

Academy of International Business—Canada Chapter

Call for Conference Papers

Conference Theme:

Multinational Corporation Governance of Global Value Chains

Saturday, December 2 (9:00 am – 4:00 pm)

Smith School of Business

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario

Keynote Speaker:

Gary Gereffi

Director, Center on Globalization, Governance & Competitiveness, Duke University.

The global division of labor is shifting in profound ways as a result of trade and investment liberalization, financial deregulation, and technological advances in the movement of information, people, and products. Many activities that previously had been internalized within multinational corporations (MNCs) are increasingly offshored and outsourced through a variety of modes, from wholly-owned to arm's length, often in emerging economies (Buckley and Strange 2015). Through this process, global value chains (GVCs) have arisen, which are groups of firms that combine to facilitate international production and trade activities from raw material to end consumer.

The particular forms and practices within GVCs—who makes what, where it is made, and how much is paid for it—emanate from decisions made by the MNCs that manage access to markets and/or own the key technologies (Gibbon, Bair, and Ponte 2008). What is particularly intriguing about GVCs is that the lead MNCs, who exert such great influence over the entire chain, often have little or even no direct ownership of production (Bair 2008), but rather orchestrate third-party activities indirectly through control and incentive schemes (highlighting the well-known distinction in this literature between buyer-driver versus producer-driven chains).

The establishment of GVC activities has led to significant economic and social progress or upgrading as they have provided new sources of income especially for poorer households in developing countries (Barrientos, Dolan, and Tallontire 2003). At the same time, emerging evidence shows that the benefits of integrating developing country economic activity into GVCs often leaves many behind (Locke 2013). In fact, a widely held concern is that the pressure on MNCs to reduce production costs incentivizes a race to the bottom, where developing-country suppliers are pushed to lower labor standards and environmental performance (Soundararajan and Brown 2016). According to the OECD (2016), the emergence of GVCs challenges conventional wisdom of how we look at economic globalization and the public policies and management practices that are developing around it. Thus, many important questions must be answered relating to ways in which MNC management practices and organizational structures relate to economic, social, and environmental performance of GVCs.

This conference is intended to provide a workshop for scholars interested in a broad range of questions relating to MNC governance of GVCs. Both conceptual and empirical contributions in their early phases of development are welcome.

Submit 250 word Abstracts to: Anthony Goerzen (agoerzen@queensu.ca) by *September 1, 2017*.

Confirmation of abstract acceptance for presentation will be by October 1

No Registration Fee

Details on travel, accommodation, and other conference information will be posted online: more info soon