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FACULTY HIGHLIGHT: PROFESSOR DALE WALTON

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By Zane Bell

Next semester, Lindenwood University will be offering a diverse selection of courses for the students in its International Relations program, and to helm several of those courses is none other than Professor Dale Walton. Currently in his eighth year at Lindenwood, Walton brings a unique perspective to his students and continues to contribute to the professional scholarship that he has actively engaged with through his time teaching as well as in his numerous published works, including an upcoming book on liberty and nationhood.

Prior to arriving at Lindenwood, Walton previously instructed at various academic institutions, both domestic and foreign. He initially taught postgraduate students at Missouri State University's Department of Defense and Strategic Studies when it was still based in Springfield, Missouri, but eventually moved with the program to its new location near Washington, D.C. Following that, Walton traveled to work at the University of Reading in England.

"That was a wonderful experience in many respects, especially working alongside my academic mentor Colin S. Gray, who had served as my PhD supervisor some years earlier," said Professor Walton in an email detailing his time in England.

During that period of his career, Walton experienced an educational system distinctly different in comparison to its American counterpart. "Reading was a very research-oriented institution; the British system is different from the US one, and funding and perceived success is very closely linked to a research assessment enterprise that is conducted every few years."

Yet for this and all of its other differing qualities, Walton still experienced great excitement at the University of Reading. "We had a steady stream of military officers and government officials -- particularly, but not only, British ones -- coming for lectures, workshops, and other events. So it was always lively!"

With such diverse experiences in his repertoire, Walton eventually moved on to Lindenwood University in the summer of 2012. Since then, he has published numerous works, including book chapters, articles, and many book reviews. In fact, when discussing his works produced during recent years, he said: "the Lindenwood environment has been a good one for my writing!"

Speaking more on Lindenwood's benefits, the International Relations professor credits a particular university center for ease that was not necessarily available elsewhere. "It's always difficult to balance teaching and writing. Doing either well is difficult, and they take considerable energy -- there are trade-offs. With that said, I have enjoyed one enormous advantage at Lindenwood: the Hammond Institute provided the financial support for a number of course releases, and those course releases were absolutely vital to my research work."

This especially applies to Professor Walton's upcoming book, titled *Beyond "American": Liberty and Nationhood in an Era of Technological and Cultural Revolution*, in which he explores an area of study that he has not typically addressed in his time writing larger works. "This will be a departure for me," he said in regards to his current project. "It's the first book that I've written that is not, fundamentally, about strategy and foreign policy."

For the most part, Walton has focused on his speciality of strategic studies, which he says includes "issues of war, peace, diplomacy, and issues related to those areas." Although the Lindenwood professor admits that this ends up being "a very broad field," he also states that it gives him a greater flexibility in his studies, which have naturally bent toward what he calls "the great moral and ethical questions that accompany issues of war and peace." Additionally, Walton states that his interests extend into other areas, including the Pacific Rim, which have been addressed repeatedly in works like his first book.

These intellectual currents in Professor Walton's studies have led him to unique perspectives in the field of international relations. Foremost amongst these is his view of the field's popular practices: "One of my great criticisms of how international relations is studied and taught is that many scholars in the field insist that they can use theory, quantitative analysis, and the rest of their bag of methodological tricks to provide reliable answers to incredibly complex questions. No, they cannot. Humans do not work like that."

In turn, Walton discusses and develops these unique views as he works with his fellow researchers at Lindenwood University's John W. Hammond Institute for Free Enterprise. When asked about his experience with the center, he said: "It has just been a joy to get to know the Hammond folks and work with them. Hammond tends to draw in clever people who are brimming with ideas, enthusiasm, and a real desire to see human life improve."

Moreover, Walton also claims that the Institute for Free Enterprise has also had an effect on the way he personally views academia. "It has certainly given me ideas and enriched my perspective."

With these experiences, Walton provides his students with unique ideas that will serve them well in a world of diverse perspectives. Next semester, Professor Walton will continue this with his courses, which include Introduction to International Relations, as well as Special Topics: Ideology and International Relations.

