Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Winter 2020 What Economists Know About Important Policy Issues

Lecture 5: Trade and Globalization

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National Economic Education Delegation



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Course Outline



- What Economists Know About Important Policy Issues
 - Week 1 (1/22): US Economic Update
 - Week 2 (1/29): Government Budgets
 - Week 3 (2/5): Climate Change
 - Week 4 (2/12): Income Inequality
 - Week 5 (2/19): Trade and Globalization
 - Week 6 (2/26): Housing Policy



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Trade and Globalization





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Credits and Disclaimer

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- It is, however, inevitable that the presenter will be asked for and will provide their own views.
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- Globalization
- International Trade
- Trade Policy



What is Globalization?



- Economies
- Cultures
- Populations

- Brought about by cross-border flows of:
 - Goods and services
 - Technology
 - Investment
 - People
 - Information



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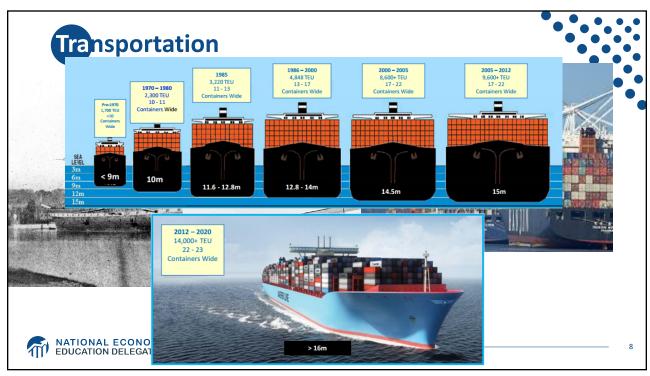


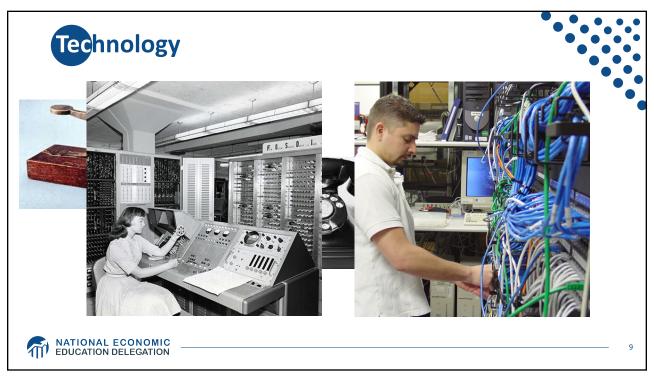


- Transportation
- Technology
- International Cooperation

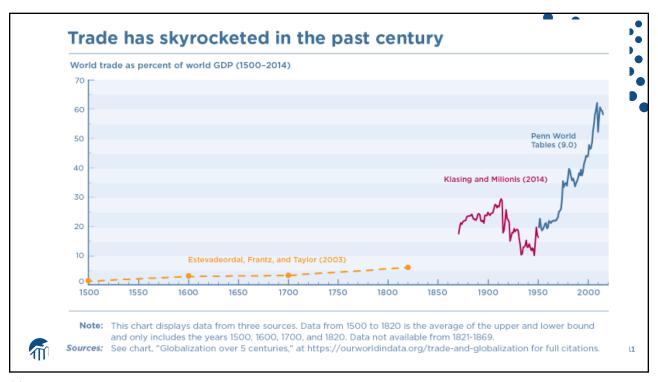


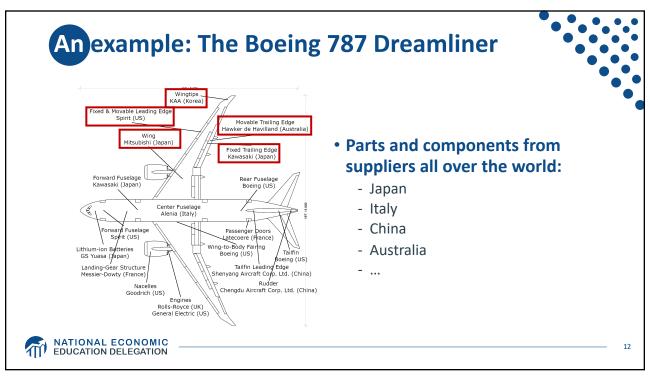
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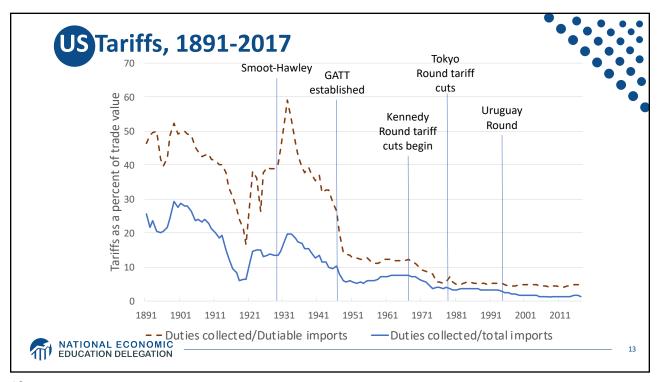
















International Trade

Exports and Imports



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Exports and Imports

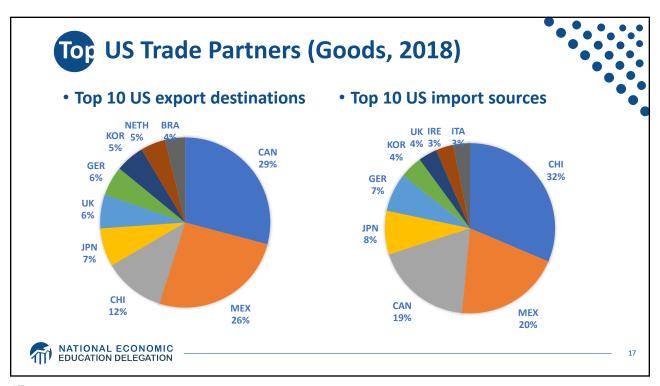


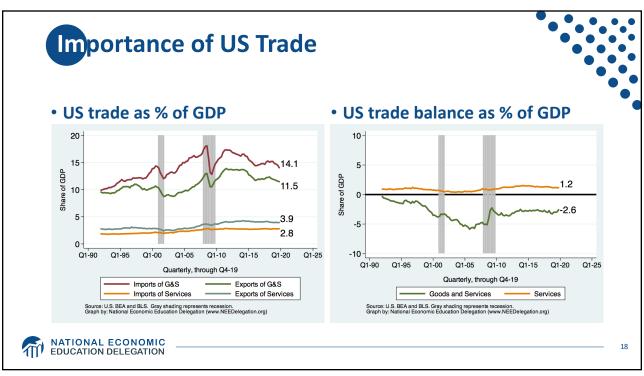
- Exports: goods or services sold to another country
- Imports: goods or services bought from another country

US exports (2016 shares)				US imports (2016 shares)			
Goods		Services		Goods		Services	
Planes	4.5%	Bus/Fin/Ins	34%	Cars	8.2%	Bus/Fin/Ins	34%
Crude Petroleum	4.3%	Travel	27%	Crude Petroleum	4.7%	Travel	24%
Cars	4.2%	Royalties	17%	Computers	4.1%	Transport	19%



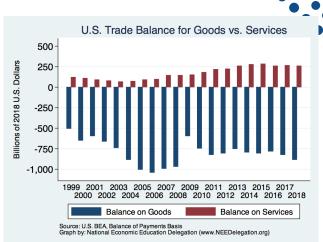
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U.S. Trade Deficits: 2018

- Overall, a nearly \$627 Billion trade deficit (3% of GDP)
- Goods trade deficit over \$887 Billion
- Services trade surplus of about \$260 Billion





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Why Do Countries Trade?



- Competition
- Varieties
- Efficiency



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Why Might Efficiency Differ Across Countries?

- Labor
 - Skilled or unskilled
- Technology
 - Some countries have firms that produce some goods well
 - Other countries have firms that produce other goods well
- Environment
 - Cold/Warm Wet/Dry Sunny/Cloudy
- Land
 - Rocky, soil, fertile, barren
 - Tundra, desert, grasslands, forest



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Comparative Advantage – Key Notion



- Two kinds of advantage: absolute and relative
- E.g., Babe Ruth vs Madison Bumgarner
 - Babe Ruth: ERA - 2Batting average - .350 - Madison Bumgarner ERA - 3Batting average - .185
- Babe is better at both
 - Absolute advantage
- If only one can bat and one can pitch, who does what?
 - Relative advantage



Relative Advantage

- Babe has an absolute advantage in both activities.
 - He is better at both pitching and hitting
- Is he RELATIVELY better at one than the other?
 - Pitching: Babe is 33% better (era of 2 vs 3)
 Hitting: Babe is 100% better (.350 vs .185)
- Babe has a relative advantage in hitting
 - So: Babe should hit and Madison should pitch
- Relative advantage determines comparative advantage
 - Babe has a COMPARARTIVE ADVANTAGE in hitting
 - Madison has a COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE in pitching



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Same Holds True for Countries



- Every country has a good or a set of goods that it is RELATIVELY better at producing.
 - Those are the goods that it will export.
 - It will import the other goods.
- There are exceptions.
 - Varieties and competition
 - May find countries trading the same goods back and forth.



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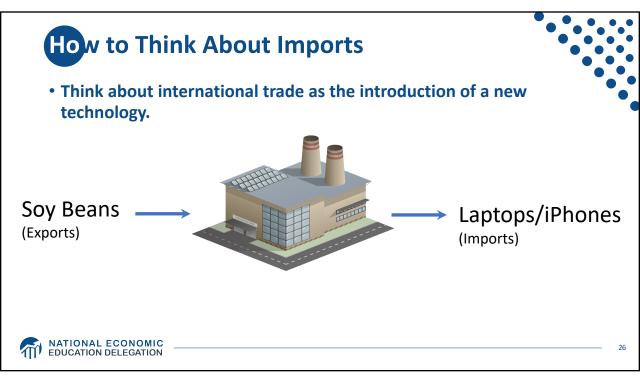
Trade Contributes to Growth

- EFFICIENCY:
 - Allocates production across countries efficiently so that countries can specialize in what they are best at producing.
- Varieties
 - More choice for consumers.
 - Better inputs for our production.
- Competition
 - Brings in cheaper goods.
 - o Makes consumers better off.
- Economies of Scale
 - Trade makes some industries bigger, more cost efficient. Lowers prices.





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What Does the Data Say? Trade Lowers Prices for Consumers



- Effect of import surge from China: 2000-2007
 - Prices would be about 10% higher without this import surge.
 - Benefits for U.S. consumers of \$100,000 per lost manufacturing job.
- Do rich or poor benefit more from lower import prices?
 - Evidence is mixed.



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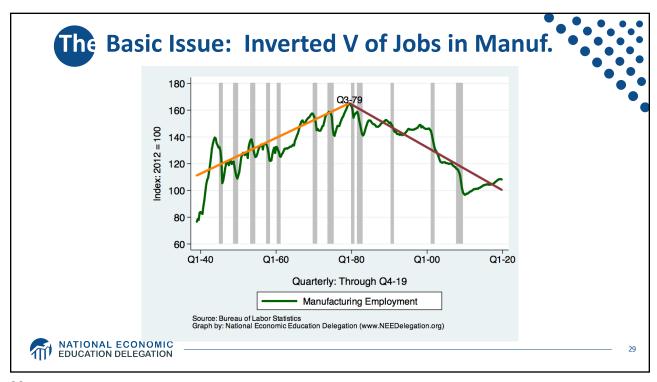
Why is the public turning against trade?

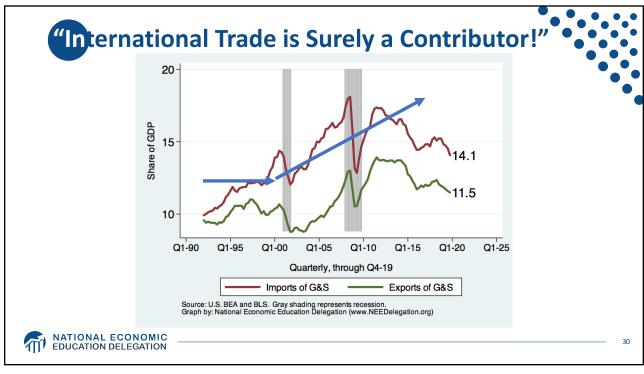


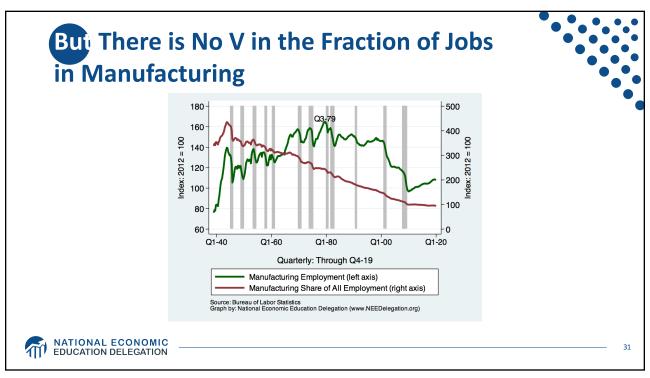
- Gains from trade are very large for the economy, BUT
 - Not always noticeable by consumers.
 Not clear why prices are falling at WalMart?
 - Individual might save \$50, but
 - \$50 x 300 million = \$15 billion!
- Costs of trade are very high for some workers and groups
 - these costs have not been sufficiently appreciated or addressed by policymakers

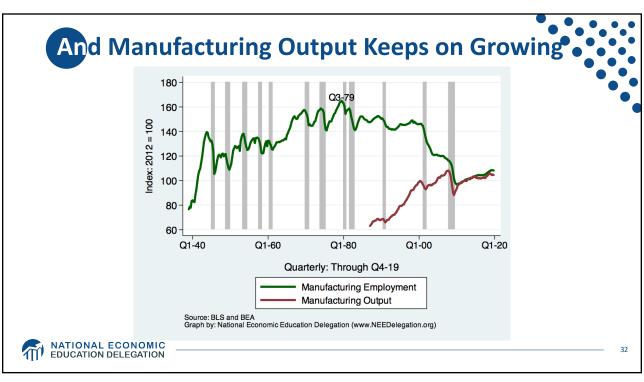












Another Problem: Trade Deficit



- Massive Trade Deficit
 - 2.9% of US GDP
 - \$893 Billion in 2018 for goods
- Massive Trade Deficit with China
 - 2/3 of US Trade Deficit



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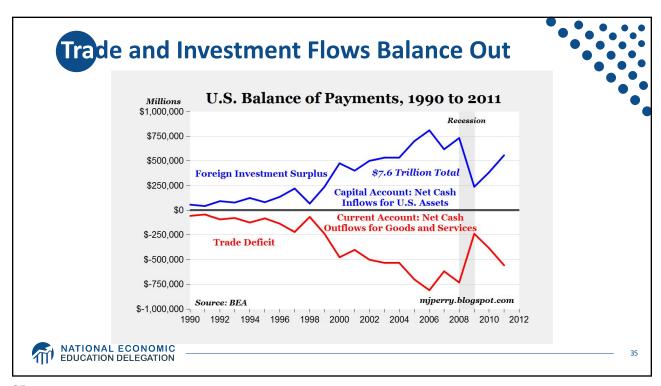
How to Think About the Trade Deficit



- A trade deficit is when:
 - VALUE of imports > VALUE of exports.
- Why does this happen?
- International transactions include:
 - Imports and exports of goods and services
- Current Account
- ALSO: imports and exports of assets (investments)
- Capital Account
- The TRADE DEFICIT only looks at the Current Account



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Exchange Rates Prevent an Overall Deficit



- As the trade deficit grows:
 - The price of the dollar declines.
- As the price of the dollar declines:
 - Investing in the United States becomes more attractive.
- As investing in the US is more attractive:
 - The financial account surplus grows.
- The financial account surplus offsets the trade deficit.
- Balance on international accounts is restored.



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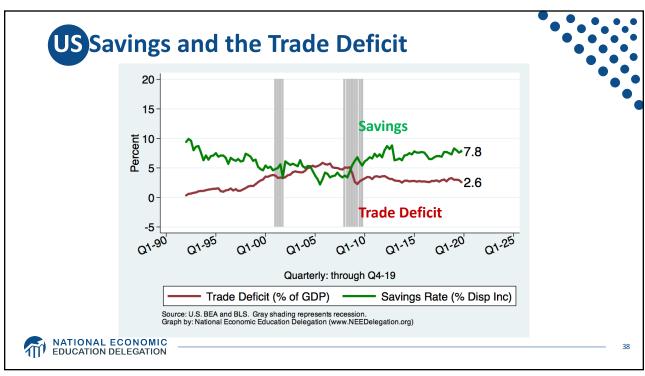
Balanced Budgets & Increased Savings

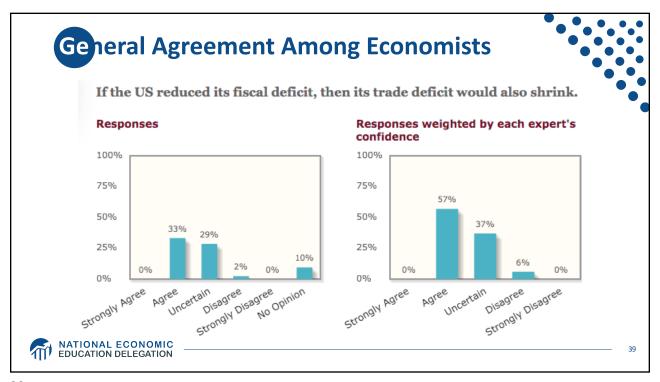
- Reducing federal borrowing would
- reduce pressure on trade deficits.
- More savings would mean more domestic investment and less borrowing from abroad.

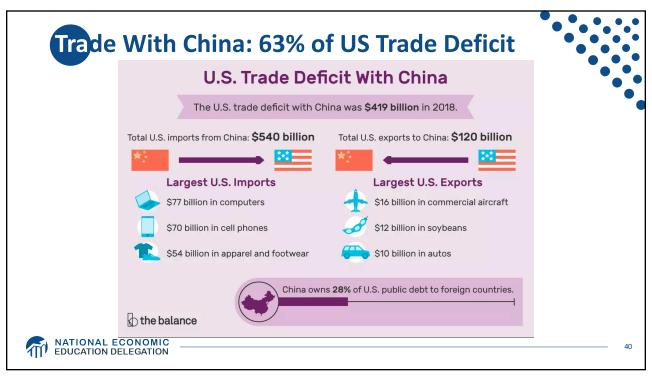


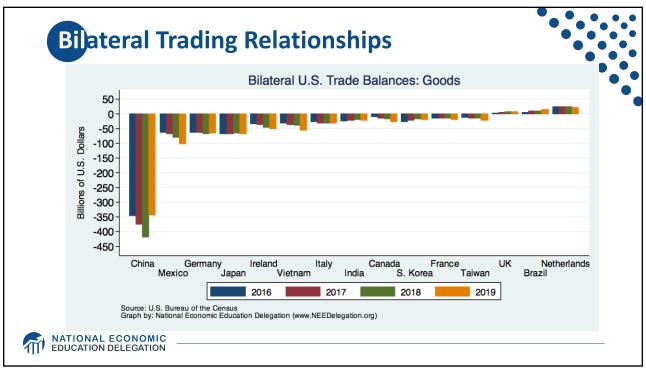


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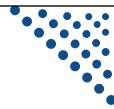








Bilateral Trade Deficits are Unimportant



- Natural result of an overall trade deficit.
- Likely result from specialization.
- Can be exaggerated by mismeasurement of bilateral trade flows.
 - Value added vs total value
- Are unlikely to be a result of foreign country's trade policies.



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DISTRIBUTIONAL IMPACTS



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Intuition on Distributional Impacts



Jobs

- U.S. imports more of some goods
 - o Reduces jobs on those industries
- U.S. exports more of other goods
 - o Creates jobs in those industries
- Are there different kinds of workers in these different industries?
- Creates adjustment costs

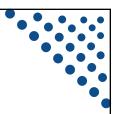
Prices

- LOWERS the price on imported products
- RAISES the price on exported products
- Who buys which products?



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What Does the Data Say? Trade Benefits Some Workers



- Trade liberalization raises wages at "most globalized" firms
 - Wages higher because
 - o lower tariffs on imported inputs used by firm
 - o lower tariffs on products sold by exporting firms



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What Does the Data Say? Trade Hurts Some Workers



- Some parts of US highly exposed to import competition.
 - Workers tend to be "stuck" in these locations and/or industries.
 - So they suffer
- Effects of Chinese import competition: 1990-2007
 - Higher unemp, lower labor force participation & wages in exposed locations
 - o Accounts for nearly 25% of manuf employment decline
- Effects of NAFTA-led US tariff cuts on Mexico
 - For workers without a college degree
 - o Up to 8% point lower 1990s wage growth in highly exposed locations
 - Up to 17% point lower 1990s wage growth in highly exposed industries



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- · Trade with low-wage countries will lower the earnings of low-wage workers as a group in the U.S.A
- · Perhaps more importantly, however, is that the adjustment costs are big.
 - People do not like to move, and getting laid off can be very traumatic, wages likely fall.
- · Costs of trade.
 - Inequality
 - Adjustment costs





Understanding Adjustment Costs

FIRMS

- Searching for new workers
- Training
- Adjusting to the new employees/integration
- Firing costs/severance pay

WORKERS

- Psychological costs of leaving a job, friends
- Loss of firm-specific or industry-specific skills
- Search costs for a new job
- Relocation costs (e.g. moving to a new location)







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Estimates of Adjustment Costs



• FIRMS

- Estimates from developed countries suggests that costs are high
- High adjustment costs cause firms to hire and fire in large groups, rather than gradually
- Estimates from developing countries suggest that firm-level adjustment costs are much lower than in developed countries

WORKERS

- New estimates in the last 10 years
- Estimate costs by looking at wage differences and how many workers do NOT move. Adjustment costs must be at least that high



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Estimated Costs to Workers of Changing Jobs Estimated Worker Adjustment Costs Multiple of Annual Earnings Developed Avg. Brazil 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7







- Adjustment costs can undermine the popular support for trade
- Falling popular support for trade in the face of concentrated losses threatens to "kill the goose that lays the golden egg"
- Adjustment costs reduce welfare
- Adjustment costs suggest potential for efficiency gains. If we can make (labor) markets more efficient, then the whole economy could realize significant gains

Policy Solutions







- Tariffs temporarily reduce imports of particular goods.
- Tariffs raise prices.
 - Final goods (consumers)
 - Intermediate goods (producers who use imported inputs)
- Tariffs invite retaliation, lowering demand for our exports.
- Tariffs lower overall well-being.
- Tariffs are generally considered to be <u>an inefficient way</u> to help those people who are hurt by trade.



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General Consensus of Economists on Tariffs Adding new or higher import duties on products such as air conditioners, cars, and cookies - to encourage producers to make them in the US would be a good idea. Responses Responses weighted by each expert's 100% 100% 75% 75% 62% 50% 50% 25% 25% Strongly Disagree Strongly Disagree No Opinion Strongly Agree strongly NATIONAL ECONOMIC EDUCATION DELEGATION

Directed Support: Adjustment Costs

- The most efficient way to help those hurt by trade is through direct payments
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) is an example of an attempt at this principle
 - TAA includes some retraining funds and extended unemployment benefits
 - Not generally considered to be very successful
 - Underfunded
 - Hard to determine who is hurt by trade and not other factors
- Larger direct payments would be most effective and efficient





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Balanced Budgets

- Reducing federal borrowing would reduce pressure on trade deficits.
- Size of debt nearly 21 trillion in 2018 means that some combination of cutting spending and raising taxes would be necessary.
- Reducing the debt would also reduce the large share of the federal budget that is directed towards interest payments and free up money for other things.
- Reducing the debt also increases our economic security because it could reduce foreign debt exposure.









- Trade and growth are positively related.
- Gains from trade can be widespread (lower prices for consumers).
- Losses from trade can be highly concentrated.
- Tariffs reduce trade overall, thus imposing widespread losses to both producers (who use imported inputs) and consumers (who buy lower-priced imported goods).
- More direct policies can be more efficient and save gains from trade.

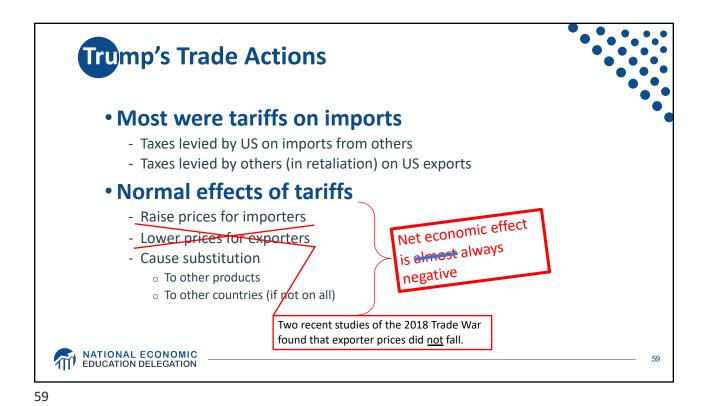






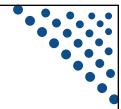
Trump's Trade Wars: Where Do We Stand?











• Jan 22, 2018: Safeguard tariffs

- 30% on solar panels
- 50% on washing machines(Actually normal trade actions)



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US Trade Policy in Practice: Winners and Losers

• Tariffs: basic insights from trade theory

- US tariffs = tax on US imports. So, higher consumer prices in US
- Winners: US producers and (at least some of) their workers
- Losers: US "consumers", including any "consuming" firms and their workers

Safeguard tariffs on solar panels & washing machines

- Presumed winners: US solar panel & washing machine producers
 - o Suniva, SolarWorld, Whirlpool...
 - But #1: China cuts consumption subsidies → massive fall in Chinese demand
 - o But #2: LG and Samsung relocating washing machine production to the US
- Losers: US "consumers" of solar panels and washing machines
 - o "Consumers" can be firms
 - o Solar panels: 85% of employment in distribution and installation



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- Mar 1, 2018: Announces
 "national-security" tariffs on steel
 and aluminum
 - 25% on steel, 10% on aluminum
 - Announced for all countries
 - o Some delayed (EU, Canada, Mexico)
 - o Others later exempted (S. Korea)
 - o Canada & Mexico exempted much later



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US Trade Policy in Practice: Winners and Losers

- National security tariffs on steel & aluminum
 - Winners: US steel producers (Nucor, United States Steel, AK Steel) & workers
 - o BEA: 140,000 jobs in steel producing industries
 - Losers #1: US consumers, including steel-consuming US firms
 - o BEA: 2 million jobs in US industries where steel >= 5% of inputs
 - US industries targeted by foreign retaliation

Industry	Countries	Share of US exports	
Pork	China, Mexico	44%	
Apples	China, Mexico, India	37%	
Nuts	China, India	12%	
Whiskies (e.g. KY bourbon)	EU, Canada, Mexico	53%	
Mineral water, coffee, ketchup	Canada	About 50%	



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- Responses to metals tariffs
 - Retaliation by China, EU, Canada, & others
 Tariffs on US
 - WTO disputes
 - ° May-Aug: Complaints filed against US
 - Jul: Complaints filed by US



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Trump's Trade Actions



- May 23, 2018: Initiates Commerce Dept investigation of car and car part imports
 - Feb 17, 2019: Commerce approves tariffs
 - Feb 2020: Still pending, waiting for Trump



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US Trade Policy in Practice: Winners and Losers

- Proposed national security tariffs on autos & auto parts
 - US car producers are winners... wait, they're actually losers!
 - o Large consumers of imported autos and auto parts
 - o Large exporters & fear foreign retaliation
 - o Strong opposition from GM, BMW, Toyota, Honda, Nissan, Mitusbishi...
 - US auto parts producers are winners... wait, they're actually losers!
 - o Lower production of autos means less demand for auto parts
 - o Strong opposition: auto parts association (MEMA)
 - Losers: US consumers
 - Estimated price increases for new cars of 10-20%
 - Winners: auto workers union (UAW) supports tariffs
 - o Auto & auto parts firms say they'll scale back US production
 - o Union claims these firms will scale up US production



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Tariff on Cars and Car Parts

•Who would benefit?

- US car companies?
 - o Most (e.g., GM) are opposed
 - I can't find objection from Ford, but others list Ford among those who object
- US auto workers?
 - UAW has spoken in favor of "target measures" with the understanding that broad tariffs or quotas "could cause harm" including "mass layoffs for American workers."



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- Concerns about China's IP practices pre-existed Trump
 Theft of technology secrets
 - Forcing investors in China into joint ventures and sharing technology
- Prior to Trump, complaints had been voiced by US and EU, but nothing had been done
- US initiated investigation under Section 301 of US trade law (unfair trade practices)
 - Aug 18, 2017: Investigation initiated
 - Mar 22, 2018: Report finds unfair trade and recommends tariffs
- Since then, Trump has announced and then implemented multiple rounds of tariffs



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Trump's Trade Actions

- Jul 6, 2018: First tariffs on China, \$34 billion
- Aug 23, 2018: Second tariffs on China, \$16 billion
- Sep 24, 2018: Third tariffs on China, \$200 billion
- May 10, 2019:
 - Tariffs on \$200 billion rise from 10% to 25%
- Sep 1, 2019: Fourth tariffs on China, \$112 billion
 - & plan for \$160 billion Dec 15



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- Dec 13, 2019: Trump cancels Dec 15 increase
 - Says "Phase One Deal" is coming
- Jan 15, 2020: Phase One Deal signed (More on that in a moment)



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• What's the point?

- To get China to stop its IP practices?
- To reduce the US bilateral trade deficit with China?
- To stop China's rise as an economy and as a world power?

•Who will "win"?

- Nobody! Everybody loses from tariffs
- Trump said it's "easy to win" because he measures success from trade deficit



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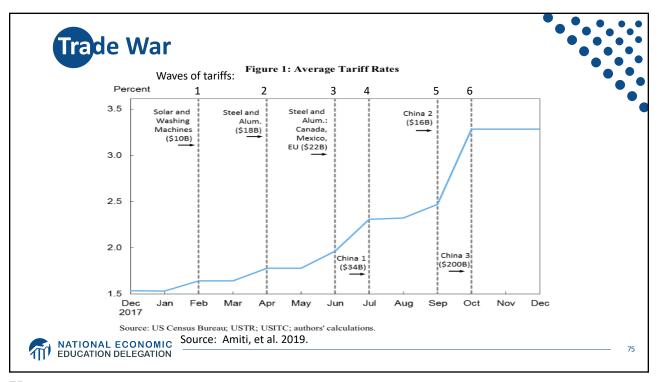
Effects of the 2018-19 Trade War

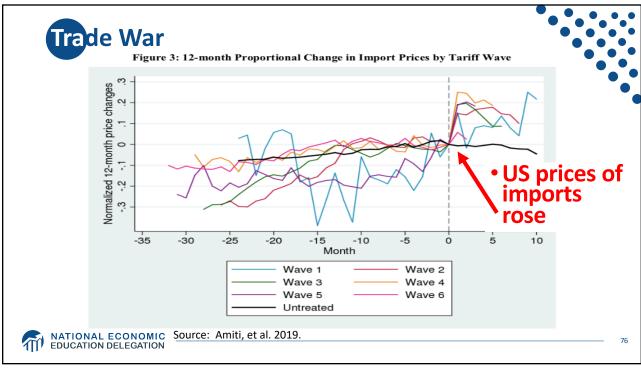
- US average tariffs rose, in several waves
- Prices of imports in US rose
- Quantity of imports fell
- Number of imported varieties fell

Source: Amiti, Redding, and Weinstein, "The Impact of the 2018 Trade War on U.S. Prices and Welfare," CEPR Discussion Paper DP13564, March 1, 2019.



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Trade War: Chinese Retaliation

United States

- March 9: US Tariffs on steel and aluminum
- April 3: US tariffs on \$50 bn in imports from China
- April 5: considering tariffs on another \$100 bn
- June 15: another \$50 bn
- August 2: another \$200 bn
- August 23: another \$30 bn
- October 30: US hints at tariffs on remaining Chinese imports

China

- March 23: tariffs on \$3bn of imports from the US
- April 4: Tariffs on \$50 bn in imports from US
- June 19: tariffs on \$50 bn US goods
- August 3: another \$60 bn
- August 23: another \$30 bn
- China is out of ammunition

Did the US Win?



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How to Think About the Trade War

- Will it stimulate a solution to the underlying problems?
 - Intellectual property theft.
 - Trade deficit
- Will it help low skilled workers? Those most affected by imports.
 - Possibly, but at what cost?
- Will it foster greater cooperation between the United States and China?
 - Future trade agreements.
 - Future trade disputes
 - Other international issues
- What about other economic implications?
 - uncertainty



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China-US Phase One Trade Deal



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China-US Phase One Trade Deal • Purchases



- China promised to increase purchases compared to 2017, with 2-year totals of
 - ∘\$77.7 billion of manufactures
 - ∘\$52.4 billion of energy products
 - \$32 billion of agriculture (e.g., soy, meat, seafood)
 - ∘\$37.9 billion of services



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China-US Phase One Trade Deal

- Intellectual Property
 - China will increase IP protections
 - No commitment to stop cybertheft
- Technology Transfer
 - China to stop forcing US companies to hand over technologies
- Food and Agriculture
 - February 11, China announced it is - China to loosen some barriers to imports letting MasterCard in.
- Financial Services
 - China & US both open to more competition



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China-US Phase One Trade Deal

- Macroeconomics & Exchange rates
 - Both pledge not to devalue currencies
- Dispute Settlement
 - Officials to meet regularly to address violations
 - If not resolved, either side can
 - olmpose punitive measures (e.g., tariffs)
 - Without "counter-response" (if in good faith)
- New negotiations for "Phase Two"
 - Will happen, but with no time line





• Tariff Cuts?

- Not mentioned in the agreement
- China may (and actually, already has) cut some tariffs, perhaps as a means to increase imports
- US has not, at least formally, promised anything
- Tariff cuts are said to wait for Phase 2 deal, probably not until after November election



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Trump's trade actions:

- Raise prices to consumers
- Raise costs to producers
- Alienate other countries



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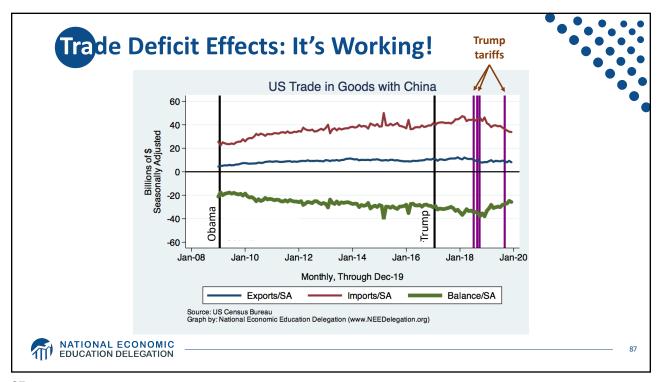


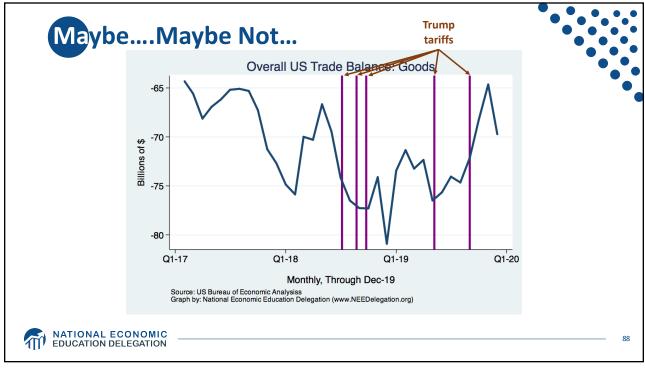
• May they serve any purpose?

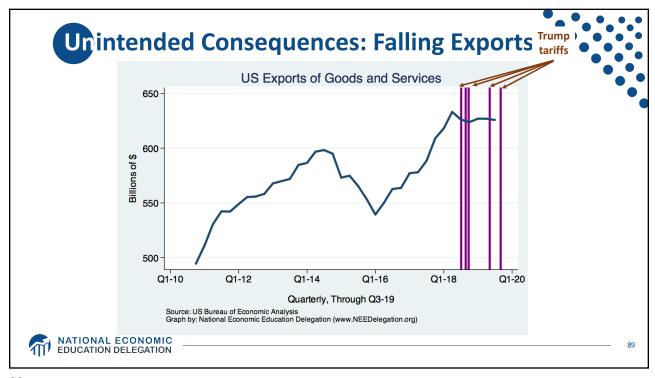
- Not to reduce trade deficit(s)
 - oTariffs may reduce both exports and imports
 - oThey do not change overall trade balance



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Conclusion



- Perhaps to motivate other countries to change policies for the better
 - oUS has negotiated with
 - China, to change their IP policies and increase imports from US (Phase One Deal)
 - EU and Japan, to open to more imports of agricultural goods from US (Nothing yet)
 - Mexico, to limit migration



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