GOVERNANCE OF GLOBAL PRODUCTION
ESPM 290 - Fall 2004

Seminar:
Tuesday 2-4 p.m.
321 Haviland Hall
CCN: 30973

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CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This graduate seminar will explore critical policy and theoretical questions regarding the governance of global production. The seminar engages current trends in the restructuring of industrial production, distributions of environmental, labor, and social impacts from this production, and new strategies for democratic governance. The course presents existing theories of regulation and governance, assesses market and state “failures,” and critically analyzes emerging responses to the limits of traditional regulation. Using cases from the wood products, electronics, garments, shoes, coffee, food, chemicals, and oil industries, the seminar explores the potentials and limitations of new governance strategies, including: corporate voluntary self-regulation, codes of conduct, multi-stakeholder monitoring systems, certification and labeling schemes, fair trade programs, transparency and reporting initiatives, legal strategies, and international accords and agreements. The course seeks to evaluate why these new institutions and policies have emerged, how they function, and when and under what conditions they can be effective in mitigating environmental, labor, or social impacts of production.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Current debates regarding globalization often center around the adverse impacts of manufacturing and production processes. Public concerns about “sweatshops,” “pollution havens,” “environmental injustices,” and human rights abuses connected to resource industries have fueled both public policy and academic debates about the causes of environmental, workplace, and social problems, and appropriate regulatory responses. As formerly arcane debates have spilled out onto the streets of Seattle, Davos, Washington, and Cancun, a range of actors have proposed responses for better governance of globalization, and specifically, new forms of regulation of global production networks. Calls for more effective regulation of production have focused on both well-worn strategies and new innovations, including: strengthening local command-and-control regulatory systems; incorporating environmental and social clauses into international trade agreements; increasing the use of market-based mechanisms and “voluntary” self-regulation of firm supply chains; expanding information-based regulatory requirements; strengthening codes of conduct and independent monitoring systems; expanding community and worker participation in regulatory systems; and, targeting brand-name firms through transnational advocacy campaigns.

This seminar seeks to explore critical policy and theoretical questions regarding the governance of production networks. The seminar engages current trends in the restructuring and reorganization of industrial production, distributions of environmental, labor, and equity impacts from this production, and new strategies for democratic governance of production. The course presents existing theories of regulation and governance, assesses market and state “failures” (such as externalities, information asymmetries, and state interests), and critically analyzes emerging responses to these failures and limits of traditional regulation. The course will be particularly concerned with the role of civil society in the governance process, increasing public participation in governance, and strengthening mechanisms of accountability of the state to society.
Using cases from the wood products, electronics, garments, shoes, coffee, food, chemicals, and oil industries, we will explore the potentials and limitations of new governance strategies, including: corporate voluntary self-regulation, codes of conduct, multi-stakeholder monitoring systems, certification and labeling schemes, fair trade programs, transparency and reporting initiatives, legal strategies, and international accords and agreements. We will examine why these new institutions and policies have emerged, how they function, and when and under what conditions they actually are effective in mitigating environmental, labor, or social impacts of production.

The course will engage a number of questions, including:

• How do different supply chains (for footwear, apparel, electronics, forest products, oil, coffee, etc.) vary? Are there “typologies” of supply chains that we can specify?
• How are the adverse impacts of production networks currently regulated by local governments? Regional agreements? International accords and treaties?
• What are the potentials and limits of current government regulatory systems?
• How are global firms internally managing their supply chains for environmental and social impacts?
• How do local and transnational advocacy campaigns influence the performance of different production networks?
• What other points of leverage or regulatory strategies exist which might improve labor and environmental conditions in these supply chains?
• When, and under what conditions, is regulation – by states, international bodies, NGOs, or firms themselves – effective over different kinds of production networks?
• Does the structure or nature of a production network render it more responsive to certain types of regulatory pressure? For instance, more responsive to consumer pressure? Or local regulatory pressure?
• Is it possible to build on existing strategies and initiatives to develop more comprehensive or more tailored forms of governance of global production?

ASSIGNMENTS

This is a graduate seminar that will entail significant reading and detailed discussions of books and academic articles. As such, students will be expected to:

1. Attend all of the class sessions and participate actively in discussions. This will count for 10% of the course grade.

2. Write reaction briefs on the readings. Students will write a one-page reaction brief on the readings for 10 of the 14 weeks. Students should email the briefs to the class list by Monday at 5 pm each week. These reaction papers should include summaries, critiques, disagreements, questions, concerns, or reactions to the most important aspects of the readings. Reaction briefs will count for 20% of the course grade.

3. Seminar facilitation and review essays. Two weeks during the semester, each student will jointly lead the discussion. For these weeks, the student will submit a 3-5 page review essay of the readings and day’s general topic. This will count for 25% of the course grade.

4. Submit an outline for a proposed term project. The outline will be due on October 5th, 2004. This will count for 5% of the course grade.
5. Complete a research paper analyzing the organization and restructuring of a global supply chain and/or critically assessing a new governance strategy or policy initiative. The research paper will count for 40% of the course grade.

**EVALUATION:**

The course grade will be based on the following activities:

- 10% - Class participation
- 20% - Reaction papers
- 5% - Outline for term paper
- 25% - Seminar facilitation and review essays
- 40% - Term paper

**READINGS:**

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

Aug 31 - Introduction to the Course

Overview of the course topics, assignments, and expectations.

Sept. 7 – Reorganization of Production


Sept. 14 – Problems of Global Production and Governance


Sept. 21 – Traditional Theories and Strategies of Regulation


Sept. 28 – New Theories of Regulation and Governance


**Oct. 5 – Corporate Accountability Demands**


➤ Outline of term project due.

**Oct. 12 – Corporate Self-Regulation**


**Oct. 19 – Codes of Conduct and Independent Monitoring**


Oct. 26 – Certification and Labeling


Also, scan recent case studies on Forest Certification in developing countries at: http://www.yale.edu/forestcertification/symposium/casestudies.html

Nov. 2 – Corporate Reporting and Transparency


Also check out: The Global Reporting Initiative: http://globalreporting.org
The Sunshine Standards: http://www.stakeholderalliance.org/sunstds.html

Nov. 9 – Fair Trade


**Nov. 16 – Product Policies**


**Nov. 23 – Legal Strategies**


**Nov. 30 – Trade Agreements, Standards, and Institutions**


**Dec. 7 – Towards Democratic Experimentalism**


**Term Papers Due in Class.**