

**PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**in partnership with the Gap Year Association (GYA)**

**MGMT 299: Principles of Economics - International Economics**

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**CREDITS: 4 quarter-credits – Continuous Enrollment Course**

Students who plan to use this course to fulfill specific requirements should discuss transfer options and obtain written approval from a counselor or study abroad advisor at their own college/university PRIOR to enrolling in this course.

**PREREQUISITES:**

There are NO prerequisites for this course.

**METHOD OF INSTRUCTION:**

This course is a field-based self-study. The course instructor will correspond with the student and provide written feedback on course assignments via email and other remote communication.

**INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD:**

PSU has approved the following Instructors of Record, one of whom will be assigned to you (typically two+ weeks prior to the beginning of your program):

- Britt Basel, MS - [brittbasel@ecothropic.com](mailto:brittbasel@ecothropic.com)
- Dianna Hahn, MA - [dianna@gapyearassociation.org](mailto:dianna@gapyearassociation.org)
- Alexander Papouchis, MS - [alexpapouchis@gmail.com](mailto:alexpapouchis@gmail.com)
- Cam Sylvester, MA – [ccamsylvester@gmail.com](mailto:ccamsylvester@gmail.com)

Office: 503-206-7336  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Students will enhance their understanding of global economics and gain a first-hand experience of the ways that international policy impacts local populations and seek an understanding for how the global supply chain works. Students will be asked to trace a particular commodity from production to purchase, gaining an understanding of where the dollars have passed and examining the impacts of each step along the way.

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS:**

- **Environment of Respect:** Disagreement and diversity of opinions are encouraged. You will be challenged to think critically about the impact of cultural differences, which may emerge in concepts of gender, race, the roles environment has in business and market development, socioeconomic status, physical and cognitive ability, sexuality, and other forms of diversity. You are encouraged to ask difficult questions and engage in discussion and critical reflection. Please be respectful of others, listen, and try to understand differences.
- **Experiential Learning:** In this course, learning is an experiential process in which you will have the opportunity to reflect on your experiences throughout the term. The richness of the course will depend on the questions, insights, and active participation that you bring.
- **Personal Responsibility:** You are expected to engage fully in the coursework and take action if you need help. Please communicate any concerns about assignments, deadlines, or course activities to your Instructor of Record.
- **Academic Integrity:** Please adhere to university policies. Take special note of policies regarding plagiarism and course withdrawal. Each student is expected to prepare their own assignments, and any assignments submitted should be the sole work of the student. Academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information, will not be tolerated. PSU's Code of Student Conduct may be found at <https://www.pdx.edu/dean-student-life/psu-code-student-conduct-and-responsibility>

## STUDENT OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify some of the manners in which the global supply chain functions.
- Recognize many of the environmental, economic, and social impacts of purchasing an item in their home country.
- Gain a deeper understanding for the economic interdependency between countries.
- Understand more deeply how State policies effect global trade.

## CONTACT HOURS, EXCURSIONS, AND METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

A total of 40 contact hours will be facilitated. These hours will come in the forms of:

- Homestays with local businesspeople
- Shopping from, bargaining with, and interviewing local business-people in markets and stores
- Service-learning projects with a focus on social-service
- Service-learning projects with a focus on environmental service
- Research projects focused on a particular item's financial trail
- Interviews with recipient-locations businesspeople

## ASSIGNMENTS

**REQUIRED HOURS:** You must complete 40 contact hours as described above. The Gap Year Association will provide verification of hours.

**DAILY JOURNAL:** The journal requirement is an important component of your grade for this course. It will count for 30% of your final grade. Elements that make a strong journal include self-reflection and evidence of critical thinking.

*\*If you are enrolled in multiple courses, you are only required to maintain one journal for all courses\**

Journals should be handwritten and legible, as handwritten reflections tend to be deeper and more insightful than those maintained digitally. Additionally, many programs have limitations to device usage in different locations; as such, a typed version may not be an option.

Journals will be graded as follows:

- **Self-reflection (20%):** Ask yourself critical questions about the experience you are having. How is this different from what you expected? What personal challenges are you experiencing? How are you learning and growing from this experience?
- **Reflection about your location and host culture (20%):** What is similar to and/or different from your home culture/environment? What is unique about this place/location? How is your day-to-day experience and learning in the host culture challenging or validating your worldviews?
- **Sharing reflections on group dynamics (20%):** What lessons can you take away from the experience you are having with your cohort? How are you developing or changing within the group?
- **Reflection on specific course themes (20%):** Review the student outcomes from the courses you are registered for. In your journal entries, speak directly about your inquiry and learning related to those course themes.
- **Quality & Consistency (20%):** Journaling every day or every few days with focus on the above elements will lead to higher quality journals and a better overall journal grade.

**REQUIRED READING:** You must read at least ONE book from the Recommended Reading list and demonstrate knowledge learned and/or perspectives expressed (**with MLA or APA citations**) in your FINAL REPORT.

A **FINAL REPORT** of insights gained from your study-away experience is required in order to complete the course. **Our expectation is that the paper you submit will reflect college-level writing.** Your report

should be 8-10 pages in length. Reports must be typed (double spaced) with a cover page that includes your name, the academic quarter (e.g. fall 2021), the name of the program you attended, and the course number.

**Submit a comprehensive analytical paper tracing a specific item/commodity of focus (e.g., coffee, rubber, technology-grade minerals, etc.) from its local origin in the region you are visiting to its destination in a foreign country. The paper should reflect thorough research describing the ways in which local families and businesses are benefitting (or suffering), as well as the secondary impacts associated with existing trade agreements and state policies. The paper should also reflect the supply chain from start to finish, as well as where—and to whom—the profits are distributed.**

**Final Report will be graded as follows:**

- Description of supply chain for a specific item/commodity - 30%
- Contextualization of how this item/commodity represents greater economic trends - 30%
- Clarity and organization of Ideas - 20%
- Grammar and punctuation - 10%
- Ability to demonstrate knowledge from the required readings - 10%

### **DEADLINES & SUBMISSIONS:**

All course requirements must be submitted by:

- Fall Semester: January 20th
- Spring Semester: June 20th

### **SUBMITTING JOURNALS & FINAL REPORTS:**

- **Journals:** Once complete, please capture legible images/scans of your handwritten journal and submit as **ONE COMPLETE** document via email/shared drive to your instructor. Instructors reserve the right to refuse your journal submission if it is not legible. Some tips for quality submission when photographing or scanning your journal:
  - Ensure adequate light
  - Use equal camera height/distance if taking photos of journal
  - Turn OFF the flash
  - Pay attention to shadows and reflections
  - Ensure the entire page is captured and sections are not cut off (even margins)!
- **Final report:** Please email or share your final report with your Instructor of Record

### **COURSE EVALUATION:**

- **Daily Journal** (30% of total course grade): Evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to, clearly presented ideas and observations, creative thought, and relevant concepts.
- **Final Paper** (70% of total course grade): Evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to, appropriate grammar and verb use, format, content relevance, organization, analysis, originality, and summarization skills.
- **Required Readings:** This is a requirement for successful completion of this class and 10% of your paper grade depends on your referencing examples and lessons learned. Citations are required.
- **Required Hours:** The Gap Year Association will provide verification of these hours.
- **Grading:** This course is graded with letter grades A - F. See more details about PSU's grading system [here](#).

## **READING LIST**

**Students must read and cite at least ONE book in the final assignment. The following books have been approved for this course. Any other books not on this list must first be approved by your Instructor of Record.**

## ALL REGIONS:

*Tangled Routes: Women, Work, and Globalization on the Tomato Trail*, by Deborah Barndt

A collection of stories about women workers along the tomato trail. These stories highlight the effects of globalization, gender, race, class, family status, and north-south relations.

*A Beginners Guide to the World Economy*, by Randy Epping

Answers to basic economic questions such as “What is globalization?” “How do social concerns and societal ills (drugs, poverty, AIDS, endangered natural resources) play a part in the rapidly changing world economy?”

*Economics in One Lesson: The Shortest and Surest Way to Understand Basic Economics*, by Henry Hazlitt

An oldie but a goodie! Hazlitt’s focus on non-governmental solutions, strong, anti-deficit position, and general emphasis on free markets, economic liberty of individuals, and the dangers of government intervention make *Economics in One Lesson*, every bit as relevant and valuable today as it has been since publication.

*The New Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*, by John Perkins

Former economic hit man John Perkins shares new details about the ways he and others cheated countries around the globe out of trillions of dollars. Then he reveals how the deadly EHM cancer he helped create has spread far more widely and deeply than ever in the US and everywhere else—to become the dominant system of business, government, and society today. As a conclusion, he gives an insider view of what we each can do to change it.

*The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist Examines the Markets, Power, and Politics of World Trade*, by Pietra Rivoli

Tracing a T-shirt’s life story from a Texas cotton field to a Chinese factory and back to a U.S. storefront before arriving at the used clothing market in Africa, the book uncovers the political and economic forces at work in the global economy.

*The End of Poverty Economic Possibilities for Our Time*, by Jeffrey Sachs

Jeffrey D. Sachs is renowned for his work around the globe advising economies in crisis. *The End of Poverty* distills more than thirty years of experience to offer a uniquely informed vision of the steps that can transform impoverished countries into prosperous ones.

*Banker To The Poor: Micro-Lending and the Battle Against World Poverty*, by Muhammad Yunus

Banker to the Poor is Muhammad Yunus’s memoir of how he decided to change his life in order to help the world’s poor. In it he traces the intellectual and spiritual journey that led him to fundamentally rethink the economic relationship between rich and poor, and the challenges he and his colleagues faced in founding Grameen.