

EC 541: Issues in the Contemporary International Economy

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1 Course Description: This course takes up issues of current interest in the world economy and examines them both theoretically and empirically. The emphasis will be on issues of contemporary relevance, rather than on historical evolution or purely theoretical debates. The topics chosen are intended to be demand-driven, so may change depending upon student interest.

2 Evaluation Method: Evaluation is based on individual presentations and participation in seminars (1 credit), one term paper (1 credit) and one end-semester examination (2 credits).

3 Main References: See detailed course outline.

4 Topics

1. The inherent instability of financial markets and issues of financial cycles and regulation
2. The global financial crisis: causes, implications and current processes, with specific attention to the eurozone crisis.
3. Implications for developing countries, including transmission of financial volatility and speculative activity in commodity markets, and prospects for financing for development.
4. Progress in re-regulation of finance and proposals for change in global financial architecture; the role and relevance of the multilateral financial institutions.
5. Trade openness and growth: definitions of openness; the evidence on trade and growth.
6. The debate on international inequality in the period of globalisation and the significance of "emerging economies" in the global economic order.
7. Current issues in the WTO: review of all the major issues of current interest, with special emphasis on negotiations relating to agriculture, TRIPS, NAMA and services.
8. Regional trade agreements: spread of RTAs and their implications; detailed examination of particular RTAs such as EU, NAFTA and Mercosur; the growth of bilateral agreements; implications for countries like India.
9. Trade in services: the various modes of trade in services; inter-modal linkages; recent trends in services trade; opportunities for developing countries.
10. Issues in developing country exports: relocative investment and patterns of intra-industry trade; the fallacy of composition in developing country exports; the issue of "job export" from North to South and implications of more open trade for employment.
11. Value chains, relocative capital and the role of multinational companies in changing patterns of export-oriented production.
12. International economic migration: recent patterns of cross-border economic migration; economic implications for sending and receiving countries; demographic change and future possibilities.