



**Online Course**  
**Trade Negotiation Techniques: Theory and Practice**  
**10 February – 24 March 2025**

**Prospectus**

**Background**

While trade remains an important instrument for sustainable economic growth and development, trade policymaking has become more complicated within current trade dynamics affected by geopolitical tensions, rising protectionism, new industrial policies and global energy transition efforts. Reaping effective development benefits from participation in the multilateral trading system, as well as coping with proliferating bilateral, regional and subregional trade integration processes, remains a big challenge for national policymakers and trade negotiator, especially in developing countries.

This online course is the third one in UNCTAD's trade policy e-learning series and is offered in English over a period of six weeks from **10 February to 24 March 2025**. It consists of five modules, with pre-recorded videos prepared by the instructor. It also includes two webinars in February and March 2025, where participants can engage in an interactive discussion with Dr. Craig VanGrasstek, the principal course instructor, as well as trade experts from UNCTAD and other international organizations.

**Objectives**

This online course is developed to address the need for building negotiation capacities of trade officials in developing countries; but is open to officials involved in trade negotiations in all countries, including developed ones to promote a common understanding of the challenges faced in negotiation processes by officials of both developing and developed countries.

The course aims to enhance and strengthen the negotiation capacity of trade officials in a way that best fits to achieving their country's sustainable development goals. After completing this course, participants will have improved their understanding of key concepts and techniques of trade negotiations. A detailed description of the course content and timetable is provided.

**Target audience and course prerequisites**

The course targets government officials involved in trade negotiations. We encourage applicants from a broad spectrum of backgrounds in policymaking including but not limited to international trade, industry, agriculture, services, intellectual property rights, environment, labor, and technology.

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Hold at least a bachelor's degree in economics or related areas.
- Possess excellent knowledge of the English language.



To successfully complete the course activities, participants need to devote around two hours a week to the course.

### Certificate of completion

Participants who successfully complete the course modules and quizzes with passing grades will receive a certificate of completion.

### Application information and deadline

Applications should be submitted by following the instructions at the links below:

<https://elearning.unctad.org/enrol/index.php?id=277>

The deadline for application is **9 February 2025**. If you need assistance with the online application process, please contact [elearningtrade@un.org](mailto:elearningtrade@un.org).

Requests for further information or clarification about this course should be sent to:

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Economic Affairs Officer  
Trading Systems, Services and Creative Economy Branch  
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## Annex

### Content and timetable of the course

The course is composed of **five modules**:

1. Review of negotiations theory and practice.
2. The conduct of multilateral trade negotiations.
3. Preferential and non-preferential market-access negotiations.
4. Understanding a negotiating partner - Part 1: The economic issues.
5. Understanding a partner - Part 2: The political issues.

There will be **three webinars** in **February and March 2025**:

**Webinar 1:** Trade negotiations in today's context.

**Webinar 2:** Negotiating trade agreements: WTO and non-WTO issues.

**Webinar 3:** Implementing trade agreements.

Participants will be requested to pass a multiple-choice quiz after each module to be able to move on to the following module.

An Internet connection is required to access the online course modules, complete the quizzes, and participate in webinars.

Dates	Title	Content
<b>Week 1: 10-16 February</b>	<b>Module 1.</b> Review of negotiations theory and practice	Trade negotiations as a process with multiple chances to fail.  The zone of possible agreement in a distributive negotiation.  The zone of possible agreement in an integrative negotiation.  Information, honesty and theatricality in negotiations.
<b>Week 2: 17-23 February</b>	<b>Module 2.</b> The conduct of multilateral trade negotiations	The vocabulary of the WTO.  The stages in a negotiation and their associated texts.  The role of the chairman and the evolution of texts.  The special modalities of multilateral negotiations on goods market access.  Multilateral decision-making from the GATT green room to WTO coalitions.
<b>Webinar 1 19 February 14:00-15:30 (CET)</b>	Trade negotiations in today's context	Past, present and future of trade negotiations.  The international trading system in today's context.  Challenges in reaching consensus in international trade negotiations.

<b>Week 3: 24 February - 2 March</b>	<b>Module 3.</b> Preferential and non-preferential market-access negotiations	<p>The fundamentals of tariffs and market-access commitments for goods.</p> <p>The differing objectives of preferential versus non-preferential agreements.</p> <p>Can RTAs with the largest markets replace multilateral liberalization?</p> <p>The potential and the limitations of preferential agreements and programs.</p> <p>The structure of market-access commitments for goods in trade agreements.</p> <p>Market-access negotiations on services in the WTO and in RTAs.</p>
<b>Week 4: 3-9 March</b>	<b>Module 4.</b> Understanding a negotiating partner Part 1: The economic issues	<p>Differences between negotiating partners.</p> <p>Differences in trade interests between negotiating partners.</p> <p>What can be learned from examining a partner's existing RTAs.</p> <p>Profiling the bilateral trade relationship and examining the partner's data.</p> <p>Profiling a partner's tariffs and other trade barriers.</p> <p>Trade in services and other issues.</p>
<b>Webinar 2 5 March 14:00-15:30 (CET)</b>	Negotiating trade agreements: WTO and non-WTO issues	<p>Negotiations outside the WTO framework.</p> <p>Environment-related trade agreements, such as ACCTS.</p> <p>Negotiation of issues going beyond the WTO.</p>
<b>Week 5: 10-16 March</b>	<b>Module 5.</b> Understanding a partner Part 2: The political issues	<p>Political issues in trade negotiations.</p> <p>Political issues before a negotiation: The selection of RTA partners.</p> <p>Political issues during a negotiation: The leveraging of domestic politics.</p> <p>Political issues after a negotiation: The approval of agreements.</p> <p>Profiling the political issues in a partner's trade policy.</p>
<b>Webinar 3 19 March 14:00-15:30 (CET)</b>	Implementing trade agreements	<p>What kind of challenges do countries face in the domestic coordination and implementation of a trade agreement?</p> <p>What are lessons learnt from such experience?</p>