

## Research Statement

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My broad research interests, many of which are prominent in my dissertation, include international law, international organization, civil conflict and intervention related to it, American foreign policy, and judicial politics. I am particularly interested in the role that international law plays in international politics, both in terms of how the law affects the behavior of actors and how those same actors influence and shape international law. I think the recent attempts to bridge the interdisciplinary gap between international law and international relations is both an important and fertile area of scholarship that can be built on in years to come. My dissertation, “Who Recognizes? The Politics of Legitimizing Governments after Extra-Legal Change,” draws on scholarship from both disciplines to explore an incredibly understudied political phenomenon.

The title expresses the question motivates the entire project—what is/are the process(es) that drive recognition decisions? Under international law when governments come to power through irregular means the governments of other states must decide whether to recognize the new government as a legitimate agent of the state, and we observe considerable variation over who recognizes the new governments, the circumstances under which recognition occurs, and even how long it takes to recognize new governments. My dissertation studies the processes that drive recognition decisions. Despite attempts, mainly by legal scholars, to limit the discretion that third-party governments have in this regard, the institution of recognition has persisted over time. I argue that states use recognition as a political tool to frustrate the interests of states with whom they are in conflict while also using recognition to bolster relationships with allies. In addition, I argue that states grant or refuse recognition to benefit or punish a new government based on the relationship with the previous regime.

The dissertation is organized into chapters, as I would like to develop it into a book in the future. The first part addresses the legal institution of recognition, how it developed, and how it relates to international relations. This section also lays out my theory in detail. This first portion of the dissertation is intended to speak to both international legal scholars as well as international relations scholars and provide a common ground across the two disciplines. The second portion of my dissertation is a quantitative analysis of recognition decisions since the end of World War II. I build on previous empirical work regarding irregular regime changes, and establish a universe of cases that I refer to as opportunities for recognition. Using historical news accounts, I code instances of recognition and apply the appropriate statistical methods to test my hypotheses. Of particular note is the fact that this dataset is entirely new, as no one has yet examined recognition. Finally, I include a case study that provides greater detail on the decision to recognize. I think it is important to balance my project with multiple types of analysis.

Once my dissertation is complete, there is certainly more work that can be done with respect to recognition. The next immediate question I would like to focus on is what are the effects of recognition? As part of civil conflicts in general and regime stability there are a number of applications for my dataset. For scholars interested in intra-state conflict duration, intensity, and/or termination recognition of governments should be a key component. Similar to my published article with Pat Regan that introduces a new dataset regarding third-party intervention in unstable countries, as domestic unrest continues in countries around the world and governments are toppled,

I hope to be able to provide advice to policy makers regarding their actions toward the new governments.

Finally, I have designed a simulation with my colleague and fellow Ph.D candidate, Casey Delehanty, here at Florida State. The paper outlines an in-class simulation that can be used in many international relations or comparative politics courses. It asks students to negotiate an international agreement as state leaders while being beholden to varying domestic constituencies. I also hope to design more simulations in the future such as an American Foreign Policy crisis simulation, parts of which could be run separately in different classes or, preferably, run simultaneously in multiple classes. For instance, an American politics class or American Foreign Policy class deals with a situation from the American perspective, while students in international relations or comparative politics classes provide the reactions of either other states or the international community. In short, I intend to follow the example of previous students—Kürşad Turan and Joe Young—that my advisor has directed and publish multiple simulations and pedagogical articles.