

# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

**By Chloe Celina Dizon**

Editor-in-Chief, 2021-2022 PSUA Vice-President Academic



Admittedly, when my editorial team and I were deciding the articles that would be featured in the Winter 2022 issue, at that moment we were unaware – and perhaps a little bit oblivious – about how timely the theme and the topics covered in this issue would have in light of events that would unfold only a few weeks later.

This issue of the PSUR comes at a special, yet politically turbulent time. First, with the success of the *Special Edition: Charter at Forty* behind us, the editorial team and I decided that the journal is entering a new era – and as a result, we redesigned the layout and format of the journal to reflect our growth. Second, we noticed that it is incredibly overdue and important for Indigenous Politics to become its own official section outside of Canadian Politics. This change reflects the enormous contributions that Indigenous activists and scholars make within the political science field. It also serves as a reminder that there is more work to be done in recognizing the harms that the University of Alberta – a settler institution – perpetuates against Indigenous peoples who have resided on Treaty Six since time immemorial. Third, the recency of the Freedom Convoy’s occupation of Ottawa, Russian aggression culminating in the invasion of Ukraine, book bans and sexual minority disenfranchisement in the United States, along with the ongoing discoveries of mass graves at Canadian Residential Schools only further highlight the relevance of this issue’s theme.

One of my colleagues in the Political Science Undergraduate Association (PSUA) suggested that the theme for this year’s edition should be called “Democracy in Decline”. While articles in this issue covered a wide variety of topics, intrinsically each of them explored the shortcomings of democratic institutions but also

emphasized the importance of reforming and protecting democratic principles. The authors discussed ongoing issues related to cancel culture, increasing authoritarianism in democratic countries, problems associated with free speech, and increasing the representation of the underrepresented in Canadian politics. With the Indigenous Students Union’s support for our new Indigenous Politics section, the authors also explored conflicting legal traditions, including Indigenous resistance to capitalist structures internationally and at home. In our effort to reflect our authors’ work, a charitable donation was made to the Albertan Chapter of the Ukrainian-Canadian Association to assist humanitarian efforts in Ukraine during the ongoing conflict.

I would like to express my immense gratitude to my senior editorial team: Fea, Hibaq, Dante, Georgia, Brie, Mo, and Grace for their encouragement, guidance, and leadership on the PSUR. I would also like to extend my thanks to the entire editorial team. Their perspectives, experiences, knowledge, and their passion for undergraduate research shows in each review, in each edit, and in the PSUR’s new redesign. Furthermore, the cover design team deserves praise, for their creativity in designing a front and back cover and creating a unique logo for the PSUR’s exclusive use. Finally, I would like to thank Sarah Severson from Library Publishing and Digital Services, and the PSUA for their assistance.

Lastly, I want to personally thank Kael Kropp and Abigail Kohler (2019-2020 PSUA Vice-President Academic) for introducing me to the world of undergraduate research. My tenure on the PSUR has eclipsed the majority of my undergraduate studies and I am truly thankful for their support and encouragement.

I also cannot express how thankful I am to each reader that continues to support undergraduate research initiatives at the University of Alberta. Our editorial team depends on students continuing to engage with this project. I am confident that under the leadership of Gavriel Kesik-Libin, the PSUR will continue to highlight student contributions from political science and political studies in new, engaging, and creative outlets for years to come.