

## **International Studies Association**

52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention  
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### **Call for Papers**

**David A. Lake, President**

**Matthew A. Baum, Program Co-Chair**

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### **Global Governance: Political Authority in Transition**

The nation-state is generally regarded as inadequate to cope with the expanding global problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Global climate change, international economic crises, transnational terrorism and crime, nuclear proliferation, and more all challenge the capabilities of states individually and collectively. Nation-states are also challenged from below by secessionist and other sub-national movements and from above by global civil society. In response to these competing pressures, political authority has begun to flow upwards to supranational or multilateral bodies, downwards to regional and local governments, and sideways to private actors – both within nations and transnationally -- who assume previously public responsibilities. Governance is no longer the exclusive preserve of sovereign states, if it ever was. But neither is it moving uniformly in a single direction.

Despite growing interest in problems of global governance and decades of research, at least four key questions still lack clear answers.

- *Where is political authority moving?* With a constantly shifting terrain, we do not yet have a good map of the present structure of global governance. If authority is no longer located in sovereign states, where is it going? Has it relocated to other sites or just evaporated, leaving a less well governed world?
- *Why is authority moving?* Although functionalism and related explanations would appear to offer easy answers, they fail to account for why authority appears to be moving in different directions in seemingly similar issue areas. In the highly globalized area of international finance, where the near instantaneous global flow of information facilitates highly complex financial transactions that occur at far too swift a pace and large a scale for governments to effectively monitor or regulate, there has been relatively little expansion of supranational authority, with most cooperation occurring within transnational and transgovernmental networks. Yet, the WTO has begun to acquire real authority over international trade through its dispute settlement procedures. What accounts for these differences?
- *Is global governance good?* Even as more global governance is demanded to deal with global challenges, there is an inherent tradeoff between all forms of authority and personal autonomy. Has the movement of authority away from the state diminished the

sum of authority exercised over individuals, thereby increasing the realm of personal autonomy, or actually expanded, leaving us as individuals less autonomous than before? How would we know? Any individual with a cell phone can communicate instantly with like-minded individuals or social movements around the world. Yet by sending such messages the individual grants government a previously unavailable window into his or her preferences and intentions. Equally, to the extent that institutions of democratic accountability have emerged to limit abuses of authority within states, how can the myriad forms and sites of global governance be rendered similarly accountable?

- *How can global governance be improved and reformed?* Lacking any central vision or architect, global governance is the product of a complex set of individual, group, and national relationships. It would be surprising indeed if the current patchwork quilt of multiple overlapping and competing authorities were somehow optimal. The compelling global problems of the 21<sup>st</sup> century clearly imply that the current system is deeply flawed. Nearly all global governance institutions suffer from problems of legitimacy and accountability. What reforms are necessary? Which are practicable?

We invite proposals for papers and panels that address these and other issues related to the problems of global governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We especially welcome proposals that bridge different theoretical, epistemological and ontological divides within international studies to address common substantive problems.

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS IS JUNE 1, 2010**

All proposals should be submitted online using the MyISA Conference Management System at <http://isanet.ccit.arizona.edu/MyISA>

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