

Indiana University
Department of Political Science
Incoming Class
Fall, 2011

Laura Bucci

*(American Politics)
BA Providence College*



Laura Bucci's research focuses on the political involvement and behavior of traditionally under-represented groups in American politics. Of special interest to her is the way in which informal networks or community-based nonprofit organizations work together with target populations and elected officials to advance rights and other collective benefits. Most recently, she has worked in an internal capacity building for grassroots nonprofits.

Matthew Fowler

*(American Politics)
BA/MA, LSU*



Matthew Fowler grew up on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain in Mandeville, Louisiana. He majored in political science and minored in African and African-American Studies as an undergraduate, before earning an MA in political science. His main area of interest is American Politics, focusing on race and politics, gender, southern politics, elections, and political behavior.

Peter Giordano

(Comparative Politics)

BA Utah State

IU Maurer School of Law



Peter grew up in Las Cruces, New Mexico. He did an undergraduate degree in history before moving to Bloomington to attend law school in 2007. Although he found law school to be a fascinating learning experience, his passion has always been for academia; he decided to pursue a Ph.D. in hopes of developing a career focused on research and teaching. Peter reports that he loves living here in Bloomington, and he is very excited to be in the program.

Paul Hoffman

(International Relations)

BS US Air Force Academy

MPA University of Oklahoma

MA Air Command and Staff College



Paul Hoffman is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Air Force. He has been stationed throughout the United States and overseas, with deployments to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Iraq. From 2009-2010 he was stationed in Kandahar, Afghanistan, where he served as advisor to the Afghan National Army Air Corps. He comes to Indiana from Montgomery, Alabama, where he taught in the Air Command and Staff College's Department of Leadership and Strategy for three years. His research interests include foreign military assistance, international development, and weapons proliferation. He is married and has two children.

Prashant S Hosur

(Comparative/International Relations)

BA Graceland College

MA Seton Hall



Prashant joins us from New Delhi, India. He completed a BA in International Studies before earning an MA in International Relations. He worked for the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi (India), where he was associated with the US & Nuclear Cluster. His broad thematic interests include US involvement in South Asia; South Asian Security; and Indian Political Philosophy.

Mike Kovanda

(Political Philosophy)

BA Wisconsin



Mike is from the western suburbs of Chicago, where he was the youngest of three brothers. He went to the University of Wisconsin with dreams of being a veterinarian, but after a miserable experience in introductory chemistry and a couple of classes in the history of Western political thought, he realized he was better suited to work with Kant and Marx than cats and dogs. He has interests in continental theory, and particularly Marxist thought and critical theory. He is excited to start his graduate career at IU and is looking forward to getting to know everyone in the department.

Matthew Kuchem

(Political Philosophy/American Politics)

BS Union University



Matthew graduated in 2010 with a degree in Political Science and Broadcast Journalism, before pursuing an internship in Washington, D.C. In college, he enjoyed both doing empirical and philosophical research in political science and also serving as a producer and anchor for a daily live news program on local cable. His graduate-study interests revolve around political theory and democratic theory, American political thought and founding, natural law and natural rights, and politics and religion. As this native Texan forays back into what he describes as “Yankeeland,” he’s looking forward to experiencing Indiana’s four real seasons.

Yesola Kweon

(Comparative Politics)

BA/MA, Korea University



Yesola joins us from South Korea. Her main interests in comparative politics and political economy stem from various experiences in NGOs and international organizations in Korea, India and China. She has worked in the field of children's education there via local NGOs. She also interned for the UNEP in Korea. As an undergraduate, she double majored in Political Science and Chinese literature and language, before completing an MA in political science. During her time as an undergraduate, she was exchange student at both Beijing Normal University and the University of Toronto. Her research interests include financial regulatory policy, fiscal policy and intra-government relations (with a focus on China).

Shelli Powell

(International Relations)

BA BYU

MA Georgia



Shelli Powell, who originally comes from Jamaica, specializes in international relations and research methods. Shelli's primary research interest is the role of religion in intrastate conflict and conflict resolution. At the University of Georgia, she conducted research with the Violent Intranational Political Conflict and Terrorism Laboratory: Project Civil Strife program (VIPCAT) and assisted in the collection and coding of data on the strategic behavior of state and non-state actors in Southeast Asia. While at VIPCAT, Shelli developed an interest in Asian separatist and nationalistic movements. Shelli is also interested in the use of psychological and psychoanalytical approaches to conflict behavior and contributed a chapter on psychoanalysis and the study of politics to a published volume entitled, Grand Theories and Ideologies of the Social Sciences.

Katie Stewart

(Comparative Politics/International Relations)

BA Dickinson College



In 2010, Katie graduated summa cum laude with honors in political science. During her undergraduate career, she studied a wide array of disciplines. While at Dickinson, she worked for the Clarke Forum for Contemporary Issues, an organization that brings guest lecturers to campus. During her junior year, she studied abroad at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, England and played goalkeeper for the university's football team. During senior year, she focused on her honors thesis, "Was it the Luck of the Irish? A Comparative Analysis of the Levels of Success Attained by the Irish and Basque Nationalist Movements." Since graduating, she has worked as the Institutional Advancement Intern for the Center for Global Development. Katie is a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Pi Sigma Alpha, Omicron Delta Kappa, and Alpha Lambda Delta. At IU, she plans to focus on the subfields of comparative politics and international relations and also continue to play soccer and piano.

Alexis Turner

(Political Philosophy/Comparative Politics)

BA Sarah Lawrence

MA Chicago



Alexis began her career studying science and the history of science. She is still drawn to these disciplines for the affinities between them and how her own mind puts things together; the way they tackle problems is indispensable to her work. That said, their answers have a deceptive appearance of finality, which provides a moment of frisson when discovered, but then the thing is fixed, lifeless. So in the intervening years she has poked at various things, but only fell in love when she discovered the existence of other people, to whom no answer can be pinned.

To be political is not to set and fix people, nor permit complete unruliness. It is the endeavor of living with them in this impossibility.

So her interests, while wide-ranging across the history of political thought, are currently focused on unraveling this confounding middle area. Somewhere between rule and not rule is the physics of moderation--the structure, movement, tensions, and balance that consistently characterize restrained political systems