



Spring 3-9-2018

Bouras '18 Presents at National Research Conference

Vi Kakares
Illinois Wesleyan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news>

Recommended Citation

Kakares, Vi, "Bouras '18 Presents at National Research Conference" (2018). *News and Events*. 3624.

<https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/news/3624>

This Article is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by Digital Commons @ IWU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this material in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you need to obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/ or on the work itself. This material has been accepted for inclusion by faculty at The Ames Library at Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@iwu.edu.

©Copyright is owned by the author of this document.

Bouras '18 Presents at National Research Conference

March 9, 2018

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — “Anti-elite sentiment is a phenomena that is prevalent everywhere,” according to Zoe Bouras '18, an Illinois Wesleyan University senior and member of Pi Sigma Alpha (PSA), the national political science honor society.

Bouras shared her findings on this phenomena at the PSA National Research Conference at George Washington University in Washington D.C., Feb. 16-18.

A [political science](#) and [international studies](#) double major, Bouras began her research on populist politics as part of her political science senior seminar course. As a member of PSA, Bouras submitted her abstract and received an invitation to present her research, which explores the relationship between anti-elite sentiment and political distrust in Europe, at the PSA conference.

“I think the Pi Sigma Alpha research conference was a great opportunity,” Bouras said. “I got to see a little of Washington D.C., and I received great feedback from a PhD. candidate who acted as a discussant. I got to meet other political science students, and I was able to share some of what IWU is doing with the wider academic community.”

Bouras said her interest in modern populist politics – which supports the rights of the common people against the privileged elite – emerged from Illinois Wesleyan professor of political science Kathleen Montgomery’s senior seminar course that focuses on the politics of inclusion and exclusion.

“That led me to questions of political trust and trust in elites,” Bouras said.

According to Bouras, anti-elitist sentiment is the “hallmark of populism” which can lead to feelings of political distrust and resentment. As someone who has studied abroad at the University of Oxford through the [IWU Pembroke Program](#), and worked as a [Freeman Asia](#) intern in Seoul, South Korea in 2016, Bouras said anti-elitism can be seen virtually anywhere. “At home, abroad, but also in our daily lives and in the Facebook comments section,” she said.

As part of her research, Bouras hypothesized that the more socially integrated a person feels and the more secure a person’s self-identified social status, the less likely the person will be to hold anti-elite sentiments.

In order to test her hypothesis, Bouras used data from Round Seven of the European Social Survey and SPSS Statistical Data Package to analyze how individual characteristics can bring about feelings of anti-elitism.

From her data, Bouras found that both economic and cultural factors play a role in the formation of anti-elite sentiment at the individual level. The results supported her hypothesis, showing that there is a relationship between both social integration and self-identified social standing, and anti-elite sentiment.

Bouras presented all of her findings in a presentation titled “Dom Perignon vs. Miller Lite” to over 100 people at the conference.

“We enjoyed having Zoe take part in the Pi Sigma Alpha Student Research Conference last month,” said Executive Director of Pi Sigma Alpha Sean Twombly. “She was a great addition to the program and represented the University in the best possible manner.”

Bouras works as a writing tutor at the IWU Writing Center, is a member of Kappa Delta Sorority, and is the president of both the Rock Climbing Club and IWU Model United Nations. She is a member of multiple honor societies including: Mortar Board, Phi Kappa Phi, Pi Sigma Alpha, Phi Beta Delta, and Alpha Lambda Delta.



Zoe Bouras '18 presented at the PSA National Research Conference at George Washington University in Washington D.C.