

From: [Leah D Nixon](#)
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Included below is a press release regarding Ferris State University's Political Engagement Project, which is presenting a panel discussion featuring alumni politicians from 7 to 8 p.m. April 6 in Business 111. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Panel Discusses Life of a Politician

BIG RAPIDS – The Ferris State University Political Engagement Project is presenting a panel discussion featuring alumni politicians from 7 to 8 p.m. April 6 in Business 111.

Panelists include Rep. Joe Haveman of Holland, former Sen. Phil Hoffman of Horton, Rep. Tim Moore of Farwell and candidate for state representative Jeremy Mishler of Big Rapids.

The Political Engagement Project is designed to encourage pedagogical research in courses taught throughout the university's curriculum focused on increasing student awareness and involvement. The panel discussion was organized to provide a behind-the-scenes look into the political process for politicians.

“This discussion is not meant to be an argument about current political issues, rather it's about people from all political parties coming together to talk about how someone gets involved in the political process,” associate professor of Accountancy, Finance and Information Systems Dick Hewer said. “It's to talk about the general experiences of these past, present and future politicians in hopes of helping students gain a better understanding of the benefits of active involvement.”

The political process continues every day, and one of the main goals of the Political Engagement Project is to encourage students to get involved, Social Sciences professor Rick Griffin added. “The point is you need to be involved no matter what your political affiliation may be. At Ferris, we promote hands-on learning, and this is what students are doing when they are actively involved in their communities,” he said.

Humanities professor Sandy Alspach noted the political process is not one person marching alone. “It is always a team effort,” she said. “And, it's about investing in ideas. The Political Engagement Project has fostered growth politically among students at Ferris, which is invaluable.”

One way in which students are connecting is through such student organizations as Student Government, or during the last presidential election, several registered student organizations were created to represent all sides, Griffin said. These groups remain at Ferris today and

continue to prosper.

“We have one of the most perfect political labs right here on our campus,” Alspach added. “Student Government gives aspiring politicians the ability to campaign, and once elected, leverage resources, work on positioning and visibility – all components of the process.”

The Political Engagement Project committee also is hosting a panel discussion about the 2010 Census at 11 a.m. April 20 in Interdisciplinary Resource Center, Room 121. Panelists include Office of Multicultural Student Services Director Matt Chaney, Humanities professor Gary Huey, Griffin and Coordinator of International Student Recruiting Luzia Tartari. The discussion will be moderated by Alspach.

More information about the Political Engagement Project is available at www.ferris.edu/pep.

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