



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

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## AU Newsmakers

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Prepared by University Communications

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### Top Story

#### GI Bill & Graduate School: Opportunities for Education

**THE HILL**

*The Hill* newspaper's education special report featured American University in articles about graduate school options and veterans going back to school. **Valerie Verra**, veteran services administrator, discussed how she works with the more than 300 students who need assistance processing their Veterans Affairs Office paperwork. "Setting up realistic expectations of when they can expect their VA benefits to pay over is key," said Verra. *The Hill* also highlighted SPA's Key Executive MPA and SOC's new media entrepreneurship degree as innovative programs that can help professionals advance their careers while living and working inside the beltway. (8/1)

### Additional Features

#### Media's Fascination with Accused Shooter



Jane Hall, associate professor of journalism, appeared on [CNN's Reliable Sources](#) and discussed the media coverage surrounding the recent Colorado shooting. "I think you can do what the families have asked for, and I think CNN and other networks have done, which is talk about the lives of the people who were lost," said Hall. (7/29)

### Op-Eds/AU Authors

#### A New Ross Perot?

**The Washington Times**

In a *Washington Times* online op-ed, **Richard Benedetto**, adjunct professor of journalism, denounced [Washington Post's](#) Chris Cillizza's suggestion that Ross Perot would be a good fit for the 2012 presidential campaign. "Successful millionaires and billionaires, of which Mr. Perot is one, are no longer admired as they once were. They are vilified, as presumptive Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney is learning the hard way," wrote Benedetto. (7/30)

#### Social Security Is not Headed for Disaster

**The Philadelphia Inquirer**

In a [Philadelphia Inquirer online](#) op-ed, professor emerita of economics **Barbara Bergmann** discussed the misconceptions about the possibility of Social Security running out of money. "Into the future, Social Security can and will provide wage replacement at about the same level it does now. It does not depend for its resources on an entity that might run out of money, that has no way to raise more, and could go into bankruptcy," wrote Bergmann. (7/30)

## Expertise

### NASA to Athletic Mars Rover: 'Stick the Landing'



**Howard McCurdy**, professor of public affairs, spoke with the [Associated Press](#) about NASA's upcoming Mars rover mission. "It would be a major technological step forward if it works. It's a big gamble," said McCurdy. More than **500** outlets, including *Houston Chronicle*, *New York Post*, and *USA Today*, republished the article or the quote itself as the AP *Quote of the Day*. **Associated Press Radio** and **Agence France Press** also interviewed McCurdy. (8/1)

### Argentina Celebrates Bond Payoff as End of an Era



The [Associated Press](#) interviewed **Arturo Porzecanski**, economist in residence, about Argentina celebrating its last \$2.3 billion payment on a bond issued to Argentina residents whose savings were confiscated a decade ago. "It's wonderful to see Argentina pay down debt, but for every dollar they're paying down, they're borrowing two or three through the other window, and increasingly from their own people," said Porzecanski. More than **275** outlets, including *San Jose Mercury News* and *Houston Chronicle*, republished the article. (8/2)

### Immigrants Prove Big Business for Prison Companies



The [Associated Press](#) quoted **James Thurber**, director of the Center for Presidential and Congressional Studies, about private prisons' lobbying efforts and the subsequent increase for immigrant lock-up appropriations. "Follow the money. If the money is being increased significantly for illegal immigration, then that is a shift in policy; a significant shift," Thurber said. More than **200** outlets, including *Washington Post*, *San Jose Mercury News*, and *Houston Chronicle*, republished the article. (8/2)

### Partisan Rifts Hinder Efforts to Improve U.S. Voting System



The [New York Times](#) quoted **Robert Pastor**, co-director of the Center for Democracy and Election Management, on state laws increasingly requiring a photo identification in order to vote and how it may affect voter turnout. "I did a survey of Indiana, Maryland, and Mississippi and found only about 1.2 percent of registered voters did not have photo IDs. The problem remains registration—not IDs—in reducing voting participation," said Pastor. Several newspapers republished the article, including the *San Jose Mercury News*, *Austin American Statesman*, and *Sarasota Herald Tribune*. (8/1)

### Change or No Change for U.S. Ties?



The *Dallas Morning News* interviewed **Manuel Suarez-Mier**, economist in residence, about the control of drug routes in Mexico, and the integration of U.S. control. "If you don't have firm control over those [drug] routes, who will the government make a pact with? All of them? It seems to me that when the discipline breaks down in the overall system, it is harder for the PRI [Partido Revolucionario Institucional/Institutional Revolutionary Party] to create the kind of order the PRI used to be able to create," said Suarez-Mier. (7/30)

### Defense Armageddon Prediction Clashes with Profits, Optimism



The [Wall Street Journal](#) quoted **Gordon Adams**, professor of U.S. foreign policy, about the upcoming cuts to the national security budget per the terms of the Budget Control Act. "This isn't about legislating and this isn't even about budgeting: it's about politics. This is all election-year garment rendering," said Adams. Another article appeared in [Bloomberg News](#). (8/1)

## Could the Syrian Crisis Create an Alawi Ministate?



[NPR's \*All Things Considered\*](#) interviewed **Benjamin Jensen**, assistant professor of international service, about what it would take for a breakaway mini-state in Syria to survive. "If you look, for example at other kinds of enclaves, quasi-states like South Ossetia [and] Abkhazia, these regions aren't economically viable without a patron-client relationship with a larger regional power, like Russia. In the case of an Alawite state, one would tend to believe there would be a similar relationship with Iran," said Jensen. [Radio Free Europe](#) also interviewed Jensen (8/1)

## Comic Book Movies: Why so Many?



(7/27)

Literature professor **Mandy Berry** talked to [Wisconsin Public Radio's \*At Issue with Ben Mehrens\*](#) about Hollywood's recent outpour of comic book movies and what has attracted such record-breaking crowds. "Many people have speculated on why these movies are so popular; these films are engaged in cultural conversations that a lot of people are very interested in right now," Berry said.

## Tales of Facebook's Demise Might Be a Little Premature



[PRWeek](#) interviewed **Scott Talan**, assistant professor of communication, about the overstated decline of Facebook. "When it comes to social media, Facebook is like breakfast—you want breakfast, but you also want other meals and you might snack. There's a whole lot you want to do on social media and Facebook will be part of that but it may not be the whole thing," said Talan. (8/1)

## Toxicity and Death



A [Nature Chemistry](#) online column cited chemistry professor **Matt Hartings** for using his blog, ScienceGeist, to improve the public image of chemicals, often demonized in the media. "Chemicals aren't inherently good or bad. In most cases, the danger is in the dosage," Hartings wrote. (7/31)