



## AU Newsmakers

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Prepared by University Communications

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### Top Story

#### AU Students Get Crash Course on National Debt



The **School of Public Affairs** and several student organizations sponsored a campus visit by *The Speak Out Don't Freak Out* forum and *\$10 Million a Minute Bus*, both of which focused on the national debt. In highlighting the event, [Washington Examiner](#) interviewed Student Government president Emily Yu who said, "I think a lot of students, because they can't see the current implications of it [national debt], haven't really thought about it. But when it hits us it's going to hit us really hard, and we're long overdue to start thinking about this issue." (10/9)

### Additional Features

#### CampaignU: Inside the War Room and the Newsroom



Each week in School of Communication professor **Leonard Steinhorn's** *Campaign 2012: Inside the War Room and the Newsroom* class, [WTTG-FOX5](#) brings a camera into the classroom as part of the station's election coverage. Each Thursday, the class is live-streamed on the station's website from 9:15–11:45 a.m. Additionally, the station's [Morning News](#) show airs a segment each week about the class. This week focused on last week's presidential debate and a preview of this week's VP debate. Immediately following the VP debate, several students provided live, [in-studio, post-debate analysis](#). The class will be televised each week throughout the election season. Tune in next week to see AU's most politically active students engage in discussions on the pressing issues of the day. (10/4)

#### Behind the Closed Doors of Washington Lobbyists



CBS' [Sunday Morning](#), turned to **James Thurber**, director of the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies, to provide expert analysis about the influence of lobbyists in Washington. "The Boy Scouts have lobbyists. The AFL-CIO has lobbyists. Apple does. Everybody has a lobbyist," said Thurber. About the money spent on lobbying, he said, "I think there's probably 100,000 people in the industry—not lobbyists specifically, but in the industry—supporting all of that in Washington. Nine billion is spent every year on lobbying and related advocacy." (10/7)

### Op-Eds/AU Authors

#### Professors Offer Solutions on Syria



Two international relations professors wrote op-eds focusing on Syria. For the [Los Angeles Times](#), **Robert Pastor** outlined a third option in solving the conflict in Syria. "Some have urged the U.S. to increase military support for the opposition, but President Obama's caution is wise. If the U.S. goes down this road, it cannot afford to lose, but it is unlikely to "win" soon or inexpensively," wrote Pastor (10/10)

## Without Voting, Noncitizens Could Swing the Election for Obama

**The Washington Post**

In an op-ed for the [Washington Post](#), Leonard Steinhorn, communication professor, explained the impact that noncitizens, who don't have the right to vote, have on the number of a state's electoral votes. "An Obama victory

could hinge on a quirk in the Constitution that gives noncitizens, a group that includes illegal immigrants and legal permanent residents, a say in electing the president of the United States," wrote Steinhorn. (10/5)

## Szasz Turned Psychiatry on Its Head

**THE SUN**

Jeffrey Schaler, justice, law and society professor, wrote an op-ed for the [Baltimore Sun](#) about the late psychiatrist Thomas Stephen Szasz's influence on mental health

studies. "The impact of Dr. Szasz's heroic life—he was consistently the object of relentless personal attacks—will continue to influence the way we think about liberty and responsibility," wrote Schaler. (10/9)

## The Questions Lehrer Didn't Ask



In an op-ed for [FoxNews.com](#), journalism professor Richard Benedetto wrote about debate moderator Jim Lehrer's 'softball' questions to President Obama at the first Presidential debate. "In news reporter parlance, such questions are considered 'softballs'—tailor made to allow an incumbent president to avoid his record and sail into the talking points he has repeated many times before," wrote Benedetto. (10/4)

## Expertise

### Preview: Commodity Regulators Face New Fight over Reforms



Finance professor James Moser discussed with [Reuters](#) the upcoming changes in rule-making for commodity regulation. "Very early in the cycle of developing a rule, you ought to decide what is going to be the benchmark for this rule. That would provide a really clear framework for the cost-benefit

analysis" said Moser." (10/4)

## Brazilian Corruption Case Raises Hopes for Judicial System

**The New York Times**

The [New York Times](#) interviewed Matt Taylor, international relations professor, about the outcome of a major Brazilian corruption trial and shortcomings of Brazil's justice system. "If anything, the courts are still the

greatest bottleneck to accountability in Brazil. It's promising to see the court take on the mensalão, but this trial is the exception that proves the rule," said Taylor. (10/10)

## Did Debate Make Undecided Voters More Decided?



"Undecided voters who tend to vote wait until the last minute to cast their ballots," Jan Leighly, government professor, said to [CNN.com](#) about the habits of undecided voters, and whether the debates may play a role in their decision making. (10/8)

## Bond Vigilantes' Ghana Ambush Proves Default Hex Unbroken

**Bloomberg**

Arturo Porzecanski, director of the International Economic Relations Program, discussed with [Bloomberg](#) the seizure of the Argentine Navy training ship, Libertad, in Ghana to enforce U.S. creditors' claims on defaulted Argentine bond debt. "It's a reminder to the Argentina government

that it cannot ply the financial waters of the world without fear of attachment. The Argentines are definitely afraid that any money they could raise abroad could be impounded," said Porzecanski. (10/4)

## The Bill O'Reilly-Jon Stewart 'Rumble': More Than a Jab-Fest?



[Christian Science Monitor](#) spoke to communication professor **Lauren Feldman** about political comedy's impact, last week's debate between TV show hosts Bill O'Reilly and Jon Stewart, and how humor mixed with comedy can attract viewers. "The debate will appeal to people who are already fans of their shows and already politically engaged, but the 'substantive discussion' that Stewart and O'Reilly have promised may, in fact, inspire more people to pay attention," said Feldman. (10/6)

## VP Debate Grows in Importance



With the [Houston Chronicle](#), communication professor **Dotty Lynch** discussed the high stakes of this week's VP debate. "Biden wants to remind people of the Ryan budget and the impact on their lives, especially if Medicare is changed and government programs like Medicaid and student loans are cut," said Lynch. (10/10)

## Silver Lining to SAT Decline



**Sarah Irvine Belson**, dean of the School of Education, Teaching and Health, explained to [WUSA-CBS9](#) why the overall decline in SAT scores isn't necessarily a bad thing. "More kids are taking the SAT than ever before and more variety of kids from all over the country have had more opportunity to take the test—and that represents the fact that the SAT is changing," said Irvine Belson. (10/6)

## Coffee: A Healthy Grind?



Psychology professor **Laura Juliano** spoke to [Experience Life](#) magazine about caffeine addiction. "For many people, the daily use of caffeine is fueled by a desire to avoid withdrawal. Once you are dependent it, you may be in pretty bad shape without it," said Juliano, who also noted that researchers who study anxiety use caffeinated coffee to incite feelings of anxiousness in study participants. (10/8)

## Chavez May Face Economic Limits in Expanding Socialist Program



**Eric Hershberg**, director of the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies, discussed with [CTV News](#) Hugo Chavez's third term victory in Venezuela's presidential election. "Chavez has retained the fierce loyalty of what turns out as the majority of the population, that sees him as someone who is determined to distribute the resources in a country that historically has been profoundly unequal," said Hershberg.

## Bonus Clip:

### Reporter's Cred: A Law Degree from AU



After **Joe Johns**, justice correspondent for [CNN's Situation Room with Wolf Blitzer](#), discussed the Supreme Court's latest case, anchor Wolf Blitzer cited Johns' credentials as a graduate of American University's Law School.