

**University of International Business and Economics**

**China Institute for WTO Studies**

**Master of WTO Law and Economics (MWLE)**

Course syllabus

**WTO negotiations: recent developments and future prospects**

Spring 2023

**General information**

Professor: Tatiana Prazeres, PhD

Classes will either be held live via Zoom or prerecorded, as per the tentative schedule below (schedule subject to changes):

- 6 March, 6:30pm-8pm Beijing time - live class
- 13 March - recorded
- 20 March - 6:30pm-8pm Beijing time - live class
- 27 March - recorded
- 3 April - 6:30pm-8pm Beijing time - live class
- 10 April - recorded
- 17 April - 6:30pm-8pm Beijing time - live class
- 24 April - 6:30pm-8pm Beijing time - live class
- 1 May - recorded
- 8 May - 6:30pm-8pm Beijing time - live class
- 15 May - 6:30pm-8pm Beijing time - live class
- 22 May - 6:30pm-8pm Beijing time - live class

Teaching method comprises lectures by the professor, students' short presentations, case studies and structured class discussions. External experts may be invited to participate in prerecorded classes.

**Evaluation**

Classroom participation: 20%. Written essay: 50%. Final exam: 30%.

### a) Classroom participation

**Attendance is mandatory.** Students are highly encouraged to actively participate in class. **Except for a valid reason, students are expected to keep their cameras open during class.** All students will be invited to take and ask questions, make comments, including on the content of prerecorded classes and recommended reading materials.

### b) Written essays

All students are expected individually to write an essay containing between 1,200 and 1,500 words about **one** of the options below, as per their own preferences. **The deadline to submit essays (to [tlprazeres@yahoo.com](mailto:tlprazeres@yahoo.com)) is 7 May 2023.** In writing their essays, students are expected to present the issue in a clear and concise manner, and articulate their views on the specific questions posed under each topic.

**Option 1** - Trade and Climate Change. How can trade policy help advance climate action? What are the risks for trade? How to reconcile the trade and climate agendas?

**Option 2** - Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) and the WTO. What value do they add to the existing WTO rules, why do they matter, what are the risks and opportunities that PTAs pose to the WTO? (Students may choose to focus on RCEP, CPTPP or a different PTA. They may wish to select one issue to focus on — for example, digital trade, gender or any other topic covered by the PTA in question).

**Option 3** — Any other topic of interest, related to the program (subject to professor's approval)

Students will be asked to comment on their essays in class (tentatively on 8 or 15 May)

### c) Final exam

All students are expected to take an open-book final exam, which, most likely, will consist of ten multiple-choice questions. The exam is to be conducted during class hours on **22 May 2023 (please do not miss class particularly on that day).**

### Course program

| Class & date | Subject | Method, activities |
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| Class 1 –<br>6 March  | <p>Introduction to the course.</p> <p>General overview of the WTO and of trade negotiations in the WTO.</p>                                                               | <p><u>Lecture</u> by the professor. Introduction to the WTO and to WTO trade negotiations.</p> <p>Mandatory reading:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pangestu (2021). Making trade work for everyone</li> <li>• Tinline &amp; Prazeres (2020). 5 reasons why the WTO Director-General position matters.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Class 2 –<br>13 March | <p>Brief history of WTO negotiations: DDA, recent ministerial conferences.</p>                                                                                            | <p><u>Lecture</u> by the professor. Recent history of WTO negotiations. General overview, law and practice of Ministerial Conferences. Political background, key issues and current state-of-play of the Doha Development Round. Post-Doha Ministerial Conferences and Ministerial guidance to negotiators.</p> <p>Recommended reading:<br/>VanGrasstek (2013). The history and the future of the World Trade Organization.</p> <p>Recommended websites:<br/> <a href="https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/minist_e.htm">https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/minist_e/minist_e.htm</a><br/> <a href="https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dda_e/dda_e.htm">https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dda_e/dda_e.htm</a> </p> |
| Class 3 –<br>20 March | <p>Recent developments and potential lessons: Trade Facilitation Agreement, expansion of the Information Technology Agreement, Fishery Subsidies Agreement and others</p> | <p><u>Lecture</u>. Agreement on Trade Facilitation. Food security at the WTO. The expansion of the Information Technology Agreement. The decision to eliminate agricultural export subsidies. Fishery subsidies agreement. Brief overview of the negotiations leading to the agreements. Potential lessons for future WTO negotiations.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Class 4 –<br>27 March | <p>Recent developments and potential lessons – continued</p>                                                                                                              | <p>Video: <a href="https://globalgovernanceprogramme.eui.eu/wto-reform-suggestions-from-recent-research-video/">https://globalgovernanceprogramme.eui.eu/wto-reform-suggestions-from-recent-research-video/</a> followed by comments by the professor.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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| Class 5 –<br>3 April  | “New issues” – Part<br>1: ecommerce                                                                                                                             | <p><u>Ecommerce</u>. Current state-of-play of WTO e-commerce negotiations and key issues at stake. <u>Trade &amp; technology</u>.</p> <p>Recommended reading. Tradetech - <a href="https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/tradtechpolicyharddigit0422_e.pdf">https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/tradtechpolicyharddigit0422_e.pdf</a></p> <p>Recommended website:<br/><a href="https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/ecom_e/ecom_e.htm">https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/ecom_e/ecom_e.htm</a></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Class 6 –<br>10 April | <p>“New issues” – Part<br/>2: investment<br/>facilitation, small<br/>and medium<br/>enterprises,<br/>women and trade.</p> <p>Trade &amp; Climate<br/>Change</p> | <p><u>Investment facilitation</u>. Current state-of-play of WTO IF negotiations and key issues.</p> <p><u>Making trade more inclusive — SMEs and Women &amp; Trade</u></p> <p><u>Trade and Climate Change</u></p> <p>Recommended reading:<br/>Sauvant (2022). How Would a Future WTO Agreement on Investment Facilitation for Development Encourage Sustainable FDI Flows, and How Could It Be Further Strengthened?</p> <p>SMEs - WTO World Trade Report 2016 – Levelling the Trading Field for SMEs: <a href="https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/publications_e/wtr16_e.htm">https://www.wto.org/english/res_e/publications_e/wtr16_e.htm</a></p> <p>Women and Trade - <a href="https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/womenandtrade_e/womenandtrade_e.htm">https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/womenandtrade_e/womenandtrade_e.htm</a></p> |

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| Class 7 –<br>17 April | Discussions about a WTO reform: political context and overview of substantive issues | <p><u>Lecture</u> by the professor. The rationale for a WTO reform. Key players, developing countries' perspectives. Overview of the issues at stake. Risks and opportunities for the WTO.</p> <p>Mandatory readings (documents to be sent to students): public papers under discussion (China, EU, Canada and possibly others).</p> <p><u>China's perspective on WTO reform</u></p> <p><u>EU's perspective on WTO reform</u></p> <p>Presentations will be followed by <u>discussion</u> among students, guided by questions by the professor.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Class 8 –<br>24 April | <p>WTO reform: substantive issues</p> <p>China &amp; the WTO</p>                     | <p><u>Industrial policy, SOEs and industrial subsidies.</u></p> <p>Recommended reading: WEF (2022). Industrial Policy and International Competition: Trade and Investment Perspectives.<br/> <a href="https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Industrial_Policy_and_International_Competition_2022.pdf">https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Industrial_Policy_and_International_Competition_2022.pdf</a></p> <p><u>Development and S&amp;D treatment</u></p> <p>Mandatory reading: <a href="https://www.t20italy.org/2021/09/08/trade-and-development-in-the-wto-toward-a-constructive-approach-to-the-issue-of-development-status-and-special-and-differential-treatment/">https://www.t20italy.org/2021/09/08/trade-and-development-in-the-wto-toward-a-constructive-approach-to-the-issue-of-development-status-and-special-and-differential-treatment/</a></p> <p><u>China and the WTO — 20+ years later</u></p> |
| Class 9 –<br>1 May    | WTO reform: the Appellate Body crisis                                                | <p>Dispute settlement in the WTO. The role of the Appellate Body. Background to the blocking of the nominations of the WTO Appellate Body members. Impact and risks. Current state-of-play.</p> <p><u>The US perspective on the AB issue</u></p> <p><u>Opposing views on the AB issue</u></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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| Class 10<br>– 8 May  | Trade & National Security. Future of the WTO & WTO of the future | <p>Introduction to Trade &amp; National Security.</p> <p><u>The National Security argument as a basis for trade restrictions: legal and political aspects</u></p> <p><u>Recommended reading:</u> Prazeres (2020). Trade &amp; national security: rising risks for the WTO.</p> <p><u>Discussion</u> among students, guided by questions by the professor. How to make the WTO work in light of the US-China rivalry.</p> <p>Short presentation of written essays by students (tbc)</p> |
| Class 11<br>– 15 May | PTAs and the WTO.                                                | <p>WTO and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs). Introduction by the professor followed by case studies</p> <p>Short presentation of written essays by students (tbc)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Class 12<br>– 22 May | Final exam and course wrap-up                                    | <p>Part 1 - Final exam</p> <p>Part 2 - Exam results / discussions and course wrap-up.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

### **Reading recommendation**

The WTO website is an excellent source of information on WTO negotiations. Students are highly encouraged to dedicate time to explore the WTO website, including the pages of Ministerial Conferences (under About the WTO), the DDA (under Trade Topics) and official documents and working papers (under Documents, Data and Resources).

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