

Global Political Economy

Root Number: 441637

Semester: Fall semester- HS2026

ECTS: 5

Lecturer: Prof. Dr. Manfred Elsig

Dates: Thursdays, 10:15 – 12:00 – except first meeting on 15 September at 14:00-16:00

Room: Silva Casa Auditorium, World Trade Institute.

Course Description

This course provides an introduction into the field of international relations and international political economy. In the first part, the course discusses various theories, analytical frameworks and research programs with a special emphasis on globalization and cooperation in economic governance. In the second part the history of the world economy's global architecture is discussed and selected research areas presented, such the role of domestic factors, international organizations, new regionalism, trade-labor linkages and development.

Lecturer

Manfred Elsig

Manfred Elsig is Professor of International Relations at the World Trade Institute (University of Bern) since 2009. He is the Managing Director of the WTI and its Director of Research. He studied at the Universities of Bern and Bordeaux and earned a degree in political science. He worked from 1997–1999 at the Swiss Federal Office for Foreign Economic Affairs. He then joined the Political Science Institute of the University of Zurich and received his PhD (Dr. phil) in 2002. From 2002–2004, he worked for UBS financial services group and as a personal advisor to the Minister of Economy of Canton Zurich. Before joining the WTI in 2005, he was a teaching fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science. His research focuses primarily on the politics of international trade, European trade policy, international organizations, US–EU relations, and private actors in global politics. He has published over 30 peer-reviewed articles.

Learning Objectives

- Introduction into the field Global Political Economy
- The role and use of theories
- Application of theories in relation to economic policy outcomes

Exams and Grades

This final course grade will be made up of two in house exams: one multiple choice exam and one academic essay.

- Short Essay
- **Thursday 10th December, 8.45-12.00**
- Weight: 50% of your final GPE grade.
- Multiple Choice Exam
- **Thursday 17th December: 10h15 – 12h00**
- Weight: 50% of your final GPE grade.

What is also recommended is to listen to some of the past episodes of following podcast where some specific topics are also covered

<https://www.tradetalkspodcast.com/>

Recording of class

Audio recordings of the lectures will not be available.

Course Overview

Class	Date	Day	Time	Lecturer	Topic
1	15. Sep	Tuesday	12:00- 16:00	Manfred Elsig	IR Theories
2	24. Sep	Thursday	10:15- 12:00	Manfred Elsig	IPE Theories
3	1. Oct	Thursday	10:15- 12:00	Manfred Elsig	Evolution of the Trading System
4	8. Oct	Thursday	10:15- 12:00	Manfred Elsig	Domestic Factors of Economic Policy Making
5	15. Oct	Thursday	10:15-12:00	Manfred Elsig	The Politics of IO
6	22. Oct	Thursday	10:15-12:00	Manfred Elsig	Research on Dispute Settlement and Trade Agreements
7	29. Oct	Thursday	10:15- 12:00	Manfred Elsig	Preferential Trade Agreements
8	5. Nov	Thursday	10:15- 12:00	Manfred Elsig	Survey Experiments and Trade
9	12. Nov	Thursday	10:15- 12:00	Manfred Elsig	US Trade Policy
10	19. Nov	Thursday	10:15- 12:00	Guest Lecturer	TBD
11	26. Nov	Thursday	10:15- 12:00	Guest Lecturer	TBD

September 15, 2026**Manfred Elsig****IR Theories****Topics**

- Introduction to Global Political Economy
- Realism, Liberalism and Social Constructivism

Compulsory Reading Material

- Dunne, T. & Schmidt, B. C., "Realism" in Baylis, J. et al. (eds.) *The Globalization of World Politics* (6th edn. OUP 2014) pp. 99-112 (Chapter 6).
- Dunne, T., "Liberalism" in Baylis, J. et al. (eds.) *The Globalization of World Politics* (6th edn. OUP 2014) pp. 113-125 (Chapter 7).
- Barnett, M., "Social Constructivism" in Baylis, J. et al. (eds.) *The Globalization of World Politics* (6th edn. OUP 2014) pp. 155-168 (Chapter 1)

September 24, 2026**Manfred Elsig****IPE Theories****Compulsory Reading Material**

- Ravenhill, J., "The Study of Global Political Economy", in: Ravenhill, J. (ed.) *Global Political Economy* (3rd edn. OUP 2011) pp.1-28.
- O'Brien, R. & Williams, M., "Theoretical Perspectives", in: O'Brien, R. & Williams, M. (eds.), *Global Political Economy* (Palgrave/Macmillan 2013) pp.5-40.
- Farrell, H. & Newman, A. "Weaponized Interdependence: How Global Economic Networks Shape State Coercion." *International Security*, 2019, 44(1):42-79.
- Helleiner, E. "Economic Liberalism from Non-European Perspectives" in: Helleiner, E. *The Contested World Economy*, CUP, 2023, pp. 37-53.

Optional Reading Material

- Gilpin, R., "Three Ideologies of Political Economy", in: Gilpin, R. (ed.) *The Political Economy of International Relations* (Princeton University Press 1987) pp. 25-64.
- Helleiner, E. *The Contested World Economy: The Deep and Global Roots of International Political Economy*, CUP, 2023.

October 1, 2026**Manfred Elsig****Evolution of Trading System****Compulsory Reading Material**

- Silke Trommer., "The Evolution of the Global Trade Regime", in: Ravenhill, J. (ed.) Global Political Economy (6th edn OUP 2020)
- Elsig, M. & Eckhardt, J., "The Creation of the Multilateral Trade Court: Design and Experiential Learning", World Trade Review, 2015, 14(S1):S13-32

Optional Reading Material

- Zeiler, T., "The Expanding Mandate of the GATT, the first seven rounds", in: Narlikar, A., et al. (eds.) The Oxford Handbook on the World Trade Organization (OUP 2012) pp. 102-121.
- Preeg, E., "The Uruguay Round Negotiations and the Creation of the WTO", in: Narlikar, A., et al. (eds.) The Oxford Handbook on the World Trade Organization (OUP 2012) pp. 122-140.

October 8, 2026**Manfred Elsig****Domestic Factors of Economic Policy Making****Compulsory Reading Material**

- Hiscox, M., "The Domestic Sources of Foreign Economic Policies", in: Ravenhill, J. (ed.) Global Political Economy (6th edn OUP 2020)

Optional Reading Material

- Allee, T., "The Role of the United States: A Multilevel Explanation for Decreased Support over Trade", in: Narlikar, A., et al. (eds) The Oxford Handbook on the WTO (OUP 2012) pp. 235-253.
- Elsig, M., "The EU's Choice of Regulatory Venues for Trade Negotiations: A Tale of Agency Power?", Journal of Common Market Studies, 2007, 45(4): 927-48
- Putnam, R., "Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: the Logic of Two-Level Games", International Organization, 1988, Vol. 42 (3).

October 15, 2026**Manfred Elsig****International Economic Organizations: The Politics of IO**

Compulsory Reading Material

- Abbott, K. , Keohane, R., Moravcsik, A., Slaughter, A. M., and Snidal, D. 'The Concept of Legalization', *International Organization*, 2000, 54(3):401–419.
- Elsig, M. 'Principal-Agent Theory and the World Trade Organization: Complex Agency and 'Missing Delegation'', *European Journal of International Relations*, 2011, 17(3):495-517.

Optional Reading Material

- Koromenos, B., Lipson, C. and Snidal, D. 'The Rational Design of International Institutions', *International Organization*, 2001, 55(4):761-799.

October 22, 2026

Manfred Elsig

Research on Dispute Settlement and Trade Agreements**Compulsory Reading Material**

- Elsig, M. and Pollack, M. "Agents, Trustees, and International Courts: Nomination and Appointment of Judicial Candidates in the WTO Appellate Body", *European Journal of International Relations*, 2014, 20(2): 391-415.
- Elsig, M. and Stucky, P. "Low-Income Developing Countries and WTO Litigation: Why Wake Up the Sleeping Dog?", *Review of International Political Economy*, 2012, 19(2):292-316.

Optional Reading Material

- Shaffer, G., Elsig, M. and Puig, S. "The Law and Politics of WTO Dispute Settlement", in: Sandholtz, W. and Whytock, C. (eds.), *Research Handbook on the Politics of International Law*, Edgar Elgar Publishing, 2017.
- Allee, T. and Elsig M. "Why Do Some International Institutions Contain Strong Dispute Settlement Provisions? Evidence from Preferential Trade Agreements", *Review of International Organizations*, 2016, 11(1):89-120.

October 29, 2026

Manfred Elsig

Preferential Trade Agreements**Compulsory Reading Material**

- Dür, A., Baccini, L. & Elsig, M., "The Design of International Trade Agreements: Introducing a New Database", *The Review of International Organizations*, Vol. 9(3), 2014, p. 353.

- Allee, T., Elsig, M. and Lugg, A., "The Ties between the World Trade Organization and Preferential Trade Agreements: A Textual Analysis", *Journal of International Economic Law*, Vol. 20(2), 2017, pp. 333-363.
- Allee, T. and Elsig, M. "Are the Contents of International Treaties Copied and Pasted? Evidence from Preferential Trade Agreements", *International Studies Quarterly*, 2019, 63(3):603-13.
- Trade agreements and the design of democracy-related provisions (TRADEM): "The creation of a new data," *Review of International Organizations*, forthcoming – 2026

Optional Reading Material

- Ravenhill, J., "Regional Trade Agreements", in: Ravenhill, J. (ed.) *Global Political Economy* (3rd edn OUP 2011), pp. 173-212.
- Allee, T., Elsig, M. and Lugg, A., "Is the European Union Trade Deal with Canada New or Recycled? A Text-as-data Approach", *Global Policy*, First published: 17 March 2017, DOI: 10.1111/1758-5899.12420.
- Lugg, A. and Polanco, R., "Globalization in Latin America: The Law, Politics and Economics of Preferential Trade Agreements". Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2025.
- Claussen, K. and Polanco, R., "The Concept Design of a 21st Century Preferential Trade Agreement". Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024.

November 5, 2026

Manfred Elsig

Survey Experiments and Trade

Compulsory Reading Material

- Elsig, M. and Spilker, G. Implementing climate commitments and the support for policy instruments: a micro-level analysis of Switzerland, *ISQ*.
- Spilker, G., Nguyen, Q. and T. Bernauer Trading Arguments: Opinion Updating in the Context of International Trade Agreements, *International Studies Quarterly*, 2020, sqaa061, <https://doi.org/10.1093/isq/sqaa061>

November 12, 2026

Manfred Elsig

US Trade Policy

Compulsory Reading Material

- Special Issue WTR: Alschner W. et al. 2025. Tariff Turbulences: The New US Trade Policy and its Impact on the Global Trading System.

November 19, 2026

**Guest Lecturer –
Topic to be Defined**

November 26, 2026

**Guest Lecturer –
Topic to be Defined**