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Universality: A Hollow Norm or a Fundamental Necessity?

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How can a culturally and politically diverse international community address shared problems of global order without a set of universal normative assumptions? Can universalism play a role in contemporary global governance? Drawing on recent developments in IL and IR theory, and here especially international practice theory, norm contestation, and global ethics, the panel brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars to explore conditions of global ordering based on the past, present, and future of universality by focusing on four contested sites of global governance: international criminal law, human rights protection, development and environmental politics. Its principal aims are 1) to provide new theoretical insights from the humanities and social sciences on the question of universality; and 2) to create a dialogue among scholars working on political theory, moral philosophy, imperial history, and IR norms research.

Track Classification: Ethics and World Politics Working Group