

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
Department of Economics

Econ 345 – INTERNATIONAL FINANCE  
Syllabus – Fall 2023

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Office Hours: Mon. 12:30 – 1:30  
Thu. 11:00 – 12:00  
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## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND PREREQUISITES

This course surveys a variety of topics in international finance and open-economy macroeconomics, including: the foreign exchange market, exchange rate determination, Purchasing Power Parity, the Mundell-Fleming model of output and exchange rate determination under fixed and flexible exchange rates, speculative attacks and the causes and consequences of international financial crises. The course will also discuss various recent policy debates. We will discuss the role of global imbalances in the recent financial crisis, and several recent proposals to reform the international financial system.

The only prerequisites for the course are a previous course in microeconomics and a previous course in macroeconomics. Although there are no mathematical prerequisites, much of the material is analytical in nature, and students should feel comfortable manipulating graphs and simple algebraic equations.

## COURSE STRUCTURE

Roughly speaking, the course is divided into two main parts. The first half focuses on theory and the second half focuses on policy. The hope is that the theory you learn in the first half will help provide better answers to the policy questions discussed in the second half.

## COURSE EVALUATION

	<u>Weight in Grade</u>
Problem Sets	– 20%
Midterm exam ( <b>Monday, Oct. 30</b> )	– 40%
Final exam ( <b>TBA</b> )	– 40%

The best way to learn international finance is to do it. Therefore, an important part of this course are the section meetings and problem sets. There are two TAs for the course: Shayan Fasahat ([sfa115@sfu.ca](mailto:sfa115@sfu.ca)) and William Helyar ([wph3@sfu.ca](mailto:wph3@sfu.ca)). The problem sets are available as PDF files on the class webpage.

## COURSE MATERIALS

There is one required book for this course: *International Economics: Theory and Policy*, by Paul Krugman, Maurice Obstfeld and Marc Melitz (KOM) published by Addison-Wesley. Recently, this book has been made available in two parts - the first part covers international trade theory, and the second part covers international finance. Since we won't be covering trade theory, a cheaper alternative is to just purchase the second half, which has been made available through custom courseware, and can be purchased online.

There are also a few journal articles and supplementary notes that will be available for download on the course webpage.

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

### I. BACKGROUND

- Sept. 11 – **Course Overview/National Income Accounting & the Balance of Payments**  
KOM, Preface and Chpt. 13  
“China, New Financial Superpower” (class webpage)  
Mankiw, “The Trilemma of International Finance” (class webpage)  
“Two Out of Three Ain’t Bad” (class webpage)

### II. EXCHANGE RATES

- Sept. 18 – **The Foreign Exchange Market**  
KOM, Chpt. 14
- Sept. 25 – **Money, Interest Rates, and Exchange Rates**  
KOM, Chpt. 15
- Oct. 2 – **Truth & Reconciliation Day (No Class)**
- Oct. 10 – **Purchasing Power Parity**  
KOM, Chpt. 16  
“Burger-Thy-Neighbour Policies” (class webpage)  
Kasa, “Understanding Trends in Foreign Exchange Rates” (class webpage)

### III. OPEN ECONOMY MACROECONOMICS: THE MUNDELL-FLEMING MODEL

- Oct. 16 – **Monetary and Fiscal Policy with Flexible Exchange Rates**  
KOM, Chpt. 17 (pgs. 145-173 in custom courseware version)  
Problem Set 1 due in class
- Oct. 23 – **Macroeconomic Policies and the Current Account**  
KOM, Chpt. 17 (pgs. 173-183 in custom courseware version)
- Oct. 30 – **Midterm Exam (Closed Book)**
- Nov. 6 – **Monetary and Fiscal Policy with Fixed Exchange Rates**  
KOM, Chpt. 18
- Nov. 13 – **Remembrance Day (No Class)**

#### **IV. SPECULATIVE ATTACKS AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS CRISES**

- Nov. 20 – **First- vs. Second-Generation Currency Crisis Theories**  
KOM, Chpt. 18 (pgs. 190-193, 216-218)  
Problem Set 2 due in class

#### **V. INTERNATIONAL MACROECONOMIC POLICY**

- Nov. 27 – **Evolution of the International Financial System**  
KOM, Chpt. 19  
Mundell, “A Reconsideration of the Twentieth Century” (class webpage)
- Dec. 4 – **Optimum Currency Areas and the European Debt Crisis**  
KOM, Chpt. 20  
Mundell, “A Theory of Optimum Currency Areas” (class webpage)  
Krugman (2012), “Crash of the Bumblebee” (class webpage)  
Rogoff (2011), “The Global Fallout of a Eurozone Collapse” (class webpage)  
Problem Set 3 due in class
- Dec. 8-19 – **FINAL EXAM (exact date will be determined later)**