

Editorial #20: Wake Me Up When Academic Hustle Culture Ends

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For anyone deep in a love affair with academia, the month of September contains a special promise – that is, in addition to that of some relief for those who, like me, barely function above 25°C. Even for us Germans, who usually only start their regular semester in October, September often is the embarkation point for adventures such as Erasmus or research stays abroad, a month of shift, change, and excitement. Our colleagues are slowly emerging from their writing retreats and reading marathons and social media hiatuses that they tweeted about in July, and we can finally admit to each other that, no, we didn't get any real writing done either. Too hot, too recovering from end-of-semester burn-out, too global crisis mode. It matters not. Not only are we returning to a place we love and feel at home in – this semester is going to be different. Teaching will already be fully prepared before classes start, our syllabi immaculate, our contributions to faculty life invaluable, our minds clear for those 7 am writing sessions after yoga and before class.

This is of course delusional and we know it, but that's not the point. The problem lies not in the overambitious promises on which we will not be able to deliver but in the too-often unfulfilled promises of academia: to provide space for deep thought, meaningful discussion, and engaged teaching instead of round-the-clock hustle, relentless competition, and rigid curricula. That's why, as we prepare to return to our offices and classrooms and digital workspaces, I suggest we focus our New Semester's Resolutions not on our individual productivity but on the spaces we want our universities to be.

As students and scholars focusing on international law, for example, we can question in how far our studies are truly global, who we are including and excluding. Whether we are paying due attention to the [long-term perspective](#), while keeping in mind [old wisdoms](#). How we are [protecting](#) the most vulnerable. In which ways we can better experience and (re-)[imagine justice](#). If, in the face of [current conflicts](#), we are truly practicing [solidarity](#).

Völkerrechtsblog as a “slow blog” remains committed to providing additional room for these thoughts and discussions – and as always, we'd love to receive your [contributions](#)!

