As the ‘Reiwa era’ began in mid-2019, the business and economic landscape of Japan was undergoing significant transformations regarding issues ranging from women in the workforce, international trade relations, immigration, and an aging population. Only a year later, Japan faced two additional momentous events: the arrival of COVID-19 and the departure of Shinzo Abe, the longest-serving prime minister in Japanese history. Although “Reiwa” translates roughly to “beautiful harmony”, the era has so far been anything but harmonious! In this lecture, Dr. Stevens will discuss the current trends and future directions of business and economic issues happening in Japan at the dawn of the Reiwa era, many of which contradict long-held stereotypes and assumptions about Japan. As a proud DEALL alumnus (BA 2005), Dr. Stevens will also discuss his journey from undergraduate student of Japanese at Ohio State to current role as a researcher and teacher of international business at Lehigh University.

Charles E. Stevens is Associate Professor of Management and holder of the Thomas J. Campbell ’80 endowed professorship at Lehigh University. Stevens received his Ph.D. in international business from the Fisher College of Business at the Ohio State University.

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