COURSE OBJECTIVES AND PREREQUISITES

This course surveys a variety of topics in international finance and open-economy macroeconomics. Among the topics covered are: (1) Theories of current account dynamics and international capital flows, (2) Theories of exchange rate determination, (3) Open-economy business cycle models, and (4) Theories of speculative attacks and exchange rate crises. Although the focus will be on theory, students are expected to understand modern econometric methods, and these methods will be used to evaluate the empirical validity of the theories we discuss. The goal of the course is to then use these theories to shed light on recent policy debates, e.g., optimal exchange rate policy and the pros and cons of international financial integration.

Although the general approach will be to survey a variety of topics, rather than focus on single one in depth, there are nonetheless several important omissions from the course. First, the course will not spend much time on issues that are of special relevance to developing economies, e.g., sovereign debt, capital market imperfections, and political economy considerations. Second, we will not discuss the recent literature on New Keynesian open-economy models, inspired by the Obstfeld-Rogoff (1995) ‘redux model’. Finally, the course will not do justice to the huge recent literature on international financial crises.

COURSE STRUCTURE

Most recent research in international finance and open-economy macroeconomics is motivated by the desire to resolve a variety of so-called ‘puzzles’, e.g., the home-bias puzzle, the exchange rate disconnect puzzle, the Backus-Smith puzzle, the forward discount puzzle, etc. As a result, the course is structured so as to first present the theories that underlie these puzzles, and to then discuss the empirical work that has been done on them. The goal is to bring students as close as possible to the current research frontiers in international finance.

COURSE EVALUATION

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<tr>
<th>Weight in Grade</th>
<th>Problem Sets</th>
<th>Term Paper</th>
<th>Midterm exam (Monday, February 26)</th>
<th>Final exam (date to be arranged)</th>
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The paper should be 10-15 pages. It can be a literature review, a replication of previous results, or even the start of a thesis! The problem sets will be available as PDF files on the class webpage (at www.sfu.ca/kkaza/). There will be 3 problem sets. Each will consist of a couple of analytical problems and one empirical question, which will involve some simple econometric work. The necessary data sets will be posted on the class webpage.
COURSE MATERIALS

There is one required book for this course: Foundations of International Macroeconomics, by Maurice Obstfeld and Kenneth Rogoff (1st Edition, 1996) published by MIT Press. There are also a number of journal articles, working papers, and supplementary notes that are available for download on the course webpage. I also recommend that students acquire a copy of Nelson Mark’s textbook, entitled International Macroeconomics and Finance (Blackwell Publishers, 2001). This book is especially useful for empirical applications. The Obstfeld-Rogoff and Mark texts are both on reserve at the library.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

Readings marked with a (*) are downloadable from the course webpage.

I. INTERNATIONAL BORROWING AND LENDING (5 lectures)

Jan. 3  –  Course Overview/A Simple 2-Period Model  
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 1 (pgs. 1-14)

Jan. 8  –  Extensions of the 2-Period Model  
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 1 (pgs. 14-42)

Jan. 10 –  Deterministic Infinite-Horizon Models  
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 2 (pgs. 59-78)

Jan. 15 –  Stochastic Infinite-Horizon Models  
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 2 (pgs. 79-95)

Jan. 17 –  Empirical Evidence  
* Caballero et. al. (2008), “An Equilibrium Model of Global Imbalances . . . ”  

II. REAL EXCHANGE RATES AND THE TERMS OF TRADE (2 lectures)

Jan. 22 –  Non-Traded Goods and the Balassa-Samuelson Effect  
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 4 (pgs. 199-216)  
Mark, Chpt. 7  
* Canzoneri et. al., (1999), “Relative Labor Productivity and the Real Exchange Rate . . . ”

Jan. 24 –  The Terms of Trade  
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 4 (pgs. 235-248)  
Problem Set 1 due
III. EXCHANGE RATE DYNAMICS (5 lectures)

Jan. 29 – The Partial Equilibrium Monetary Model
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 8 (pgs. 513-529)

JAN. 31 – The Monetary Model (continued)
Mark, Chpt. 3

Feb. 5 – Empirical Evidence on the Monetary Model
* Engel & West (2004), “Accounting for Exchange Rate Variability in Present-Value Models when the Discount Factor is Near 1”
* Engel et. al. (2007), “Exchange Rate Models Are Not as Bad as You Think”
* Djedtem & Kasa (2013), “Robustness and Exchange Rate Volatility”

Feb. 7 – Complete Markets General Equilibrium Models
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 8 (pgs. 530-554)
Mark, Chpt. 4

Feb. 12-14 – Spring Break (No Class)

Feb. 19 – Risk Premia in the Foreign Exchange Market
Mark, Chpt. 6
* Burnside et. al. (2007), “Understanding the Forward Premium Puzzle”

IV. INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL MARKETS AND RISK-SHARING (3 lectures)

Feb. 21 – The Complete Markets Benchmark
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 5 (pgs. 269-306)
Problem Set 2 due

Feb. 26 – Midterm Exam (Closed Book)

FEB. 28 – Risk-Sharing with Frictions
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 5 (pgs. 325-329), Chpt. 6 (pgs. 349-379)
* Obstfeld & Rogoff (2000), ”Six Puzzles Major Puzzles in International Macroeconomics”

March 5 – Quantifying the Gains from International Risk-Sharing
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 5 (pgs. 329-332)
* Lewis (1999), “Trying to Explain Home Bias in Equities and Consumption”
V. OPEN-ECONOMY DSGE MODELS (4 lectures)

March 7 – The Benchmark Complete Markets Model
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 7 (pgs. 496-507)
Mark, Chpt. 5

March 12 – Quantitative Implications

March 14 – Exogenous Incomplete Markets

March 19 – Endogenous Incomplete Markets
* Song, Storesletten, & Zilibotti (2011), “Growing Like China”

VI. SPECULATIVE ATTACKS AND EXCHANGE RATE CRISIS (3 or 4 lectures)

March 21 – First-Generation Models
Obstfeld & Rogoff, Chpt. 8 (pgs. 558-566)
Mark, Chpt. 11 (pgs. 256-262)

March 26 – Second-Generation Models
Mark, Chpt. 11 (pgs. 262-269)

March 28 – Imperfect Common Knowledge and Global Games

April 4,9 – Presentations

April 12-20 – FINAL EXAM (exact date not yet decided)
Term Paper due