



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

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This Week's Newsmakers

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Prepared by University Communications

Top Stories

2010 not the Year of the Woman



Jennifer Lawless, director of the Women & Politics Institute, told [Forbes](#) that despite the number of women running for office, 2010 is no “year of the woman” like 1992 was. “In 1992, women’s issues were really driving the election cycle,” Lawless said, citing the Family and Medical Leave Act as an example. Lawless also discussed female political candidates running in this year’s election with [Globe and Mail](#), [CNN.com](#), and [Associated Press Television](#). (10/26; 10/25; 10/28; 10/25)

Satire Could Energize Electorate



Lauren Feldman, assistant professor of public communication, explained to the [New York Times](#) how Jon Stewart’s and Stephen Colbert’s non political rally could foster greater political engagement. “To the extent that people are showing up because of their enthusiasm for the message behind the rally—that is, discontent with extremist rhetoric and divisive politics—that is a political statement, and that makes their participation political,” she said. Feldman also discussed the rally with [Washington Post](#), [WTTG-Fox5](#), [WAMU 88.5](#), and [TBD.com](#). (10/29; 10/25; 10/26; 10/29; 10/29)

Additional Features

Federal Executive Leaders Win Prestigious Award



[Washington Post's Federal Eye](#) noted the winners of this year’s **Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership**. **Robert Tobias**, director of the Key Executive Program, emceed the ceremony which honored

Kenneth E. Baker, principal assistant deputy administrator for the Office of Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation at the Energy Department, and Margaret A. Focarino, deputy commissioner of patents for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. (10/25)

Op-Eds & Editorials

Voter Disillusionment Tied to Economy



Curtis Gans, director of the Center for the Study of the American Electorate, asserted in his [Roll Call](#) Op-Ed that the economy, unemployment, and underemployment are the main sources of voter disillusionment for the mid-

term elections. “Obama chose to build his record on individual policy achievements rather than the assertion and defense of an engaged government as the only entity with sufficient resources and ability to attack the magnitude of the nation’s economic crisis,” Gans wrote. (10/28)

Quotes

Focus on Fiscal Discipline



President Obama likely will focus on fiscal discipline between now and 2012—a nod to voters tired of big spending and to a Congress positioned to become more Republican. “To a certain extent, (Obama’s) strategy depends on the strategy of majority of the House, and what can be found in the Senate, where’s he’s basically going to be deadlocked,” **James Thurber**, director of the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies, told the [Associated Press](#). The article was republished more than 470 times. (10/24)

Curve Ball an Optical Illusion



New research by **Arthur Shapiro**, assistant professor of psychology, found that the curve of a curve ball is an optical illusion facilitated by the way the eye is constructed. “It’s like we have an HD camera in the center and a cell phone camera in the periphery (of the eye),” Shapiro explained to [NPR’s *All Things Considered*](#). When

we first observe a curve ball from the batter’s point of view, we see it with the strong, central part of our visual system, but as it comes closer, the ball is too fast for the “HD camera” to keep up—we rely on the lesser “cell phone camera” to complete the picture. (10/23)

Election Season = Mean Season



Dotty Lynch, director of the graduate political communication program, told [Yahoo! News](#) that politicians use negative ads because their advisors say they work. Lynch said she had heard of a campaign advisor who told candidates they

would do more good giving money to charity than running positive ads. (10/24)

Latino Vote Critical in California



David Lublin, professor of government, told [CNN’s *Situation Room*](#) that the controversy surrounding Republican California gubernatorial candidate Meg Whitman—who fired her illegal immigrant housekeeper when she decided to run for governor—reminded him of former Governor Pete Wilson’s 1994 bid for reelection and Prop. 187. Lublin said Prop. 187, a push to deny tax funded social services to illegal immigrants, succeeded “in making Latinos in California very solidly Democratic.” (10/27)

AU’s Maksoud Goes One on One



Clovis Maksoud, director of the Center for the Global South, discussed life in the center of Arab regional politics and East-West issues with [Al Jazeera English](#) for the network’s popular “One on One” segment, which focuses on the lives and accomplishments of notable public figures in the Middle East. (10/28)