

ECON 0420 – Globalization and U.S. Inequality – Spring 2020
Professor Wolcott

Seminar: 11:00-12:15am, T/R, Wright Seminar Room
Website: Course Hub or [go/wolcott420/](https://go.wolcott420/)
Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 1:30-3:00pm, 502B Warner
Email: wolcott@middlebury.edu (response within 24 weekday hours)

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

Does globalization increase inequality in the United States? This course examines how trade, automation, immigration, and financial integration relate to the distribution of income, wealth, and employment in the U.S. over the last century. We will analyze peer-reviewed articles, discussing evidence for and against globalization increasing inequality and debate policy prescriptions. You will master communicating complex economic and policy ideas through writing, discussion, data, and formal debates.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

You are expected to read all papers (unless otherwise noted), articles, books, and listen to all podcasts prior to class. *Before Tuesday classes*, prepare and upload a two-slide presentation on one of the papers. The first slide should cover what you found convincing about the paper, the second slide what you found unconvincing. You will then field questions from the class and help facilitate discussion. I will randomly call on students to present their slides. *Before Thursday classes*, prepare and upload a typed response describing what you took away from the assigned podcasts/articles. This may include a summary, criticism, or questions you have, but it must be concise and no more than 300 words. Submit these responses on Canvas by 9am Thursday. Finally, I will evaluate your involvement during in-class discussions on all assignments.

DEBATES:

You will partake in two Oxford style Debates. I will assign topics and groups at least 8 days in advance. With your group, you will find 3-4 studies to support your position. You will write opening and closing statements. At least one class period before the debate you will reveal your sources to the class, which the class will read.

FINAL PROJECT

Suppose you are a journalist at the New York Times for [TheUpshot](#) tasked with writing an article on globalization and/or inequality. You have the option of writing about a particular dimension of globalization (e.g. trade, automation, immigration, financial integration) and relating it to a particular dimension of inequality (e.g. opportunity, income, wealth, employment). You may also take a broader approach and write about many dimensions or compare and contrast different drivers and outcomes of inequality. Articles should include an original eye-catching data visualization and cite at least three academic papers. Examples are available on Canvas. At the end of the semester, you will give a 10-minute presentation in class about your article.

GRADES:

Tuesday Paper Presentations (10%), Thursday Responses (10%), Debates (20%), Participation (30%), Final Project (30%).

READINGS:

Below is a list of the readings and podcasts for the course. You are expected to read and listen to all (unless otherwise noted) listed material *before* class. This list is subject to change, so please check Canvas. You are also responsible for reading *Economical Writing* by Deirdre McCoskey (see next page).

T Feb 11	Introduction.
R Feb 13	Income and wealth inequality: Piketty and Saez (2014)
T Feb 18	Employment inequality: choose one: Burkhauser, Daly and Ziebarth (2016); Wolcott (2019)
R Feb 20	Employment inequality: The Conversation; Freakonomics with Daly; EconTalk with Hurst
T Feb 25	Mobility, choose one: Chetty et al. (2014); Chetty et al. (2017)
R Feb 27	Mobility: Raj Chetty Lecture, TheUpshot: Colleges
T Mar 3	Debate.
R Mar 5	Debate.
T Mar 10	Trade, choose one: Autor, Dorn, and Hanson (2013); Pierce and Schott (2016)
R Mar 12	Trade: EconTalk with Autor, NY Times: Global Trade's Impacts
T Mar 17	Trade, Choose one: Pierce, Schott and Tao (2017); Pierce and Schott (2018)
R Mar 19	Cancelled
T Mar 31	Robots, choose one: Autor Dorn Hanson (2015); Borjas and Freeman (2019)
R Apr 2	Robots: NY Times: Robots; Planet Money Interactive; Planet Money Podcast
T Apr 7	Immigration, choose one: Peri and Sparber (2009); Burchardi et. al (2019)
R Apr 9	Immigration: Planet Money: When the Boats Arrive; The Atlantic: Immigration Data Debate
T Apr 14	Monopsony Power, choose one: Hershbein, Macaluso and Yeh (2020); Azar et al. (2017)
R Apr 16	Monopsony Power: Krueger Speech
T Apr 21	Debate.
R Apr 23	Debate.
T Apr 28	Final project presentations.
R Apr 30	Final project presentations.
T May 5	International Financial Flows: Furceri and Loungani (2015)
R May 7	Wrap up and CRF

OTHER DATES

Date	Final Project	Debate Preparation
R Feb 20	Read <i>Economical Writing</i>	Topic and groups assigned
R Feb 27	Topic due	Sources due*
T Mar 3 & R Mar 5	Annotated bibliography due*	Debates
R Mar 12	Outline due	N/A
R Mar 19	Data sources due	N/A
R Apr 2	Graphic due	N/A
R Apr 9	First draft due*	Topic and groups assigned
R Apr 16	N/A	Sources due*
T Apr 21 & R Apr 23	N/A	Debates
T Apr 28 & R Apr 30	In-class presentations	N/A
Fri, May 15	Final Project due 5pm	N/A

*Due later in the day

OTHER DETAILS:

1. Please take care of yourself. College is a demanding (and rewarding) experience. If you or one of your friends, peers, classmates is facing mental health problems, please consider seeking help. Resources include your Common's Dean, Resident Life Staff, Middlebury College Counseling center, and ULifeLine website.
2. You must sign the Honor Code on all written assignments. Directly copying someone else's work, ideas, or answers is an Honor Code violation with serious consequences.
3. Students who have Letters of Accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact me as early in the semester as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For those without Letters of Accommodation, assistance is available to eligible students through Student Accessibility Services. Please contact Jodi Litchfield, the ADA coordinator: litchfie@middlebury.edu. All discussions will remain confidential.
4. At Middlebury, we strive to make our campus a respectful, engaged community that embraces difference with all the complexity and individuality each person brings. Each student in this course is expected to contribute to an inclusive and respectful class environment. Students of all backgrounds including gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and religion are to be treated fairly and with honesty, integrity, and respect. Civil discourse without degrading, abusing, harassing, or silencing others is required of all students in this class.