A Model and Scorecard of the Trump Administration’s Trade Policy

a discussion with

Juscelino Colares Ph.D., J.D.
Schott – Van Den Eyden Professor of Law

February 8, 2019 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.
Dampeer Room, Second Floor of Kelvin Smith Library, 11201 Euclid Ave

For decades, the United States was the main organizer of a system of multilateral and regional frameworks to encourage international commerce, such as the WTO and NAFTA. The Trump Administration has rejected this approach with both statements and actions. The President has criticized multilateral agreements, on the grounds that the United States could negotiate more favorable bilateral deals. The administration rejected the draft Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and forced a renegotiation of NAFTA. It has also resorted to an array of remedies, based on existing law, designed to address allegedly unfair trade practices. Escalating threats threaten trade wars but can also lead to negotiations.

The Trump trade initiatives raise a lot of questions. One is whether Democrats who are skeptical of the free trade ideology should oppose or support the administration’s actions. This is related to the possible effects of conflict on the national economy. It also involves whether the administration is choosing the right targets. In practice, it can be hard to discern the principles, other than pure suspicion, behind the administration’s specific choices. Professor Colares joins us to suggest how the parts of the Trump Administration’s trade policy fit together – and to what extent it has been successful.

The Friday Public Affairs Discussion Lunch is an opportunity for students, faculty, staff, emeriti and other members of our communities to learn and question each other about public policy issues at the international, national, and local levels. Faculty and other speakers share their research and experience to get beyond the headlines and repetition in the mass media, and the wild rumors of the internet. Lunch is brown bag, but cookies and some beverages are provided by the Center for Policy Studies of the College of Arts and Sciences.

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