



2011

## Editor's Introduction

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### Recommended Citation

Burgess, Michael and Uden, Amy (2011) "Editor's Introduction," *Res Publica - Journal of Undergraduate Research*: Vol. 16

Available at: <http://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/respublica/vol16/iss1/4>

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## EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

In assembling *Res Publica XVI*, we have had the honor of engaging a span of scholarly work that is broad in both method and substance. Perhaps more than any other edition, this year's journal represents many of the unique research threads that make up the discipline of political science.

The concept of "*res publica*" itself also suggests the dynamic and diverse character of political science. The phrase itself has been used in incredibly diverse contexts, from the title of the early Roman political writings of Cicero, to the name of a contemporary Estonian populist party. The world has been witness to much of the power and volatility of politics in the year 2011, making it all the more evident that political scholarship requires continued commitment to intellectual inquiry, in order to further our understanding of this dynamic field.

*Res Publica*, as one of the few undergraduate scholarly journals in existence, provides a unique venue for nascent scholars to contribute to the intellectual dialogue. Our contributing authors have used the skills they have developed during their undergraduate careers to create original research, tackling issues from the international realm to the local level of government. We offer our thanks and congratulations to these contributing authors for their willingness to engage the scholarly dialogue, building upon their already excellent academic accomplishments.

Furthermore, we express our appreciation to Kim McDonald and Jillian Schmitz for their dedication and patience in assisting us with the creation of *Res Publica*. We also thank the Illinois Wesleyan political science faculty for entrusting us with the task of assembling a journal that is not only a representation of the diversity of our department, but also of our larger university. This product, created by the hard work of Wesleyan students, represents the outgrowth of the faculty's investment in our intellectual development and of their continued support throughout the editorial process.

**Michael Burgess & Amy Uden**