Course Description
This course is the first half of the Brandeis MAief capstone class exploring challenges in the global economy. This first module explores current policy issues in international trade and economic development of importance to domestic and international policymakers. Students will apply the tools and concepts from international trade, microeconomics, finance, economic development and statistics to analyze these challenges. Using rigorous analysis and research, students will evaluate key global issues in-depth, and present their views persuasively, in discussion, debate and in writing.

Learning goals
1. Carry out in-depth analysis of a current global policy issue, using the economic concepts and tools from international trade, economic development, microeconomics, and statistics.
2. Engage in effective debate on a current global issue, with a well-reasoned and compelling economic analysis that reveals knowledge of both sides of the issue.
3. Write a well-argued policy paper, evaluating a current global issue for a policymaker, using in-depth economic analysis.
4. Analyze and present data effectively in discussions, oral presentations, and written analyses.

Course Structure
The course will cover four current policy topics in international trade and development. Each topic will begin with a class discussion of a paper analyzing the broad policy debate. The next class will go deeper into the policy debate, with a paper that provides more in-depth economic and data analysis. In the third class meeting, student debate teams will face off on an issue at the heart of the policy debate.

Prerequisites
Econ 260a International Trade Policy and Institutions, and Econ 202a Applied International Macroeconomics

Required reading
Required reading will include professional studies by scholars and by international organizations, and professional journal articles (via Brandeis Scholar or online) posted on LATTE.

Optional textbooks for reference
There are no textbooks for this class. However, students may wish to consult a standard textbook on international trade such as: R. Feenstra and A. Taylor, International Economics; S. Husted and M. Melvin, International Economics; P. Krugman, M. Obstfeld and M. Melitz, International Economics.
Grading
1. Policy Paper (35%)
2. Debates (30%)
3. Class participation (35%)

Overview of Assignments
1. Policy Paper (35%). Students will write one policy paper of 4-5 (double-spaced) pages in length, plus charts, tables and references. As part of your new job in the Ministry of Foreign Trade, you have been asked to evaluate one of four economic papers by the World Bank, the WTO, or the OECD, and explain its strengths, weaknesses, and significance for your country’s trade policy. The professor will provide the list of papers. Your draft policy paper is due during the fourth week of class, and will be submitted via TurnItIn on LATTE. The TAs will provide feedback. The final policy paper is due the last week of class, and will also be submitted via TurnItIn on LATTE. Further instructions will be provided in class and on LATTE.

2. Debates (30%). We will have 4 debates throughout the class. Debate topics and schedule are in the syllabus and posted on LATTE. Debate teams will be announced within the first week of class. Your debate grade will be based on your team’s performance as well as your individual performance. Further instructions and resources will be discussed in class and posted on LATTE.

3. Class Participation (35%). Student participation in class is crucial. Attendance in class mandatory. Student comments in class will be tracked and graded based on both frequency and quality. Students should be ready to speak, and can expect to be called on without warning. Your participation score will be based on attendance and classroom contribution.
   - **Attendance** is mandatory.
     - Your participation grade will be reduced if you miss a class, come late or leave early.
     - You are allowed to miss one class without penalty. However, NO absence is permitted on the day your team is debating.
   - **Classroom contribution**: Your class discussion grade will be based on the extent and quality of your contributions. In each class meeting, grades will be assessed as follows:
     - High: a comment that move the discussion forward significantly
     - Good: a comment that provokes some discussion
     - Pass: a standard comment.
     - Zero: no comments

Class Preparation.
Preparation prior to each class meeting is mandatory. The goal for each class is to (1) thoroughly and rigorously discuss the economic issues raised in the readings and (2) achieve involvement of most of the students in the classroom discussion. Everyone must be prepared to participate. You should expect to spend 2-3 hours preparing for each class. Be ready to answer the following questions for each reading:
   - What is the main question examined in this paper, and why is it important?
   - What are the key economic arguments the authors make?
   - What economic concepts/tools are central to the analysis?
   - What evidence is presented, and how is it used in the analysis?
   - What are the authors’ conclusions? Do you think they are right?

Additional study questions to guide your preparation are posted on LATTE. These questions are designed to stimulate your thinking rather than structure or limit your analysis.
**Academic Honesty.**
You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University *Rights and Responsibilities* for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty—such as plagiarism—can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. *It is your responsibility* to accurately cite any words, ideas, data, charts, etc., from *any* sources you use in your work. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS - Library guides.

**Disabilities**
If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.
# Readings and Course Outline

(* indicates required reading)

## Overview

### January 13

**A. A New Global Trading System?**
3. 10th WTO Ministerial Conference, Nairobi 2015

**B. Key Issues**

## Topic #1: Duty-free-Quota-free (DFQF) Access—the new trade agreement?

### January 20


### January 25


### January 27

**Debate #1:** Malaysia and Vietnam would be better off with an AGOA-type preferential agreement than with the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

## Topic #2: Food Security—the new case for protection?

### February 1


### February 3


### February 8

**Debate #2:** India’s food security policies distort trade without achieving food security.

## Topic #3: Global Value Chains (GVCs)—the new source of comparative advantage?

### February 10


### February 22


### February 24

**Debate #3:** China can only benefit from GVCs by abandoning “low-end jobs” and “moving up the value chain.”

## Topic #4: SMEs, Finance, and Growth—the new path to development?

### February 29

*World Bank GFDR 2014,* chapter 3 _“Financial Inclusion for Firms,”* pages115-146 (only)

### March 2


### March 7

**Debate #4:** The best way for African SMEs to grow is by joining global supply chain production networks.