

**Georgetown University**  
**McDonough School of Business**

**ANALYZING MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS**

April 22 & 24, 2015

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**Session Dates and Times:** (1) Wednesday, April 22: 9:00-10:30 am; (2) Wednesday, April 22: 10:45 am – 12:15 pm; (3) Friday, April 24: 1:30-3:00 pm; (4) Friday, April 24: 3:15- 4:45 pm

**Course Objectives:**

Students will learn about several multilateral institutions – including, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the United Nations, the G20, and regional institutions, including the BRICS, the Asian Development Bank, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and the European Union. We will conclude the course with a fun discussion of the Olympic Games.

The course will take a “political economy” perspective. From economics, we will borrow the assumption that individuals seek to maximize income, while from political science, we will borrow the assumption that governments seek to maximize the likelihood of surviving in power. With those assumptions in mind, we will consider how governments interact on the international stage.

We will begin with an international perspective by considering dynamics in global power and how these dynamics are reflected in the changing balance of power across international institutions. Of central importance will be the rise of China and the role of the European Union. We will quickly learn that much of the motivation for international relations comes from domestic politics. So, in the second part of the class, we will shift focus, trying to understand outcomes at the international level from the perspective of domestic institutions.

*Discussion Questions:*

1. Who should lead the world?
2. What is the best way to build global cooperation that involves a broad number of countries with deep commitments to each other?
3. Considering its rapid rise in economic power, what will be the role of China in multilateral institutions?
4. What can we learn from the examples of the United Nations and the European Union?

**Outline for class sessions:**

Session 1: Global Cooperation and Change: Rise of the G20

Session 2: The Political Economy of the UN Security Council: Money and Influence

Session 3: How do we build global cooperation? A tale of two human rights treaties

Session 4: Which country is the best? Who wins the Olympics?

**Primary take-away points:**

1. A basic understanding of the interests and constraints of the major players in international institutions (especially the **IMF**, the **UN Security Council**, and the **G20**)
2. A framework for understanding global and regional cooperation. The course will advocate for greater efforts at the **regional level**.
3. The importance of **domestic politics** in international relations

**Required Reading:**

1. Lipsy, Phillip Y. 2003. Japan's Asian Monetary Fund Proposal. *Stanford Journal of East Asian Affairs* 3 (1):93-104.  
<http://www.stanford.edu/group/sjeaa/journal3/japan3.pdf>
2. Desai, Raj M. and James Raymond Vreeland. 2014. What the new bank of BRICS is all about. *The Monkey Cage* The Washington Post. 17 July.  
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2014/07/17/what-the-new-bank-of-brics-is-all-about>
3. Desai, Raj M. and James Raymond Vreeland. 2010. Are Davos Man's Days Numbered? *Up Front Blog*, The Brookings Institution, 26 January.  
[http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/0126\\_davos\\_desai.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2010/0126_davos_desai.aspx)