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# Authors' Biographies

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## Authors' Biographies

## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

**Casey Plach** is a junior Political Science and Spanish double major. In her time at IWU, she has worked as a writing center tutor, a research assistant for the Political Science department, and a residential community advisor. Casey has interned at State Farm, Heartland Head Start, and the McLean County Law and Justice Center. This semester she is enjoying time abroad in Granada, Spain and interning at an organization called Tierra de Todos.

**Lauren Burke** is a senior Political Science major at Illinois Wesleyan University. She has been active in IWU's chapters of the Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity and the Sigma Alpha Iota International Music Fraternity. She is also a member of The Phi Beta Kappa Society, Pi Sigma Alpha (The National Political Science Honor Society), The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, Phi Beta Delta (The Honor Society for International Scholars), Omicron Delta Epsilon (The Honor Society for Economics), Sigma Alpha Pi (The National Society of Leadership and Success), and Alpha Lambda Delta (The National Honor Society for First-Year Students). Her experiences volunteering with Habitat for Humanity's Alternative Spring Break during her sophomore year and working as an intern in the Irish Parliament during the spring of her junior year contributed greatly to her interest in international politics. Lauren will begin pursuing her M.A. in Democracy and Governance at Georgetown University this fall.

**Patrick Cavanaugh** is a senior with majors in English Writing and Political Science. He has served as an editor for *The Argus*, a Communications Intern at the Chicago Red Cross, and a News/Production Intern at WJBC Radio in Bloomington. Patrick currently works as the Music Director for WESN Radio, an assistant for the Political Science department, and a tutor at the IWU Writing Center. While studying abroad in the Netherlands, he organized a poetry reading to raise money for the Dutch NGO Dokters van de Wereld and got into a couple biking accidents. Patrick hopes to secure an intern position with National Public Radio for the summer before going to graduate school and pursuing a career in journalism and/or communications. He loves his family, his pets, and his friends (not in that order).

**Lexi Baltes** is a senior at Illinois Wesleyan University with majors in Political Science and English Literature. Playing four years on the IWU Women's Basketball Team, Lexi won a National Championship, served as Captain for two years, and earned Elite 89 and Academic All American honors. Lexi is a member of the 2014 All State Good Works Team, a Phi Beta Kappa Fellow, a member of Phi Kappa Phi and the Student Athlete Advisory Committee, and President of Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Lexi interned at the McLean County State's Attorney's office. She will be attending Notre Dame Law School in the fall.

**Xinlin Xu** is a senior Political Science major. She is a member of Pi Sigma Alpha, the Political Science honor society. She has been working with Scholars at Risk on human rights advocacy for threatened intellectuals since her sophomore year. She spent her junior year at Pembroke College in Oxford, studying philosophy, politics and economics. She has interned with Prairie State Legal Services and the Economic Development Office of the City of Bloomington. After graduation, she will be attending New York University School of Law.

**Brad Gresik** is a senior at Illinois Wesleyan University with majors in Political Science and International Studies, Development Concentration. He is the 2013-2014 Co-President of Pi Sigma Alpha and 2014 President of IWU College Democrats. He was selected summer to participate in the Technos International Program in summer 2012 and spent the following semester studying international politics at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. This year, Brad has interned with Bloomington Mayor Tari Renner, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, and for Democratic congressional candidate Ann Callis. After graduation, Brad hopes to work for the state or federal government and eventually attend graduate school studying public policy.

**Ryan Winter** is a senior Political Science and History double major. In his time at IWU, Ryan has been a mentor for the Engaging Diversity program, an intern for the Bloomington Mayor's Office, and a political science research assistant. He served as Co-President of Pi Sigma Alpha and Vice President of Phi Alpha Theta honor societies, and was initiated into Phi Beta Kappa. As a recipient of IWU's Ecldey Summer Research Fellowship, Ryan spent last summer studying the role of religion in European populist radical right parties. Ryan competes on the track and field team, and this year he was awarded all-conference honors in the triple jump. Ryan loves working with kids, and along with two other student-athletes he earned a Weir Fellowship for founding an exercise and healthy lifestyles program at the local Boys and Girls Club.