PLIR 4410: Political Economy of Foreign Direct Investment
Spring 2016
(version 2/19/2016)

Mondays, 1-3:30 pm
Location: Nau 242

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Course Description
Foreign direct investment (FDI) is the single largest form of international capital flow. Countries actively court FDI in hopes of job creation, access to cutting-edge technologies, and, ultimately, sustained economic growth. At the same time, multinational corporations, the primary agent of FDI, are frequently implicated in a “race to the bottom,” accused of eroding environmental, health, and safety standards and exploiting labor to the determinant of workers in both developed and developing countries. This course reconciles competing views through a rigorous examination of the economics and politics of FDI. The course strongly emphasizes analytical research and writing skills.

Requirements

Papers
Students must submit four papers, each five pages in length (no more, no less), double-spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins, single-sided, and stapled. For each paper students must do the following:
1. To receive full credit, a hard copy of the paper must be submitted within the first five minutes of the class in which the paper topic’s will be discussed.
2. Submit along with the paper a completed writing worksheet (sheet posted to Collab)
3. Hard copy of paper and writing sheet should be stapled together (paper clips also acceptable)
4. Upload the paper to the student’s Collab dropbox
5. Post an abstract of paper to the Collab discussion forum for that week’s topic (see below for further details).

Papers receive letter grades. Students may choose the weeks for which they write papers within the following parameters:
- First paper due February 8
- Rewrite of first paper due February 29
- Second paper due March 14 or March 21
- Third paper due March 21, March 28, April 4
- Fourth paper due April 18, April 25, or May 2
Papers address the topic on which the paper was submitted. Students will not have had a class discussion on the topic prior to writing their paper.

Students should approach the assignment as someone preparing a legal brief. See the course writing guide for a more extensive discussion on the principles of analytical writing. A central goal of this course is to teach students rigorous analytical skills. Papers should address the readings for the week in which they are submitted. Papers should stake out a position about the readings and issues, building on a specific aspect of the readings. For example, students may dispute a claim based on its theoretical foundations or the evidence used to support it. Alternately, students can build on the readings by stating and testing an observable implication of findings in the assigned readings. “A” papers will address the following issues in a careful and precise manner:

1. What seems most likely to be true based on the evidence you can marshal?
2. What motivate(d)(s) various actors (and authors) to stake out the policies (analyses) they do?
3. What are the distributional implications of policies (e.g. who are the winners and losers of the possible policy outcomes?)
4. What motivates actors and structure their interests? How do they make common cause with other people sharing the same interests? What institutions and organizations they use to attain those interests?

data: Authors that support their claims data make the most convincing arguments. Note that this does not necessarily mean formal statistical analysis – summaries of raw data can also serve this purpose. Students will be penalized for making assertions unsupported by evidence.

resources: You may bring any external sources you wish to bear on these papers, consistent with the honor code and common sense. Take cues from the course readings; use well-documented, credible sources (as opposed to Wikipedia or other undocumented and unreliable sources).

Students may choose to “apply” the insights of the readings to a case or an issue to which it is related. For example, a week in which readings address FDI’s effects on democratization a student may write a paper on these issues as they manifest in a particular country. The paper would examine data for this particular country and assess how that country’s experience compares to the general claims made in the readings.

Paper Late Policy: Late papers (e.g. submitted after the first 5 minutes of class) will be marked down 1/3 a grade for each day or portion of day it is late. For example, a paper that merits an A will be marked down to an A- if it is submitted within 24 hours of the class at which it was due. If that same paper were submitted 24-48 hours late, it would be marked down to a B+. Students submitting late papers may have to wait two weeks to receive their graded paper. Students submitting late papers should upload a copy to their Collab dropbox and leave a paper copy under Professor Pandya’s door. Please do not give the paper to Politics Department staff.
Class Participation

Class participation is a central element of the course and consists of three parts:

1. Posting critical reflection/discussion questions or paper abstract to the Collab site in advance of class

Students are required to post critical reflection and discussion questions about a given week’s readings 12 hours prior to the beginning of class. Questions must critically engage one or more assigned reading, identifying points of discussion for the class. In class, students may be called upon to pose their posted questions in order to initiate discussion. For those weeks that a student as written a paper they may post an abstract of their paper in lieu of reflections and questions. The abstract should briefly summarizing the paper’s thesis, evidence, and how it builds upon that week’s assigned readings. Posts should be a minimum of 1-2 paragraphs (approximately 300 words).

Students can also choose to post course-related content to the course web site. These posts are optional but will count towards students’ participation grade. Student may post relevant current events to the designated Collab forum. Posts should describe the event and reflect on its implications for the course. These posts are optional but will contribute to students’ course participation grade. Students may also contribute to the terminology wiki. Additional web-related exercises may be available during the course of the semester.

2. Writing Assignments

Students will complete three writing assignments designed to develop and reinforce specific research and writing skills. These assignments should take no more than 1-2 hours. The first assignment will be distributed to students one week in advance. The second and third assignments will be customized microrevisions based on students’ second and third papers. Microrevisions help hone specific analytical and writing skills. Students must submit the second and third assignments at the beginning of class one week after having received their graded paper.

Students should submit these assignments by uploading to the Collab dropbox before the class session at which it is due. Writing assignments will be graded on a credit/no credit basis.

3. Active engagement in class

Throughout the semester there will be in-class exercises that require students to collaborate and produce some collective output. The instructor will assess each student’s participation/contribution to their group and factor this into class participation grades. See separate handout on class participation for more specific guidelines.

Students who do not provide quality discussion questions prior to class or participate in class discussions will receive lower class participation grades.
Attendance
Students are allowed one unexcused absence during the semester – no questions asked. Students will receive a zero class participation grade for any subsequent unexcused absences. Unexcused absences are those without written documentation of medical illness or other exceptional circumstances. Students who anticipate missing class for official university purposes (e.g. scheduled athletic events) should advise the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

Composition of Final Grade:
Four papers @ 19% each = 76%
Class Participation and Writing Assignments = 20%
Completion of Final Course Evaluations = 4%

Materials

All readings are available electronically on the course Collab site or at the web link indicated on the syllabus.

Student may find useful this optional book:
   The book will be on reserve in Clemons Library within the first two weeks of the semester.

In-Class Computer Use

Throughout the semester students will have in-class exercises in which the use of laptop computers is necessary and encouraged. Outside of these designated exercises students are asked not to use a computer/tablet etc. Texting and other use of phones during class is strictly prohibited. In almost all class sessions students will have a ten minute break during which phone use is permitted.

Honor Code

All students are subject to the University of Virginia’s Honor Code. If a student has questions about any aspect of this code, he or she should consult the instructor for guidance. Students should take particular care to adhere to standard practices for the citation of published work. For further details see: [http://www.virginia.edu/honor/wnew/links.html](http://www.virginia.edu/honor/wnew/links.html)

Statement on Violence Prevention

The University of Virginia is dedicated to providing a safe and equitable learning environment for all students. To that end, it is vital that you know two values that I and the University hold as critically important:

1. Power-based personal violence will not be tolerated.
2. Everyone has a responsibility to do their part to maintain a safe community on Grounds.
If you or someone you know has been affected by power-based personal violence, more information can be found on the UVA Sexual Violence website that describes reporting options and resources available - www.virginia.edu/sexualviolence.

As your professor and as a person, know that I care about you and your well-being and stand ready to provide support and resources as I can. As a faculty member, I am a responsible employee, which means that I am required by University policy and federal law to report what you tell me to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator's job is to ensure that the reporting student receives the resources and support that they need, while also reviewing the information presented to determine whether further action is necessary to ensure survivor safety and the safety of the University community. If you would rather keep this information confidential, there are Confidential Employees you can talk to on Grounds (See http://www.virginia.edu/justreportit/confidential_resources.pdf). The worst possible situation would be for you or your friend to remain silent when there are so many here willing and able to help.
**Schedule**

January 25: Course Introduction and Overview of FDI Trends  
No forum posts  
Complete readings prior to first class meeting  


Select one of these two papers to read:  


February 1: Economic Effects of FDI Flows in Sending and Receiving Countries  
* writing assignment #1 due  


**Recommended**  
National Public Radio. 2013. Planet Money T-Shirt Project:  
http://www.npr.org/series/248799434/planet-moneys-t-shirt-project  

February 8: Politics of FDI Regulation in Receiving Countries  
* first paper due  


February 15: [SNOW DAY – UNIVERSITY CLOSED]

February 22: International Cooperation and the Anti-Globalization Movement

Chapter 2: The MAI and the Politics of Failure: Who Killed the Dog?


United Nations Global Compact

February 29: In Class Writing Workshop
* revision of first paper due

Bring paper copy of revised first paper without identifying information

[March 7: Spring Break, No Class]

March 14: Political Risk and Volumes of FDI Inflows


March 21: FDI, Democratization, Human & Labor Rights
* second paper due; first date to submit third paper


March 28: FDI, Gender, and Race


**Recommended**

April 4: National Security Implications of FDI/Sovereign Wealth Funds

* last day to submit third paper


April 11: In-Class Case Study
No forum posts
[readings TBA]

April 18: FDI and “Land Grabs”


April 25: Race to the Bottom?: The Politics of Investment Promotion


May 2: Pollution vs. Technology: FDI and the Environment
*last day to submit fourth paper*


May 2: [students’ choice]
**students will suggest and vote on topics mid-semester**

Scheduled students’ choice class cancelled due to Feb 15 snow day. Based on student interest additional session can be scheduled.