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Editors' Introduction

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Editors' Introduction

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This tenth edition of *Res Publica* is a tribute to the great diversity of scholarly works of political science produced by students of Illinois Wesleyan University. Students in many classes, both within the Political Science department and in other fields, are required to write substantial empirical analyses. The essays in this journal represent the very best papers written for a variety of different courses at IWU.

The first three essays in this year's publication were all written as part of the political science senior seminar, a course required of all political science majors. In this class, students develop an original work of political science that constitutes a substantial contribution to the field. Some, such as the first essay, are done through a quantitative analysis of existing data. Others, such as the second essay, analyze a specific case study in order to reveal a more general trend or principle. The third essay combines both approaches, using statistical analysis as well as carefully selected case studies.

Many political science students choose to take on a second major in a similar field. These students often have the opportunity to apply knowledge gained from political science courses to their thesis for this other area of study. The fourth essay in this year's journal was written for the author's international studies senior seminar.

Additionally, students are often required to write analytical essays for political science classes outside of senior seminar. The fifth essay in this volume was written for the upper-level American Public Policy course.

While most students complete their senior seminar as part of a class with several of their peers, some choose to fulfill the requirement through an independent study. These students work closely with a faculty member to produce a work that differs from those normally produced for the senior seminar. The sixth essay in this year's *Res Publica* is not an empirical study, but a work of political thought, which analyzes how people ought to act in order to combat a social problem.

Finally, for certain courses students must write several "microessays" in which they make and support an argument in the span of one to two pages. Though short, these brief essays require a great deal of critical thinking and analysis. The two microessays that appear at the end of this journal were prepared for a course in Constitutional Law, and demonstrate how reason can often lead two intelligent thinkers to different conclusions.

In addition to the authors who spent a great deal of time preparing these essays both for class and for publication, this journal is highly indebted to the IWU political science faculty. Without the wisdom and skill they demonstrate in teaching students not what to think but how to think, the original work contained in this volume could not have been created. The two assistant editors of this volume also deserve much, if not most, of the credit for this journal. Their hard work and dedication was what guided this project from start to finish.

Ryan Foster

Editor-in-Chief