

Global Approaches to Tech Regulation

Course Duration: One Semester (14 Weeks)

No. of Credit Units: 4 Credits

Level: UG and PG

Pre-requisites (if applicable): None

Course Description

Welcome to the regulatory theatre of the digital age, where privacy, data protection, platform governance, and artificial intelligence form the four acts of a script still being written—and constantly revised in response to the latest crisis. Technology, of course, does not politely wait for the law to catch up. While parliaments debate definitions inherited from a pre-digital century, platforms quietly rewrite economies of speech and influence; while courts inch toward precedent, data flows across borders at the speed of light; and while regulators draft consultation papers, artificial intelligence is already reprogramming the terms of human decision-making. Law students entering this terrain cannot simply memorize statutes and case law. They must learn to navigate a fragmented, contradictory global order where every jurisdiction insists on “doing tech regulation” in its own unique style, and yet none can escape the cross-border consequences of its choices.

This course, **Global Approaches to Tech Regulation**, equips students with precisely that, a comparative and critical lens. It focuses on four anchor areas—privacy, data protection, platform governance, and artificial intelligence—across jurisdictions including the European Union, the United States, India, Singapore, and China. Students will situate these frameworks within the broader tensions of innovation versus rights, sovereignty versus globalization, and enforcement versus evasion.

Students will examine landmark frameworks: the EU’s GDPR, Digital Services Act, and AI Act; the United States’ Section 230 and its patchwork of privacy regimes; India’s IT Rules and newly enacted Digital Personal Data Protection Act; and Asian accountability models such as Singapore’s PDPA and POFMA, and China’s algorithmic controls. They will study case law and policy battles—from Schrems II and Facebook’s Oversight Board to TikTok bans, and algorithmic bias controversies. Beyond doctrinal detail, students will grapple with deeper philosophical and political-economic questions: Why does the EU embrace precaution while the US clings to innovation-first exceptionalism? And how do Global South jurisdictions adapt, resist, or repurpose regulatory templates crafted elsewhere?

The course begins by unpacking the fundamental question of *why* we regulate technology at all. Students will examine the competing logics of precautionary versus innovation-driven regulatory

models, Lessig’s modalities of law, Reindenberg’s Lex Informatica, and the perennial jurisdictional headache of applying territorial legal frameworks to borderless digital phenomena. From there, the course turns to privacy and data protection. Students will interrogate which of the jurisdictional models “travels best,” whether trade-offs are inevitable, and if the so-called “Brussels Effect” is genuine leadership or merely Europe exporting its anxieties.

From privacy, the course shifts to platform regulation and intermediary liability, where ideology collides most visibly with law. Should platforms be neutral conduits, or quasi-publishers responsible for amplified speech? Here, students confront the uneasy reality that “platform accountability” can mean democracy, market fairness, or political expedience—depending entirely on who is invoking it.

The political economy of tech regulation will be laid bare in its full geopolitical glory. Regulation is not merely about protecting consumers or setting ethical baselines—it is also about projecting power. Every data localization mandate and AI guideline is a move in a larger chess game. The course situates regulation within international agreements and the global struggle for economic dominance, which became multidimensional with the addition of the contested frontier of artificial intelligence regulation. Ethical dilemmas of bias, transparency, explainability, and human oversight, and the role of law in addressing them, become sharper in this space.

Having parsed the substance of laws, the course then addresses enforcement. Extraterritorial claims, forum shopping, regulatory arbitrage, and conflicting obligations create an enforcement nightmare no jurisdiction has resolved. Case studies of enforcement clashes will anchor student debates on whether global harmonization is desirable, feasible, or simply a fantasy cherished by academics and trade lawyers.

The concluding weeks will examine ethical and human rights dimensions. Algorithmic discrimination, election interference, and surveillance capitalism are not abstract risks but lived realities. Students will interrogate whether current laws meaningfully integrate human rights standards, and whether feminist, postcolonial, and Global South critiques can reshape governance. The course will pivot to future trajectories, analyzing whether tech regulation can converge into a common global standard, or are we hurtling toward a splintered internet governed by incompatible laws and nationalist imperatives? The aim is not prediction but preparedness: cultivating lawyers who can think critically about technologies not yet invented and laws not yet written.

Students will, of course, learn cases, statutes, and UN principles. But they will also confront the absurdities: that US platforms are still shielded by a 1996 provision written when AOL chatrooms were edgy; that India introduced its data protection law in the same week it demanded WhatsApp traceability; that Europe’s AI Act attempts to tame technologies even as AI systems ghostwrite attorney briefs.

Global Approaches to Tech Regulation is designed to unsettle, provoke, and equip students with the comparative, critical, and creative skills required for one of the century’s most urgent legal

challenges. It is a course designed with the aim to make law students learn not only to interpret existing texts but to imagine and negotiate regulatory futures. That means thinking like regulators, advocates, corporate counsels, and civil society watchdogs.

And if students occasionally find themselves asking whether the law is chasing technology or technology is deliberately outrunning the law, well—that confusion is not a bug in the system. It is the point.

Pedagogy

Expect interactive debates, moot simulations, policy-drafting sprints, and foresight workshops. Students will deploy AhaSlides and Kahoot! for collaborative activities, engage in structured peer debates, and even attempt to draft their own “Platform Constitution.” These exercises demand that students move beyond doctrinal knowledge toward the skills of design, critique, and negotiation.

- Comparative Analysis: side-by-side study of jurisdictions (EU, US, India, & Singapore).
- Case-Based Learning: landmark decisions (e.g., Schrems II, Google Spain).
- Simulation & Roleplay: acting as regulators, companies, or civil society actors.
- Collaborative Tools: AhaSlides, debates, peer critique.
- Critical Reflection: feminist, postcolonial, and Global South lenses.

Course Structure

The course unfolds across seven thematic modules, spread over fourteen teaching weeks (with Week 7 reserved for a midterm assessment and Week 14 for review). We start with foundational frameworks, move through substantive issue-areas, grapple with geopolitical complexities, and close with ethical and forward-looking reflections. This progressive difficulty ensures students move from comprehension to application to critical synthesis.

Each module zooms in on a core area of regulation:

Week #	Module	Topics
1	Module 1 Foundations & Frameworks (Initiation into regulatory philosophies, jurisdictional clashes, and theories)	Mapping the Terrain of Tech Regulation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competing rationales of regulating technology.• Regulatory models: hard law, soft law, co-regulation.• Lessig’s modalities & Reidenberg’s Lex Informatica• Jurisdictional scope: territorial vs. extraterritorial regulation.• Institutional actors

2	Module 2 Privacy Regimes (European Union, United States, India, & Singapore)	Global Approaches to Privacy & Data Protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GDPR: principles, rights, enforcement, case law (Google Spain, Schrems I & II). • US: CCPA, FTC enforcement, HIPAA – sectoralism vs. federal attempts. • India: DPDP Act 2023 – consent, significant data fiduciaries, overlaps with IT Act. • Singapore: PDPA and POFMA – accountability model.
3		
4	Module 3 Platform Governance & Content Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 230 (US) – protection and reform debates. • EU Digital Services Act – systemic risk mitigation, transparency. • India’s IT Rules 2021 – compliance officers, traceability, safe harbor erosion. • Content moderation vs. free speech: Facebook Oversight Board, Twitter/X controversies. • Algorithmic bias and discrimination. • Digital inclusion and accessibility.
5		
6	Module 4 Political Economy of Tech Regulation (Tech nationalism)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech nationalism: Huawei ban, TikTok controversies. • Global South approaches: balancing development with regulation. • Tech regulation and democracy (fake news, elections, surveillance). • Feminist, postcolonial, and Global South critiques of tech law.
7	<i>Pause and Access</i>	<i>Mid-Term Assessment</i> (Policy hackathon or scenario-based exam.)
8	Political Economy of Tech Regulation (...continued: Digital Sovereignty)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU “digital sovereignty” and industrial strategy. • Digital economy agreements. • Regulatory capture and lobbying in tech lawmaking.

9	Module 5 AI Regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EU AI Act – risk-based model, prohibited practices, enforcement. • US approach – AI Bill of Rights, NIST framework, state-level bills. • China’s algorithmic regulation and social scoring. • India’s NITI Aayog and non-binding principles. • Ethical dilemmas: bias, accountability, explainability, human oversight.
10		
11	Module 6 Cross-Border Enforcement & Global Fragmentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extraterritoriality of GDPR and EU AI Act. • Conflicts of laws: US tech firms vs. EU regulators. • Global standards initiatives (OECD, UNESCO AI ethics, G20 principles). • Data localization vs. free data flows. • Net Neutrality • Forum shopping and regulatory arbitrage.
12		
13	Module 7 Future of Tech Regulation (Internet fragmentation, convergence, and visions of digital constitutionalism)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet fragmentation (splinternet scenarios). • Future of cross-border data governance. • Convergence of privacy, AI, platform regulation. • The rise of “digital constitutionalism.”
14	<i>End and Reflect</i>	<i>Revision</i>

Course Vision

This course envisions law students as future regulators, litigators, policy architects, and critical scholars of digital society. It aims to cultivate comparative literacy (understanding multiple jurisdictions), normative awareness (justice, equity, democracy), and practical skills (drafting, debating, foresight). The vision is to empower students to not only know and navigate the law -- but also how to critique it, how to imagine alternatives, and how to regulate it.

Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will:

- Understand and critically evaluate the key regulatory frameworks for privacy, data, platforms, and AI across multiple jurisdictions.

- Compare regulatory philosophies and identify their normative and political underpinnings.
- Apply legal reasoning to real-world case studies and hypotheticals.
- Develop skills in policy drafting, advocacy, and foresight scenario building.
- Reflect on broader questions of justice, equity, and human rights in tech governance.

Assessments

Assessment	Mode	Type	Maximum Marks
Reflection Paper	Take-Home	Critical reflection paper	15
Mid-Term	In-Class	Policy Hackathon	30
Presentation & Viva	In-Class	Policy Presentation	20
Class Activities	In-Class	Debates, simulations	5

Reading

Statutes

- EU's General Data Protection Regulation, 2016/679
- EU's Digital Services Act (DSA) and Digital Market Act (DMA), 2022/2065
- EU's AI Act, 2024/1689
- India's Information Technology Act, 2000, and Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021
- India's Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023
- United States' Communications Decency Act, 1996
- California Consumer Privacy Act, 2018
- Singapore's Personal Data Protection Act (PDPA), 2012
- Singapore's Protection from Online Falsehoods and Manipulation Act (POFMA), 2019
- Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, UNESCO, 2021

Books

- Digital Empires: The Global Battle to Regulate Technology by Anu Bradford (Oxford University Press, 2023)
- Global Trends in Digital Technologies: Digital Policies and Regulations by Dr. Manmohan Chaturvedi (2024)
- Comparative Global AI Regulation: Policy Perspectives from the EU, China, and the US by Jon Chun, Christian Schroeder de Witt, Katherine Elkins, 2024.
- Edwards, L. (Ed.). (2020). Future law: emerging technology, regulation and ethics. Edinburgh University Press.

Articles

- Mansell, R. (2023). Digital technology innovation: Mythical claims about regulatory efficacy. *Javnost-The Public*, 30(2), 145-160.
- Palmer, L. (2023). Regulating technology. In *Framing Technology* (pp. 77-90). Routledge.
- Paul, R. (2024). The politics of regulating AI technologies: towards AI competition states. In *Handbook on Public Policy and Artificial Intelligence* (pp. 261-279). Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Rabitz, F. (2025). A theory of international technology regulation. *Review of International Studies*, 1-18, Cambridge University Press.
- Seun Solomon Bakare, Adekunle Oyeyemi Adeniyi, Chidiogo Uzoamaka Akpuokwe, & Nkechi Emmanuella Eneh. (2024). Data Privacy Laws and Compliance: A Comparative Review of the EU GDPR And Usa Regulations. *Computer Science & IT Research Journal*, 5(3), 528-543.
- Suveer Dubey, A Comparative Analysis of Data Privacy Laws across India, EU and USA, Volume 10 Issue 1, *Journal of Legal Studies & Research*, 52-64, Published on 05/02/2024.

Report

- J. Rich, Cynthia. "New Wave of Privacy Laws in the APAC Region." Morrison Foerster. 30 Jan. 2023.