

PROPOSAL: TRANSNATIONAL GOVERNANCE PROJECT

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This project examines organizations emerging to oversee the many activities that now transcend national borders. The emphasis of my research is on the design and administration of global governance organizations that regulate international commerce. The objective is to understand how these organizations work, why this is the case and the substantive implications of this reality. Methodologically, the project combines a quantitative approach and qualitative method modeled on previous work. The centerpiece of the quantitative portion is a database I am in the process of building that will code all global-governance organizations on a set of approximately 100 variables regarding structure and processes. The objective is to identify any relationship between, for example, the mechanics of participation by members and the oversight of executives or the structure of the organization and its enforcement powers. There is no existing study of international organizations that attempts to systematically study the relationship between structural features and outcomes across numerous organizations. Thus this undertaking alone will constitute a significant contribution.

The qualitative portion of the project will involve identification of organizations that provide opportunities to examine key theoretical questions. For example, the International Standards Organization is a prime target because it is a leading example of a private governance organization wielding tremendous power without formal enforcement tools. ICANN, an organization about which I have already written in a published article, is likely another candidate with its struggle to integrate an innovative global direct participatory scheme. Existing case studies will complement my own primary research.

Undergraduate assistants make up an active research team carrying out the comparative data creation project on international organizations (e.g. World Trade Organization, International Standardization Organization, World Intellectual Property Organization, etc.). Assistants collect, analyze, distill, organize and code data on the structure and administration of multiple international organizations and write reports on the history, operations and issues confronted by such organizations. Applicants should have some basic knowledge of politics, economics and international affairs and experience navigating both Yale's library system, online databases of publications (including Lexis-Nexis, JSTOR, Factiva, etc.) and the internet for research materials. Previous experience with STATA is a plus.