

**Title: How Trade Agreements Impact Economic Development and National Competitiveness?**

**Speaker: Prof. Vidya Mani, University of Virginia**

**Area: POM**

**Date: 29.12.2025, Venue: P22 @ 3.30PM**

**Abstract:**

Over 70% of international trade involves global value chains that span multiple countries and sectors. A key component of national policy is trade agreements – arrangements that countries make with one another to facilitate the flow of goods and services. Trade agreements can generate economic value in partner countries by promoting the movement of goods and services through incentives to establish production networks and reduce tariffs. Duty-free access to US markets under these agreements is governed by Rules of Origin (ROO) requirements. Moreover, they can enhance national competitiveness by encouraging the formation of production networks within the country. In this paper, we conduct a systematic study of three trade agreements initiated by the US, AGOA, CAFTA-DR and USMCA, and their impact on the auto and apparel supply chains. We demonstrate that the underlying mechanisms through which these trade agreements shape the associated supply chains help explain the difference between expected and observed outcomes.

**Speaker Profile:**



Dr. Mani is an Associate Professor of Business Administration with deep expertise in global supply chains. In addition, she is a Visiting Associate Professor at SC Johnson College of Business at Cornell University for Fall 2025 and a Senior Research Fellow in the Mexico Program at Inter-American Dialogue. Her research focuses on how supply chain imperatives drive operational decisions across key sectors, including automotive, electronics, energy, tech, pharmaceuticals, and retail. Her work highlights how businesses within these supply chains will respond to specific market constraints and regulations. Some of her research topics include examining impact of trade policies on national competitiveness and resilience of critical supply chains, developing energy-transition pathways for industrialized and less-developed economies, evaluating the effectiveness of inspection and penalties towards ensuring environmental safety and compliance for energy sector, effective ways to create a secure supply chain in the electronics sector, developing an efficient product portfolio and distribution strategy for specialty drugs and making targeted assortment and labor decisions for retail stores. She teaches an elective on Sustainable Global Value Chains in the Residential and Executive MBA programs at the Darden School of Business. She is also the faculty lead for the P3 Impact Award Program run by Concordia, the University of Virginia Darden School Institute for Business in Society, and the U.S. Department of State's Office of Global Partnerships.

Dr. Mani collaborates with industry and policymakers to assess the impact of recent legislative efforts and ESG standards on the supply chain and evaluate the trade-offs associated with local policies, national security, and global objectives. In collaboration with the US Department of Defense and the LMI Research Institute, she developed a data-driven intelligent response toolkit to mitigate counterfeit risk in the weapons system supply chain. Dr. Mani is a Franklin Fellow at the Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Office of International Labor Affairs. She is also a member of the working group tasked with developing sustainability standards for the textile and apparel sector at the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and an Expert Advisor to the working group on Critical Minerals Supply Chain for the Ripples of Hope Project at the Miller Center.

**Webpage Link:** <https://www.darden.virginia.edu/faculty-research/directory/vidya-mani>