INTA/ECON 4740/4500
Seminar in (International) Political Economy

Fall 2026

Instructor Information

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General Course Information

Description

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

Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. identify research puzzles and empirical variation in the wild;
2. develop causal theoretical arguments to explain empirical variation;
3. select and apply appropriately at least one widely used quantitative or qualitative social science research method;
4. demonstrate the ability to consume diverse empirical research studies in order to evaluate their research and policy implications; and
5. use written and oral communication to demonstrate knowledge and to make cogent arguments.

Course materials

- Powner, L. C. (2014). *Empirical research and writing: A political science student's practical guide*. CQ Press.

Additional course materials will be available through the course website, Canvas, and the university library.

Grading Policy:

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

Grade	Points	Descriptors
A	> 900	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	800-899	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	700-799	Adequate performance demonstrating an adequate understanding of the subject matter, an ability to handle relatively simple problems.
D	600-699	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	< 600	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 Grade Scale:

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A 900 - 1000 points

B 800 - 899 points

C 700 - 799 points

D 600 - 699 points

F 0 - 599 points

The weights of the assignments are built into their point totals. This means that to calculate your grade you can simply add up the points lost on any assignment and subtract them from 1000.

Assignments

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments should be submitted via Canvas. Deadlines are in EST.

Assignment	Points
Class Participation	150
Research Paper Components (RCP)	
1. Research Question & Topic	25
2. Preliminary Literature Review	50
3. Research Design	75

4. Data Report	50
5. Draft Paper	100
Discussant Remarks	100
Presentation	100
6. Poster	100
7. Research Paper	250

Class Participation (150pts)

Throughout the term, students will be evaluated on their participation via drafts of paper components – submitted prior to class to be used in class activities – as well as their participation in the in-class activities themselves.

Research Paper Components (RCP) (300pts)

To prepare for the final paper, students will submit components of the project throughout the semester cumulating in the draft paper where they will put all the pieces together. Instructions on the submission requirements and expectations will be made available via Canvas.

Discussant Remarks (100pts)

Students will provide one graded round of feedback to their peers via discussant remarks given in class and submitted separately to the author. Instructions on the submission requirements and expectations will be made available via Canvas.

In-Class presentation (100pts)

Students will give one graded in-class presentation of their project to the class. Instructions on the submission requirements and expectations will be made available via Canvas.

Final Paper and Poster Session (350pts)

The core cumulative assignment for the semester is a research paper. In addition to their completed paper, students will participate in a poster session at the end of the semester where they'll present their work to their peers and other faculty. Instructions on the submission requirements and expectations will be made available via Canvas

Course Policies

Attendance and/or Participation

Students are expected to attend and participate in all class meetings and attendance will be tracked via in-class activities. It should be noted that mere attendance is not equal to participation; in order to earn full credit, students should be actively engaging with the material, their classmates' work, in-class drafting activities, etc.

Academic Integrity

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. Review Georgia Tech's Honor Code and the student Code of Conduct.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. The Student-Faculty Expectations articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Use of Generative AI

As the goal of this course is for students to understand and participate in the process of original social science research, generative AI usage policy is adapted from leading peer-reviewed journals relevant in this field. (This policy language is closely adapted from the *American Journal of Political Science*.)

Students cannot use generative AI to draft submissions or substantial elements of submissions. For example, students cannot have generative AI conduct the literature review on their behalf or ask generative AI to draft annotated bibliography entries. If you are uncertain whether a particular application of generative AI exceeds permitted usage, you must clarify the permissibility in advance of submission.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure the veracity and validity of any elements produced or influenced by generative AI. It is also the student's responsibility to ensure that any generative AI usage falls within permissible use cases.

When they submit each paper component and the final research paper or design, students must disclose the following:

1. What (if anything) they use AI for. Students must describe the specific tasks for which AI tools were employed, including tasks such as data collection and management, copyediting, code generation, data processing, literature search, research design, and statistical analyses.

Students should indicate whether the usage directly shaped the paper's substantive contents (e.g., collecting data, generating analysis code) and tasks that indirectly supported the writing process (e.g., proofreading or formatting).

2. Which AI tools they used. Students must identify each tool by name (e.g., "Claude Opus 4, Anthropic"); in case they are unable to identify the exact version, students should report the dates during which they used the AI tool. If the student used multiple tools, they must identify which tools they used for which specific tasks.
3. How they maintained human oversight. Students must describe the degree of human review applied to AI outputs, indicating whether they reviewed, edited, or approved AI-generated content.

This disclosure should appear prior to the bibliography section in any relevant submission. If you did not use generative AI, you should write, "I did not use generative artificial intelligence at any stage in the development of my submission." This disclosure both ensures the transparency and reproducibility of scientific research and attributes appropriate credit for scientific outputs.

In case students fail to faithfully disclose generative AI usage or use generative AI beyond the boundaries permitted here, the usage shall qualify as a violation of academic integrity. Students are encouraged to maintain detailed logs of generative AI usage (e.g., preserve drafts both before and after using generative AI for copyediting, saving genAI transcripts) to demonstrate that violations of academic integrity did not occur; in case of suspicion or when need for clarification arises, instructors and other relevant assessors may ask students to provide such detailed evidence of AI usage. The instructor will interpret failure to provide such evidence as indication that a violation occurred.

Extensions & Late Assignments

As most submissions are to be used in class discussions, late submissions on drafts will not be eligible for credit. Students should communicate with the professor should any extenuating circumstances arise; for certain assignments, the professor may have room to negotiate. <u>It is the student's responsibility to keep track of outstanding assignments. Extensions are not guaranteed.</u>