



AU Newsmakers

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Prepared by University Communications

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Top Story

Professors Provide Insight on Tragedy in Connecticut



Professors **Joseph Campbell**, **Scott Talan**, and **Jordan Tama** provided commentary for stories related to the school shooting in Connecticut. **Campbell** talked to the [Washington Post](#) about the media’s tendency to jump to conclusions in its initial reporting. “The widespread reporting of the teacher story may have highlighted the news media’s tendency to fill in the blanks on initially confusing and tragic stories.” **Talan** appeared on [ABC’s 20/20](#) to explain why people are drawn to social media. “When things happen that most of us cannot understand, we want to have some shred of insight, and social media helps this because [it] can [say] something and others can say, ‘I agree with you.’” With [U.S. News & World Report](#), **Tama** discussed the task force Obama created to look at gun reform and mental healthcare access. “Success hinges on the make-up and buy-in of the panel members, it needs to be bipartisan or diverse and deliver a unanimous recommendation in order to build political credibility.” (12/18, 12/19, 12/20)

Additional Feature

Post 200: AU Ranked in Top 5 Universities



[Washington Post Capital Business](#) Post 200 ranked **American University** among the top five universities in the region in its annual guide to the region's top businesses. The ranking highlighted AU's campus renovation plans, efforts to help rebuild higher education in Burma, and the first Wonk of the Year award presented to former President Bill Clinton. (12/21)

Expertise

Will Record Number of Women in Senate Mean Less Gridlock?



Jennifer Lawless, director of the Women and Politics Institute, told the [Washington Post](#) that the gridlock in the Senate is likely to remain, even with more women in office. “Once you get to the Senate, you’re talking about people who are far more like one another than they are like the general populace. There may not be enough women anyway for major change. Having 20 women in the Senate may seem like a lot, but it isn’t,” said Lawless. (12/14)

The Electoral College Process



James Thurber, director of the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies appeared on [C-SPAN’s Washington Journal](#) to discuss the Electoral College process. “The Electoral College is not a place, it’s a process, and today, December 17, begins the process where the electors get together in each state to cast their votes,” explained Thurber. (12/17)

2012's Legacy: The Monitor's Top 11 U.S. stories



The [Christian Science Monitor](#) spoke to communication professor **Leonard Steinhorn** about the top media stories and controversies of 2012. "For all the sort of media controversies and all of the tensions that get covered on the front pages, what any number of these [top stories] will show is that we are a country that is more diverse, inclusive, transparent, and that ultimately we are a nation that has to feel a good deal of hope and optimism about this next generation," said Steinhorn. (12/19)

Top 10 Privacy Law Violations in the Petraeus Probe



Law professor **Daniel Metcalfe** talked to [CNNMoney.com](#) about privacy law violations in former CIA director David Petraeus' case. "Virtually all the information that has entered the public domain about these investigations has constituted a violation of law. You can think of it as almost a civil liberties issue, the identities of Kelley, Petraeus, and Allen, were all supposed to be protected under the Privacy Act. When the inquiry established that the emails were written by Paula Broadwell, Petraeus' biographer and, for a period, lover, her name too, should have been protected," said Metcalfe. (12/17)

Downsizing the Pentagon Budget



International service professor **Gordon Adams** spoke on [WHYY Public Media's Radio Times](#) to discuss the Pentagon's defense budget. "The budget always comes first, there are some people who think we should be planning the foreign policy strategy independent of how much it costs, but the truth is throughout history the amount that we spend and the foreign policy that we have are intimately related, the one is always adjusted to the other," said Adams. (12/19)

Will Your Marriage Last?



Psychology professor **Barry McCarthy** spoke to [Washingtonian](#) magazine about how the early years of a marriage are a good predictor of marital happiness and success. "The first two years are supposed to be a honeymoon, but research says they're quite difficult. You're figuring out how to be a couple. Many couples just can't figure these things out and they end up fighting all of the time," said McCarthy. (12/18)

Congress Hangs 'Help Wanted' Sign



With [HR Magazine](#), the magazine for Society for Human Resource Management professionals, business professor **Meredith Persily Lamel** provided advice to new legislators how to hire new staff to work on the Hill. "They don't have the staff to do what's done in the private sector, and they are anxious to get rolling. Think about your priorities and what you want to accomplish for your district. Then, think about how you want to apply your resources," said Lamel. (12/17)

U.S. State Department Criticized



Diplomat-in-residence **Anthony Quainton** appeared on [CTV \(Canada\)](#) to discuss the Benghazi report release which was highly critical of the U.S. State Department. "The key problem which we face and deal with security everywhere in the world is risk management—how to determine the level of threat which a particular post faces. In the case of Benghazi, there was an underestimation of the likely threat, given the fact that there had been a whole series of incidents over the previous six to eight months," said Quainton. (12/19)