Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis

2009

annual report

A new science of governance for a new age
Highlights of the Year 2009

We were tempted to remove the plural from the heading above and focus on the highlight that was so big it could seem like the only one: Lin Ostrom’s Nobel Prize. But in fact, there were numerous highlights in 2009.

In January, we hosted a conference on Building Sustainable Democracies, coordinated by Bill Bianco and Regina Smyth, coordinators of the working group on the Political Economy of Democratic Sustainability (PEDS). Later in the spring, we hosted a joint conference with the Gruter Institute on the evolution of mechanisms for solving collective-action problems. The fourth Workshop on the Workshop (WOW4) followed in early June, with 16 working groups and roughly 130 attendees.

Following WOW4, we began preparing in earnest for our October external review, which serendipitously happened on October 15–16—three days after the announcement of the Nobel.

In June, Lin stepped down as Co-Director, and into the newly created position of Senior Research Director, enabling her to focus on research, graduate student advising, and now the increased list of demands that come with being a Nobel laureate. Long-time colleague Mike McGinnis joined Jimmy Walker as Co-Director as part of the transition, and the pair are working with the Workshop Advisory Council to establish a rotating system of directors that will provide strong leadership into the future.

Between the Nobel, the transition to new leadership, and the positive feedback from the external review team, 2009 brought change and the promise of change, the extent of which will not be clear for some time. We look forward to a brighter (and hopefully slightly calmer) 2010.

The betterment of humankind depends on the ability of fallible human beings to make decisions, manage resources, and govern themselves. This is the basis of democracy, and of civilization itself. It is also the basis for more than 30 years of research and inquiry at the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University in Bloomington. The Workshop was founded in 1973 by Elinor and Vincent Ostrom to study human institutions and their effects on resources, livelihoods, and societies. It has grown dramatically since its founding, and today explores a wide diversity of basic questions related to governance and democracy. In addition to general theoretical issues, colleagues at the Workshop are exploring forest governance in 13 countries, governance reform in Liberia, water governance in the American West, peacebuilding in Sudan, and related topics in many other locations all over the world.
The Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences

Although we’ve had an exciting year regardless, everything else pales compared to the news we received on the morning of October 12: Elinor Ostrom, along with Berkeley economist Oliver Williamson, had been awarded the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences—"for her analysis of economic governance, especially the commons." The bedlam that ensued following this announcement has been described elsewhere (see our November Workshop newsletter)—suffice it to say that on that day, everyone’s job at the Workshop changed, as did the Workshop’s status both inside and outside the university. Months later, the activity has subsided to a more manageable level for most of us, although the effect on Lin’s schedule (and Nicole Todd’s as a consequence) may be permanent. Lin has been declining any additional invitations she receives for 2010, and her 2011 schedule is filling up quickly; interview and other requests continue to trickle in.

"for her analysis of economic governance, especially the commons"

In addition to the intellectual boost we received, another happy consequence is that the Workshop buildings will be getting a makeover—new paint and (in the case of Park 1) interior redecorating for many parts of the building.

Workshop External Review

Amidst the chaos, the Workshop leadership put the finishing touches on preparations for the external review, held just days after the Nobel Prize announcement. During this two-day process, external reviewers Margaret Levi (Univ. of Washington) and Bobbi Low (Univ. of Michigan) partnered with internal reviewers Lisa Blomgren Bingham (Public and Environmental Affairs) and Scott Robeson (Geography) to evaluate the Workshop. The team met with Workshop staff, directors, students, visitors, and affiliates as well as IU administrators and others to discuss the organization’s vision, structure, management, and future plans. The resulting report was extremely positive:

“The Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis is a model of how to produce high quality social science research that is truly interdisciplinary, cutting edge, and collaborative” (p. 2).

The final outcomes of both the Nobel and the review are still working their way through the IU system, and we anticipate that changes will continue to evolve for months to come.
Core Research Activities

Natural Resources

During 2009, we completed the fourth year of the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management grant received from the U.S. Agency for International Development, and will wrap up a few last activities in the early months of 2010. The core purpose of this project has been to study the effects of forest decentralization policies on both forest health and livelihoods using over-time data from the International Forestry Resources and Institutions (IFRI) program and household-level data collected in Uganda, Mexico, Kenya, and Bolivia. Partners on the project include collaborating research centers in the four target countries, the Center for International Forestry Research, the International Food Policy Research Institute, and the University of Colorado.

This year, we also hosted training for the IFRI network, led by Catherine Tucker and Burney Fischer. In all, there were fifteen participants in the training, including five visiting scholars, one post-doc, and nine IU students.

PIASES, the Program in Institutional Analysis for Social-Ecological Systems (formerly known as DOSES, the Diagnostic Ontology for Social-Ecological Sustainability working group), continued to meet regularly throughout the year. This group is discussed in more detail under “Working Groups” (see p. 7).

Democratic Governance

In January, we hosted a conference on Building Sustainable Democracies, coordinated by Bill Bianco and Regina Smyth and the working group on the Political Economy of Democratic Sustainability. This conference focused on new techniques and theories related to the factors that sustain democracy. Participants discussed the interactions between democratic institutions using majority rule decision-making processes and the social, economic, geographic, and cultural factors that can influence the outcomes of group decisions. Scholars from Princeton University, Brown University, the World Bank, and the University of Edinburgh attended. This initiative is also supported by a working group that met regularly throughout 2009, discussed in more detail under “Working Groups” (see p. 7).

In late April/early May, we hosted a joint conference with the Gruter Institute on the evolution of mechanisms for solving collective-action problems, organized primarily by Lin Ostrom and affiliate Jeff Stake. Participants in this conference considered the evolution of collective action in a number of contexts, approaching the subject from the perspective of institutional analysis, patterns of behavior in primates, and cultural differences in modern and primitive societies. Plenary talks were given by Nobel laureate Vernon Smith, Pete Richardson, and Oliver Goodenough.

Workshop staff and faculty also assisted affiliated faculty member Aurelian Craiutu with the development of the Tocqueville Program, funded by the Jack Miller Center. This new program will attempt to reintroduce Tocqueville’s work on modern democracy to undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty. The goal of the program is “to foster an understanding of the central importance of principles of freedom and equality for democratic government and moral responsibility, as well as for economic and cultural life.” In its first year, the program brought Tocqueville expert Matthew Mancini of St. Louis University to discuss the study of Tocqueville today. Additional speakers, a conference, seminar courses, and other initiatives are planned for the future.

Experimental Methods

Complementing and contributing to the work in institutional analysis is the Workshop’s use of experimental research. Laboratory experiments in the social sciences are central to exploring linkages between theory, institutions, and behavior.

Jimmy Walker, Lin Ostrom, and affiliate Tom Evans continued as directors of the Interdisciplinary Experimental Laboratory (IELab) on the IU campus, and are key in setting the policies for its use. Jimmy and Carol Buszkiewicz (the Workshop’s fiscal officer), with James Russell (from the Data Lab, Department of Political Science), are working to develop a long-term bud-

(continued on p. 4)
We shared this exciting year with a number of long- and short-term visitors. In total, we welcomed 20 long-term visitors from 10 countries, and 20 short-term visitors during the 2009 calendar year—countries including China, Colombia, Finland, Mexico, South Korea, and Spain. Visitors participated in IFRI training and various working groups.

For complete lists of long- and short-term visitors, please see Appendix A.

Colloquium Series and Miniconferences

During 2009, the Workshop continued its Monday colloquium series, with Wednesday and Friday colloquia also held periodically as needed. The Monday colloquia continue to serve as the Workshop’s public face to the university and the broader community, with both local and distant affiliates presenting the results of research. The Wednesday colloquia serve a more internal function, primarily giving students, visitors, and others with research in intermediate stages an opportunity to obtain feedback. Presenters in 2009 included Anirudh Krishna of Duke University, Jesse Ribot of the University of Illinois, and Catherine Boone of the University of Texas-Austin.

In keeping with a long-standing Workshop tradition, the Workshop’s seminar class closed in both the spring and the fall with a miniconference. These conferences give students and visitors the opportunity to hear their work presented by a colleague, and to ask and answer questions that will improve their research in the future.

For a complete list of colloquia from 2009, see Appendix B. For miniconference agendas, see Appendix C.

Publications

This was another productive year of publications. IU affiliates published 7 books and 64 articles. Off-campus affiliates published 5 books and 40 articles. Topics addressed as always reflect the wide range of research activities related to the Workshop, including climate policy, water governance, elections in Liberia, and the French Revolution. For a complete list of publications, please see Appendix D.

Workshop Advisory Council

The Workshop Advisory Council, formed in 2005, was instrumental in navigating the leadership transition and the external review. As a result of the review and of the heightened profile of the Workshop due to the Nobel, the council is exploring new configurations that will better represent our various connections throughout the university. For the time being, the structure remains the same.

Current members of the council (and term expirations) are:

Matt Auer, SPEA, IUB Fall 2010
Bill Blomquist, Political Science, IUPUI Fall 2011
Burney Fischer, SPEA, IUB (Chair) Fall 2010
Regina Smyth, Political Science, IUB Fall 2012
Catherine Tucker, Anthropology, IUB Fall 2012
The Workshop is supported by three important sources of funding: funds we receive from Indiana University, external grants, and the Workshop’s endowments. This year, university funds made up nearly 40 percent of our overall budget, up from 35 percent in 2008. Our dependence on the endowments also declined from 19 percent in 2008 to 17 percent in 2009. The percent of our budget coming from external grants stayed roughly the same. Our total budget declined by 12 percent.

### Workshop Funding Overview for 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCES</th>
<th>IU General Fund</th>
<th>Internal Grants</th>
<th>External Grants</th>
<th>Endowments</th>
<th>Fees</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
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<td>Salaries &amp; Fringes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Staff (including academic &amp; hourly)</td>
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<td>Fringes</td>
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### External Grants Submitted and Received in the Last Year

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<th>Title</th>
<th>Granting Agency</th>
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<th>Amount</th>
<th>Submitted/Date</th>
<th>Received</th>
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<td>DDIG: Understanding the Acequia Irrigation Communities of New Mexico as Complex Social-Ecological Systems</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>E. Ostrom/M. Cox</td>
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<td>Asymmetric Power in Paired Common-Pool and Public Good Games: Experiments, Institutions, and Behavior</td>
<td>NSF</td>
<td>E. Ostrom/J. Walker</td>
<td>$389,628</td>
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<td>Decentralization, Reforms, and Property Rights (Year 4 of four-year agreement)</td>
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<td>E. Ostrom</td>
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<td>Relational and Rule-Based Governance in Developing Societies</td>
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<td>A. Razo</td>
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Workshop Library and the Digital Library of the Commons

Throughout 2009, work continued on a $388,900 grant received from the Mellon Foundation in 2007 for necessary upgrades and expansion of the Digital Library of the Commons (DLC). The grant enabled the library to hire assistants to help with obtaining permissions from authors and posting and scanning papers. It also supported the transition this year of the DLC to new software (D-Space), which is more compatible with other digital library resources at Indiana University.

In keeping with goals of the grant, the growth of the DLC continues apace. The number of papers contained in the DLC increased from 3,580 at the end of 2008 to 5,298 at the end of 2009. The total number of papers entered as part of the grant is 3,916—15 percent over the original goal of 3,420. The grant has now been extended through March 2011.

The number of unique visitors to the DLC remained high at 183,127 (a drop from the exceptionally high number [236,781] in 2008). Visitors came from 135 different countries, with the most hits coming from Canada, Great Britain, India, Japan, Mexico, and the United States. The number of hits on the DLC grew 11 percent, from 1.2 million in 2008 to 1.4 million in 2009. See Appendix E for a detailed library report.

The Workshop research library had numerous other accomplishments. Library Director Emily Castle worked with several colleagues to ship 30 boxes of books and journals to the University of Liberia, which is working to rebuild its collection after fourteen years of civil war. The library also accepted a gift of 287 books from the Liberty Fund to create a new Tocqueville Collection as part of the new Tocqueville Program (see p. 3).

Many thanks to our supporters!

Given the continuing uncertainty in both university budgets and the economy overall, the Workshop has continued to focus on building up the Tocqueville Fund, which is so valuable in supporting our activities. Thank you to our many long-time supporters who made a contribution this year. Your ongoing enthusiasm for the Workshop’s research makes possible the vital contributions of graduate students, visitors, and faculty to the field of institutional analysis.

Recognition and Awards

The year saw Workshop scholars receive a number of recognitions for their contributions to scholarship.

- Alumnus Michael Schoon received the 2009 Harold D. Lasswell Award from the American Political Science Association for the best doctoral dissertation in the field of public policy. His dissertation was titled “Building Robustness to Disturbance: Governance in Southern African Peace Parks.” He also received IU’s Greenough Award.

- Graduate student Gwen Arnold received a second fellowship from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the summer of 2009. This will enable her to continue her work from summer 2008 on wetlands regulation.

- Affiliated faculty member Lauren Morris MacLean received an IU Trustee Teaching Award for Political Science.

- Lin Ostrom was one of two recipients of the 2009 Reimar Lüst Award for International Scholarly and Cultural Exchange. The award is sponsored jointly by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

- Lin also received the Daniel Elazar Distinguished Scholar Award from the American Political Science Association. This award recognizes a lifetime of contributions to the study of federalism and intergovernmental relations.

- Finally, Lin Ostrom also received the Tisch Civic Engagement Research Prize from Tisch College for her distinguished scholarship on civic learning, citizen participation and engaged research, and the Sagamore of the Wabash Award from Governor Mitch Daniels of Indiana.

![Tocqueville Endowment Market Value](image)
Working Groups

Experimental Methods

The Workshop has an active group of students, visiting scholars, and affiliated faculty currently involved in conducting experiments that focus on the role of institutions in shaping behavior. These experiments range in scope from basic settings related to evaluating levels of trust to voting institutions in common-pool resource settings. The group met every other week with participants (faculty, visiting scholars, and students) from numerous disciplines to discuss and further develop the use of experimental approaches—both in the lab and in the field—as a way of complementing social science research.

Political Economy of Democratic Sustainability (PEDS)

The PEDS Working Group conducts and sponsors research on the microfoundations of sustainable democracy, defined as a commitment to democratic processes, respect for election outcomes, and linkages that engender responsiveness and accountability. The overarching goal is to move toward interdisciplinary studies of democratic decision making in different contexts, from new or consolidating systems to established democracies and self-governing systems, by characterizing factors that shape processes and outcomes in a wide range of working democracies. An equally important goal is the development of graduate and undergraduate training programs that draw on and contribute to the research program.

Program in Institutional Analysis for Social-Ecological Systems (PIASES)

This working group will focus on further development of the ontological framework originally presented by Elinor Ostrom in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (Elinor Ostrom, “A Diagnostic Approach for Going Beyond Panaceas,” PNAS 104(39) (2007): 15181–87). The group will be developing a common set of definitions of concepts and terms used in specific resource sectors (forests, irrigation, and fisheries) as well as in the analysis of more generic social-ecological systems. Initial results will be incorporated into a report to an interuniversity group in Europe at a meeting to be held in Delft, the Netherlands, in May 2010. Plans are also in place to submit an application for long-term funding to the National Science Foundation in August 2010.

Social Network Analysis

The working group on Social Network Analysis (SNA) devoted most of its time to exploring the literature and major tools of SNA. One of the primary goals of this group is to obtain a working knowledge of popular SNA tools (e.g., Pajek, UCINET, SoNia) in addition to evaluating the suitability of these different tools in highlighting specific spatial and temporal features of social networks. Apart from technical proficiency, members are interested in becoming more acquainted with the theoretical foundations of SNA through regular consultation and discussion of a sample of the major publications in this field.

Appendices

A: Visiting scholars
B: Colloquia
C: Miniconference agendas
D: Publications
E: Workshop library
F: Information technology

For information about ways to make a gift to the Workshop, please contact:

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