





Governance (GOVN) 540

Global Governance and Law (Revision 5)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode:

[Grouped study](#) 

Credits:

3


Area of study:

Arts

Prerequisites:

None.

Precluded:

GOVN 540 cannot be taken for credit if credit has already been obtained for Athabasca University's [GOVN 440](#), [GLST 440](#), or [POLI 440](#) .

Faculty:

[Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) 

Notes:

Students in Grouped Study courses are advised that this syllabus may vary in key details in each instance of the course. Always refer to the Moodle site for the most up-to-date details on texts, assignment structure, and grading.

Overview

Governance 540: Global Governance and Law is a three-credit, graduate-level course that provides an overview of the theoretical debates on law as governance in an increasingly globalized world. The study of law and governance is multidisciplinary, including sociology, political science, political theory, international relations, psychology, and law. Thus it is not possible to cover the vast subject of global governance and law in a single course. The issues that we will study here reflect the significance of globalization to contemporary politics. Each unit is a sampling of some of the recent thinking on governance and law, rather than an exhaustive overview of the literature.

Here are some of the questions posed by this course:

- Under what circumstances do people conform?
- Why do states cooperate?
- Does law prevent violence?
- How does governance function without government?
- What is the relation of law to democratic practice?
- What is the future of multilateralism?

Rather than reviewing institutions and structures of government, this course provides the tools and concepts necessary for you to understand and think critically about practices of governance, and how and towards what ends they function in contemporary societies.

We will explore some of the current debates on globalization, especially in relation to violence and the use of force, political community, legal legitimacy, and democratic practices. We will discuss a number of key questions related to these debates:

- What is governance for?
- Where does accountability lie?
- How does law function?
- Who is being governed?
- Who participates in governance?

We will consider these and other questions, and we will look at various institutions of governance, including several institutions of the United Nations, multilateral economic institutions, and international criminal tribunals. You will gain a broad understanding of some of the problems for governance and law in politics posed by globalization, from a contemporary social theory perspective.

Governance 540 does not assume that you already have a background in global governance and law. The course materials are meant to offer a sophisticated introduction to some of the key concepts in the area. Together with the commentary in the Study Guide, the readings for Governance 540 introduce the interdisciplinary terrain of the study of law and governance and situate these discussions in the context of globalization. We will pay particular attention to the ways in which international organizations and global social movements impact how violence, economics, and politics are regulated globally, and we will look at a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations. Throughout the course our discussion will be informed by contemporary theoretical debates.

Learning outcomes

The primary objective of Governance 540: Global Governance and Law is to introduce students to the interdisciplinary study of governance and law and, in particular, global governance and law. When you have completed this course, you should be able to

- discuss the significance of modern forms of state and global governance,
- analyze the challenges to the sovereign state system and the possibilities of legal governance in globalization,
- offer a detailed account of the many ways in which globalization is manifested,
- discuss the significance of global social movements in globalization,
- analyze contributions that social movements make to food, environmental, military, and human rights security globally,
- evaluate the different kinds of democracy that global social movements propose,
- discuss the interrelationship of the environment, gender, human rights, and social and economic well-being,
- understand the politics of legal systems, whether global or domestic,

- gain an understanding of how to read and write with critical interpretation, and
- develop a sense of how theories inform policy and legal decisions.

Evaluation

To receive credit for this course, students must participate in the online activities, successfully complete the assignments, and achieve a final mark of at least 60 per cent. Students should be familiar with the Master of Arts—Interdisciplinary Studies **grading system** [↗](#). Please note that it is students' responsibility to maintain their program status. Any student who receives a grade of "F" in one course, or a grade of "C" in more than one course, may be required to withdraw from the program.

The following table summarizes the evaluation activities and the credit weights associated with them.

Activity	Weight
Online Participation: Weekly Contribution to Discussion Forums	20%
Critical Review Essay of the text <i>The Darker Nations</i>	25%
Topic Statement and Research Proposal (5% each)	10%
Major Research Paper	45%
Total	100%

Materials

Digital course materials

Links to the following course materials will be made available in the course:





Prashad, V. (2007). *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*. A New Press People's History.

In addition to this textbook, several online readings will be assigned, all of which are available in the course's Digital Reading Room.

Athabasca University Online Materials

All other material for the course, including a Course Information, a Study Guide, and information about the assignments, as well as access to the Digital Reading Room and the discussion forums are found on the course home page.

Important links

- › [Master of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies](#) 
- › [Focus Areas](#) 
- › [Courses](#) 
- › [Fees and Funding](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

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