COURSE NUMBER: IBUS 6290/IAFF 6378  

COURSE TITLE: *Oil: Industry, Economy, Society*  

PREREQUISITES:  
Familiarity and comfort with economics measures and concepts at the level of one of the following: ECON 6280, IAFF 6363, MBAD 6242, PAD 6003, PPOL 6014.

If you are unsure of you econ background, please review and confirm that you are comfortable reading this assigned article: “World Oil: Market or Mayhem?,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives,* Summer 2009: 145–164

The course is in part aimed at those pursuing regional studies, but is not organized geographically. Oil plays a significant role in every continent but Antarctica (as of yet). Participants can pursue regional interests through projects.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Petroleum is one of the fastest-growing industries in the USA, and affects the fortunes of companies and nations. Most of the largest firms in the world are in petroleum.

This course takes a multidisciplinary approach (primarily political economy and management) to oil and its effects on business, nation-states, and the world economy. The first half of the course adopts a top-down viewpoint, examining the global oil environment. The second half is more bottom-up, using cases to grapple with industry issues.

The course is conducted in a mixture of seminar and lecture formats. A group proposal, paper, and presentation, as well as active class participation are expected, and constitute over half the assessment.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

In addition to the specific objectives below, the course uses oil as a vehicle for applying and deepening understanding of intentional-business concepts. As by far the largest global industry, oil reflects and influences broader sociopolitical issues and developments, facilitating pedagogy.

1. Understanding of the development of the oil industry in historical context, including key nations and companies.

2. Ability to analyze the various roles played by resource-rich states and resource-poor states, as well as causes and effects of resource nationalism and resource mercantilism.

3. Analysis of political risk, and negotiations between multinational companies and oil-producing countries.

4. Identification of key factors influencing competitiveness in global resource industries.

5. Students will develop perspectives on the roles played by oil in society, including the rentier state, and the resource course.

6. Ability to analyze corporate-governance issues that arise in the industry.

7. Ability to explain causes and effects of oil crises.

8. Ability to assess arguments for and against the proposition that oil production has “peaked,” and the claimed consequences of “running out.”

9. Ability to explain the relationship between the public and private sectors as manifested in a global industry.

10. Ability to identify and use resources for research on the oil sector in the global economy; familiarity with the types of data often used.
ASSESSMENT: exam ⅓
        group term paper ⅓
        group project proposal ⅑
class participation ⅑ (including group presentation)

Attendance and participation in the group presentation sessions is mandatory.

EXAMINATION: In class, 20th April, open-book, open-notes. Attendance is mandatory.

GROUP PROJECT: A proposal with the names of 4-5 group members is due by Session 4 class meeting. Subject – your choice, with approval of the instructor. Length – 5 pages, plus any charts, tables, and bibliography.

The paper is due by Session 13 class meeting.

Group members are individually and collectively responsible for project work, and will receive a common assessment.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Students are responsible for compliance with GW’s policies on academic honesty and integrity. Using words written by others without proper citation, or passing off someone else’s work as your own, constitutes academic dishonesty and is subject to disciplinary action including failure of the course. Please ask if you have questions.

REQUIRED READING: This is an experimental course; additional readings may be assigned as they become available, depending on focus.

No textbook. Articles, book chapters, and some cases are on Bb (depending on your IP address, you may need to log in to Gelman e-journals to get articles).

Most HBS and other cases must be purchased here: https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/32458819

Petroleum Intelligence Weekly (PIW) is the industry’s widely-respected newsletter. PIW’s publisher has granted permission to post it to BLACKBOARD each week (Bb > Electronic Reserves); for course use only (circulation and copying not permitted). Read the weekly issue before each meeting; in a topics course, it is especially important to keep up with current developments. Also, general business
Useful websites. No endorsement implied; take *cum grano salis*

**ON-LINE RESOURCES:**

**Government**
- U.S. Energy Information Administration

**Company**
- BP Statistical Review of World Energy

**IGO**
- Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
- Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries (OPEC)

**NGO**
- Global Witness
- Oxfam America
- Publish What You Pay
- Revenue Watch

**Blog**
- General

**Peak-Oil**
- [http://www.themonkeytrap.us/articles-and-blog-posts](http://www.themonkeytrap.us/articles-and-blog-posts)
- [http://bittooth.blogspot.com/](http://bittooth.blogspot.com/)
- [http://euanmearns.com/](http://euanmearns.com/)
- [http://ourfiniteworld.com/about/](http://ourfiniteworld.com/about/)

**Anti-Peak-Oil**
- [http://peakoildebunked.blogspot.com/](http://peakoildebunked.blogspot.com/)
## SPRING 2015 SCHEDULE

1. **jan 12** Course Overview, Historical Perspectives
   
   **jan 19** *MLK day – no class*

2. **jan 26** Looking Ahead: Is the World Running Out of Oil?

3. **feb 2** The Global Petroleum Market – Players and Prices

4. **feb 9** Societal Institutions — (When) is Oil a Resource Curse?
   
   **feb 16** *GW day – no class*

5. **feb 23** Political Risk, Resource Nationalism

   
   **mar 9** *Spring Break*

7. **mar 16** Oil Shocks & Energy Security

8. **mar 23** Petroleum Industry I – Players, Strategy

9. **mar 30** Petroleum Industry II – Ownership, Corporate Governance

10. **apr 6** CSR, Societal Impact

11. **apr 13** Oil Consumption, Environmental Consequences

12. **apr 20** **EXAMINATION** *(open book, notes, etc.)* **Attendance mandatory**

13. **apr 27** class presentations **Attendance mandatory**

14. **apr 29** *GW Monday* Class presentations **Attendance mandatory**
Topics & Readings

Petroleum Basics (BLACKBOARD Session 1 please review and familiarize yourself)

U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Explained – Oil and Petroleum Products

BP Statistical Review of World Energy (petroleum section)

1. Course Overview, Historical Perspectives

Antecedents and origin of the industry. Which aspects are familiar today?

Yergin, The prize: the epic quest for oil, money & power, 1991: Ch 1 SKIM

Olien and Olien, Oil and Ideology, 2000: Ch 2

CASE Creating Global Oil, 1900-1935, HBS 9-804-089, revised 2011

MINI-CASE Debating the Expropriation of Mexican Oil, HBS 9-805-011, 2008

2. Looking Ahead: Is the World Running Out of Oil?

Is the world running out of oil? If so, what are the consequences for the global petroleum oil industry? The world economy? Nation-states? What does running out mean? Should oil prices reflect scarcity? What is the evidence? How is scarcity defined and measured? Implications of new technology, e.g. fracking?

Point-Counterpoint


Intro to the Economics of Exhaustible Resources (read at least one of the two)

Tietenberg and Lewis, Environmental and Natural Resource Economics, 8th ed., 2009, Ch. 7


3. The Global Petroleum Market – Players and Prices

Why are oil prices so volatile? Role of OPEC Cartel? Fundamentals? Speculation?


**CASE** *Filling the Empty Quarter: Saudi Aramco and the World Oil Market*, HBS, 9-708-048, 2010


**Optional Background on Traders, Derivative Markets, and Speculation**


4. Societal Institutions — (When) is Oil a Resource Curse?

Does oil foster authoritarianism, conflict, and corruption? Do oil-exporting countries have a worse growth record? (How) do institutions play a role?


**CASE** *Angola and the Resource Curse*, HBS, N9-711-016, 2010

**Optional Regional Articles: Africa**


**Optional Literature Surveys**


van der Ploeg, “Natural Resources: Curse or Blessing?, *Journal of Economic Literature*, June 2011.

5. **Political Risk, Resource Nationalism**

*The obsolescing bargain. To whom does petroleum under the ground belong? Who should receive the benefits of oil? Who does? How important is FDI, and how does political risk affect investment? How can we conceptualize political risk in a systematic fashion? What are the sources of political risk?*


**Investor Perspective** Click and Weiner, Resource nationalism meets the market: Political risk and the value of petroleum reserves, *Journal of International Business Studies*, June-July 2010: 783-803


7. **Geopolitics & Energy Security**

*How does oil influence interstate relations?* Concepts of energy security. *Import dependence vs. vulnerability. National strategies – resource mercantilism?*


**CASE** *Unocal Corporation: China’s Unwelcome Bid*, ACRC, University of Hong Kong HKU588, 2006

**Optional Background**

Stobaugh, “The Oil Companies in the Crisis,” *Daedalus*, Fall 1975: 179-202


8. **Petroleum Industry I – Players, Strategy**

**NOTE** *The Global Oil and Gas Industry–2010*, Thunderbird TB0223, 2010


9. **Petroleum Industry II – Ownership, Corporate Governance**

*Who owns the world’s oil companies? (Why) does it matter? If privatization of national oil companies is the answer, what is the question?*
Background on Corporate Governance (SKIM if you are familiar with CG): Eun and Resnick, *International Financial Management*, 5th ed., 2009, Ch. 4


**CASE Royal Dutch/Shell: A Shell Game with Oil Reserves (A) & (B),** Rock Ctr for Corporate Governance, Stanford GSB, CG-11 & CG-17B, 2008

10. **CSR, Societal Impact**

Video of the Niger Delta, Nigeria

Watts, “Righteous oil? Human rights, the oil complex, and CSR,” *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 2005


**CASE Talisman Energy: The Decision to Enter Iraq, 9B09M035, Ivey School of Business, Univ. of Western Ontario, 2009**


11. **Oil Consumption, Environmental Consequences**

**Climate Change**


**Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill**

**CASE BP’s Macondo: Spill and Response, HBS, 9-711-021, 2011**

**Optional Background**