

12th Annual Queen's Institute on Trade Policy

Trade Rules for the Pandemic and Its Aftermath



November 23-27, 2020

Information on Small Group Seminars

The small group seminars take place at the end of each day (from 12:15 – 1:00 EST), except for the Friday, when the seminar takes place from 11:30 – 12:15 EST and is followed by the final discussion with senior officials.

Purpose of the Small Group Seminars

The purpose of the small group seminars is threefold:

- The seminars provide you with an opportunity to crystallize what you have learned from the presentations and to discuss any points that may be unclear.
- You can use the seminars to get to know your counterparts in other government departments and to learn about the career paths that the other participants, as well as the facilitators, have followed.
- The seminars will also be used to prepare the discussion with the senior officials in the final session (more on that below).

Facilitators of the Small Group Seminars

The seminars will be facilitated by distinguished former trade officials and trade experts. The facilitators are (with most recent/relevant positions – for the full biographies of the facilitators, please refer to the [Agenda](#) of the Institute):

- **Elaine Feldman**, former Assistant Deputy Minister for North America, Global Affairs Canada.
- Jonathan Fried, former G20 Sherpa and Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the WTO.
- Valerie Hughes, Senior Counsel, Bennett Jones; former Director of the WTO Legal Affairs Division and of the WTO Appellate Body Secretariat.
- Andrew (Sandy) Moroz, former director of various trade-related divisions at Global Affairs Canada.
- John O'Neill, former Deputy Permanent Representative to the WTO; former director of various trade-related divisions at Global Affairs Canada.

- Don Stephenson, former Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the WTO; former Assistant Deputy Minister, Trade Policy and Negotiations.
- Stephen Tapp, Deputy Chief Economist and Director of the Economic Research and Analysis Department at Export Development Canada.
- Robert Wolfe, Professor Emeritus, School of Policy Studies, Queen's University; founder, Queen's Institute on Trade Policy.

Composition of the Small Groups

The composition of the groups will change every day, except that on Friday the group will be the same, and will have the same facilitator, as on Monday.

Suggested Discussion Questions for the Seminars

Global questions:

Please think about the following three cross-cutting questions over the course of the week:

- What is the most significant challenge to Canadian trade policy that the pandemic presents?
- What is the most significant shortcoming of trade rules that the pandemic has revealed?
- What is the most significant interaction (either positive or negative) between the pandemic and long-run trends in relation to trade policy?

At the small group seminar on Friday, each group will be asked to provide a one-sentence answer to each of these questions. We will compile your answers and then ask the senior officials to react to them (for further instructions, please see the end of the document).

1. Monday, November 23: 12:15 – 1:00

Discussion questions

1. How has the pandemic affected international trade in goods compared to international trade in services?
2. In which respects does the pandemic present unique challenges for Canadian traders? How does the impact of the pandemic differ from previous crises, such as the Great Recession of 2008?
3. Which trade measures has Canada taken in response to the pandemic?
4. Which measures taken by other countries have proved to be most problematic for Canada?
5. What can Canada do to increase the resilience of the supply chains on which Canadian companies and consumers rely?

2. Tuesday, November 24: 12:15 – 1:00

Discussion questions

1. How has the pandemic affected the cost of conducting trade?
 2. How can trade policy mitigate the effect of the pandemic on trade costs?
 3. If the US increasingly “decouples” from China, what are Canada’s options? Will Canada have to “decouple” as well, or can Canada adopt its own trade policy approach to China?
 4. How can WTO Members use the WTO’s councils and committees more effectively?
 5. Which aspects of Trump’s trade policy will likely be retained by the Biden administration, and which aspects will change?
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3. Wednesday, November 25: 12:15 – 1:00

Discussion questions

1. Is the criticism that the US has been levelling against China’s economic model justified?
 2. Is China’s economic model compatible with the liberal trade regime embodied in the WTO?
 3. Should Canada advocate for additional rules to discipline export restrictions and other trade measures that affect the supply of medical products? Do such rules have any realistic chance of being enforced in an emergency?
 4. Do the intellectual property protections enshrined in trade agreement present an obstacle to the global dissemination of a coronavirus vaccine?
 5. What are Canada’s interests (both offensive and defensive) in agricultural trade policy?
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4. Thursday, November 26: 12:15 – 1:00

Discussion questions

1. What is the role of trade rules in regulating the digital economy?
 2. Do WTO rules on subsidies allow governments to pursue industrial policy objectives?
 3. How should Canada respond to the “Buy America” policies envisioned by the Biden administration?
 4. How can climate change be “mainstreamed” into the different chapters of trade agreements?
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5. Friday, November 27: 11:30 – 12:15

Discussion questions

You should discuss the following questions and provide a one-sentence answer to each question.

- What is the most significant challenge to Canadian trade policy that the pandemic presents?
- What is the most significant shortcoming of trade rules that the pandemic has revealed?
- What is the most significant interaction (either positive or negative) between the pandemic and long-run trends in relation to trade policy?

The Facilitators will ask one of the participants to write down the answers that the group has selected and to send them to Nicolas.Lamp@queensu.ca and sps.comms@queensu.ca no later than 12:10 pm. The answers will be presented to the senior officials in the final session.