teaching.html>

Office: Economics Building 216,

**Office Hours:** Tuesday-Thursday 09:30-11:00, 13:30-14:00

**Course Outline and Reading List**

**\*\*\*\*\*Econ 3070, intermediate microeconomics, is a pre-requisite for the course and is rigorous enforced\*\*\*\*\***

Professor Maskus and I are currently completely rewriting an old textbook of ours: the new version will be called something like: Markusen and Maskus, *International Trade: Theory and Applications*, Wiley Publishers, 2014.

The CU bookstore has duplicated and bound the manuscript which is on sale there at cost: no fees or royalties are being collected by myself.

The slides I will use in class are posted on the course website and also on my personal website. These are large font slides, so I suggest that you print two (or even four) to a page and bring them to class; this avoids you have to write down too much during class and frees the mind to think and question.

Assessment in the course will consist of three exams only, **mid-term dates subject to change:**

Mid-Term Exam 1	30%	Thursday, February 14
Mid-Term Exam 2	30%	Tuesday, March 18
Final Exam	40%	Monday May 5, 16:30-18:00

Final Exam schedule:

<http://www.colorado.edu/registrar/calendars-schedules/final-exams-schedule>

Sample questions from past exams are given at the end of this syllabus.

The exams will be analytical-essay type exams in which you will be asked, for example, to analyzed the relationship between two variables or assess the likely effects of some policy.

In the lectures, I will try to present theory in the first half of the class period, and applications in the second half.

The topics and readings follow. **Many sections of the new book are advanced and written more for master's and MBA students. Which sections to skip will be announced in class. Students are responsible for all announcements made in class. I will not be continually updating the website with announcements, etc.**

## **PART I: TECHNICAL TOOLS AND THE GAINS FROM TRADE**

In this part of the course, we develop and review basic tools of microeconomic theory that we

7. Demand Determinants of Trade  
MM chapter 14

#### **PART IV: FACTOR TRADE AND DIRECT FOREIGN INVESTMENT**

The final section of the course looks at trade in factors of production and direct foreign investment by multinational firms.

1. Trade in Factors of Production  
MM chapter 15
2. Direct Foreign Investment  
MM chapter 16
3. Migration  
MM chapter 17

#### **PART III: TRADE POLICY**

This part of the course analyzes the principal tools that governments use to influence trade. We analyzed the effects of the policies and try to understand the reasons that governments choose the policies they do.

1. Tariffs  
MM Chapter 18
2. Quotas  
MM chapter 19
3. Imperfect Competition, Increasing Returns, and Strategic Trade Policy.  
MM chapter 20
4. Political Economy of Trade Policy - class notes

## Economics 4413-001, International Trade, Prof Markusen

### Review questions for Chapters 2-8

Please note that these questions can be answered with varying “tools”: algebra, geometry, careful and logical verbal (words) argument.

Similarly, the degree of rigor and quality of the explanation can vary. Approach the questions as if you are trying to explain the material to another student who has had intermediate micro but missed the class.

I give substantial points for the quality and clarity of the answer.

1. Derive the curvature of the production frontier (two goods) when (1) there is a single factor of production and constant returns to scale.
2. Derive the curvature of the production frontier (two goods) when (1) there is a single factor of production and increasing returns to scale in both industries.
3. Derive the curvature of the production frontier graphically using the Edgeworth box for the “Heckscher-Ohlin” model: two goods, two factors, both factors mobile between industries.
4. Define the economy’s social optimal output levels for given goods prices. Prove: given perfect competition and the absence of distortions such as taxes or externalities, profit maximization by individual firms results in the socially optimal output levels for given goods prices.
5. Define homogeneous preferences. Why is this a useful assumption for analyzing trade?
6. Discuss the pitfalls of using a national or “community” indifference curve to analyze the welfare effects of trade; specifically, aggregate consumption versus individual welfare.
7. Explain the fundamental difference facing an open versus a closed (autarky) economy.
8. Explain or show the following: the condition that a country satisfy trade balance is equivalent to the value of production equals the value of consumer expenditure.
9. Explain or show the following: if a country is running a balance-of-trade deficit, then consumption spending exceeds the value of production.
10. Illustrate (graphically) how to derive a country’s excess demand function. What is the interpretation of the “zero” point, the price at which excess demand is zero?
11. Explain why the free-trade price ratio for two countries must lie in between their autarky price ratios.
12. Explain and illustrate graphically the following proposition: a country’s welfare is higher the

further the world price ratio is from its autarky price ratio.

13. Reproduce the gains-from-trade theorem without looking at the book (it is only three lines long!).
14. What does the gains from trade theorem say about the distribution of the gains within a country?
15. How is the gains-from-trade theorem useful in countering the argument that one country can only gain at the expense of another (a zero sum or negative sum game)?
16. Define and explain gains from exchange versus gains from specialization.
17. Use Figure 5.1 to address the argument that it is better to export high-tech than low-tech goods.
18. Can you explain the issue of the distribution of total gains from trade between two countries in Figure 5.3 is similar to the idea in question 12 (the further you trade from your autarky price ratio the better)?
19. Use the idea in Figure 5.4 to argue that a group that has a high preference for the country's own export good could be made worse off by trade liberalization.
20. Write a short five-sentence report for the president stating what sort of groups within a country might be made worse off by trade liberalization and what sort of groups seem sure to gain.
21. Given the problem of the internal division of gains in Figures 5.6 and 5.7, can you argue that the gains-from-trade theorem must imply that the gaining group must be able to compensate the losing group such that everyone one is better off with free trade relative to autarky?
22. State the "no-trade" model. What is the idea behind this? Why do we care?
23. In the two-good, one-factor Ricardian model, define comparative advantage and define absolute advantage. If I look at the production possibility frontiers of individual workers for two countries, how would I identify absolute versus comparative advantage in the figure?
24. In the two-good, one-factor Ricardian model, the ability of two countries to gain from trade does not depend on absolute advantage. True, false, explain.
25. In the Ricardian model, how do we know that market economies specialize in the "correct" good: the comparative-advantage good?
26. If one country has an absolute advantage in both goods, it must have a higher real wage in free-trade equilibrium. True/false, explain.
27. Use the Ricardian model to suggest a response to the argument that "high wage countries should not trade with low wage countries because the high wage country will lose jobs".

28. In the Ricardian model, discuss how differences in country size are an important determinant of

cigarettes). Contrast a consumption and a production tax on Y in achieving this goal.

7. Suppose that we have two identical countries and so free trade involves no trade (free trade prices equal autarky prices). Show the effects of a subsidy in one country to X on production and welfare in both countries.

Questions 8-13 involve a model with a constant-returns, competitive sector Y, an imperfectly competitive sector producing a homogeneous good X, and a single factor of production L.

trade in differentiated intermediate goods improve the productivity of final goods production?

18. Outline the “ideal variety” approach to product differentiation. Define ideal and compromise varieties. Under what circumstances might the compromise variety be preferred to each of two groups getting their ideal variety?
19. In the ideal variety model, how can the opening of trade between two identical economies make consumers better off? Why are scale economies vital to the argument?
20. State the "Linder Hypothesis". What empirical facts are this theory suppose to explain? Why can't the Heckscher-Ohlin model explain these facts?
21. Explain Vernon's product-cycle model. What empirical facts are this theory suppose to explain? Be sure to indicate how it is a natural extension of the Linder Hypothesis.
22. Suppose that goods with high income elasticities of demand are also capital or skilled-labor-intensive goods. How does this help us understand the volume (amount) of trade among the high-income countries versus “north-south” trade between the high-income countries and the low-income countries?

## Review questions for Chapters 15-16, 18- 20

Please note that these questions can be answered with varying “tools”: algebra, geometry, careful and logical verbal (words) argument.

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I give substantial points for the quality and clarify of the answer.

1. Discuss trade in goods versus trade in factors of production (capital and labor). Discuss to what extent trade in goods and factors could be thought of as substitutes.
2. Explain the welfare equivalence of three types of trade:
  - (A) US exports-capital intensive goods to Mexico and imports labor-intensive goods.
  - (B) US exports capital to Mexico and imports goods.
  - (C) US imports Mexican workers and exports goods.
3. Discuss trade in goods versus trade in factors of production (capital and labor). Discuss to what extent trade in goods and factors could be thought of as complements.
4. With increasing returns to scale, equal relative endowments of factors across countries (e.g., countries identical) is generally not optimal (e.g., it leaves unexploited gains from trade). Explain.
5. The traditional view of multinationals was that they moved capital from capital abundant to capital scarce countries. Yet most multinational investment takes place *among* the capital



abundant countries. What new theory explains this?

6. Outline the OLI view of multinational firms. In these terms, why is Nike not a “true” multinational?
7. What properties of knowledge capital as opposed to physical capital help explain why the former is highly correlated with multinational firms?
8. Outline a model which explains the conditions under which a firm will under take a “horizontal” strategy, building plants in both of two countries.
9. Outline a model which explains the tradeoff between owning a foreign subsidiary versus outsourcing production to a local firm.
10. An import tariff on X can be duplicated by a production subsidy on X and a production tax on Y. True/False, explain.
11. Use the Heckscher-Ohlin model to explain how an import tariff on X redistributes income inside the country.
12. Evaluate the following argument: “if the government’s goal is to increase production in sector X, it is better to use an import tariff to protect the X sector than to use a domestic production subsidy on X”.
13. Answer both parts.
  - (A) An import tariff on X is the same as an export subsidy on Y. True/False, explain.
  - (B) An import tariff on X can be duplicated by a production subsidy on X and a production tax on Y. True/False, explain.
14. Explain the “second best” infant industry argument (using a tariff to correct some other distortion), and then evaluate whether or not it makes sense.
15. Define quota rent and indicate how alternative ways of instituting the quota distribute rents in different ways. Explain how quotas can be used as an instrument of corruption.
16. If you were the prime minister and wanted to reward your friends without paying anything out of the government treasury, how might you do it?
17. Develop the argument that a country’s welfare may be improved by a production or export subsidy for an industry producing with increasing returns and imperfect competition.
18. Contrast the effects of a production subsidy in a distortion-free, competitive world versus one in which the industry in question is imperfectly competitive.
19. Present and analyze one set of assumptions under which an export subsidy must be welfare reducing for the subsidizing country. Present an alternative model in which the export subsidy could be welfare improving.

## Policies, Etiquette

E-mail policy: you may email me with small questions, but I tend not to answer questions that have been answered twice in class. You are responsible for what is presented in class, including revisions to the syllabus and changes in mid-term dates. I don't respond to emails and questions like "what did I miss in class last Friday [when I blew off class to go skiing]".

Class attendance policy: I don't take attendance unless there is particularly poor attendance on a given day. But you are responsible for everything said in class and I will not repeat it for you. On adjusting marginal marks (e.g., D+ to C-), I do consider your attendance and class participation.

My mother bought me a plane ticket without asking policy no, don't even bother to ask. The final exam time and date is set by the registrar and is already known: Saturday Dec 14, 16:30. - .18:30.

Athletics, clubs events, religion, weddings, etc. policy: all these things are known well ahead of time. If you have a conflict with an exam, tell me this week or forever hold your peace. I reserve the right to make sensible restrictions: a cousin's wedding is not a sufficient reason to miss an exam for example. Make up exams create a lot of work and hassle for me.

Metric only policy: in order to take a small step in rebelling against US backwardness, all questions, answer, and discuss involving units of weights/measures/distances and so forth should be in metric unit.

European grading policy: I start from zero and add points, rather than the odd American policy of starting at 100 and subtracting. Hence never come to me and ask "where did I lose points?". A and B+ grades are reserved for answers that are not only correct but clear, logical, and generally well written. For an A mark and answer must also be technically rigorous.

Students: here are a list of comments that we are urged to put on our syllabus. I personally find some of this patronizing. The main purpose is decorative. I think we all know the standards for behavior and professional conduct.

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honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student\\_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code)

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All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>