

Empirical Project Assignments

In this course, you will need to complete 2 empirical projects. You can complete them by yourself or have up to 2 other co-authors from the class. You must pick the 2 projects from the 7 possible assignments at the course webpage:

<http://www.uoregon.edu/~bruceb/ecn481.html>

Each empirical project listed on the weblog typically provides some background information on an interesting current-event topic in international trade from a recent media article, as well as some important questions I believe you should address in your analysis of the issue. Each written report cannot be longer than 4 pages of text (double-spaced) with an extra page allowed for charts and graphs.

For each project, just a description of the data and trends will not be sufficient to receive a good grade – nor is it enough to just give quick answers in sequence to the questions asked. It is very important that in addition to presenting data you also use what you have learned in class to **analyze** and **explain** why the data show certain trends. Sometimes the data may be consistent with concepts in class (like comparative advantage) and sometimes they may appear to be inconsistent. Giving alternative explanations for what you observe may be necessary as well.

You are tackling issues that could take up many more pages than you are given, so spend considerable time on making your report concise and to the point. Pretend that this is a report for the President of the United States who will have at most 10 minutes to read it. Other examples of the analytical writing I would like to see are the articles that one can find in any issue of the *Economist* magazine.

You must complete one of the projects by the beginning of class when I give the course midterm (week 6). Otherwise, you will automatically receive 0 points for your first empirical project. Your last empirical project must be handed in by the beginning of class on the last day of class in week 10 (Thursday, March 13). Otherwise, you can hand empirical projects in at any time at the start of a class period. Completed projects handed in early would be much appreciated!

As a final reminder, these 2 projects will comprise 20% of your overall course grade.