



**PRESS RELEASE: Election Events Designed to Engage Ferris State
University Students in Political Process**

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Here is a press release about the Political Engagement Project at Ferris State University, which is presenting a series of debates, discussions and guest speakers to spotlight the 2012 presidential election and encourage students to participate in the process. Events begin with a viewing party for tonight's first presidential debate.

In addition, PEP Steering Committee members and professors Richard Griffin and Richard Hewer are faculty experts available to discuss 2012 election issues and candidates.

For more information on PEP or to contact Griffin or Hewer, please contact Sandy Gholston, News Services and Social Media Manager.



Election events.doc

View the release online: <http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/archive/2012/october/pep.htm>



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Election Events Designed to Engage Ferris State University Students in Political Process

BIG RAPIDS – Ferris State University’s Political Engagement Project is presenting a series of debates, discussions and guest speakers to spotlight the 2012 presidential election and encourage students to participate in the process.

PEP’s main focus is to promote democratic participation in broader terms, but November’s presidential race between Democratic President Barack Obama and Republican candidate Mitt Romney is “an opportunity to engage,” said Richard Griffin, a political science professor and member of the PEP steering committee.

“The goal of the Political Engagement Project is to engage students in the political process, to show students they have a stake in the political institutions of society,” Griffin said. “We are trying to increase their political awareness and sense of duty. What better time is there to do this than during a presidential election year?”

The PEP initiative is designed to increase political awareness and democratic participation among undergraduate students and college graduates. Ferris is one of eight institutions nationwide selected for Phase II of the joint initiative of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and *The New York Times*.

Phase I sought to enhance student political engagement through individual courses; Phase II seeks to achieve that goal on a campus-wide basis.

The November general election is the theme behind PEP’s fall-semester calendar, which features appearances by veteran Michigan political reporter Tim Skubick and election analyst Richard Scher, a political science professor at the University of Florida.

Events kick off Wednesday, Oct. 3 with a viewing party for the first presidential debate, which will focus on domestic policy. Ferris’ Young Democrats and Young Republicans will host the event from 9 to 10:30 p.m. in Room 111 of the College of Business building.

Additional viewing parties are scheduled Thursday, Oct. 11 for the debate between Vice President Joe Biden and Congressman Paul Ryan regarding foreign and domestic policy, and presidential debates on Tuesday, Oct. 16 regarding foreign and domestic policy in a town-meeting format and Monday, Oct. 22 on foreign policy. All viewing parties will take place from 9 to 10:30 p.m. in Business 111, hosted by the political student organizations.

Other events include a “Just the Facts” discussion at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 9 with Griffin and fellow PEP steering committee member and associate professor Richard Hewer in Business 111 and a “Politics and the Press” panel discussion at 1 p.m. Oct. 24 in the Rankin Student Center Dome Room.

Appearances by guest speakers Skubick and Scher are “don’t-miss events,” Griffin said.

“They can add more authority to the political process for students,” he said.

Skubick, who has been covering Michigan politics for more than 40 years, will speak at 7 pm. Tuesday, Oct. 23. Scher will provide an analysis of the election when he appears at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 15. Both events are in Business 111.

But one of the most engaging events will be on election night, Griffin said.

“It’s a great night,” he said. “We have big-screen TVs tuned in to each of the major networks, free pop and popcorn, cookies ... it’s very exciting.”

The party is 8 p.m. to midnight on Tuesday, Nov. 6 in Westview Dining.

All PEP events are free and open to Ferris faculty, staff and students.

For a complete schedule of events or to learn more about PEP, visit <http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/administration/academicaffairs/ADP/PEP/>.

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