University of Scranton Students Delve into Political Campaign Season

From weekly voter registration drives to debate watch parties and town meetings, University of Scranton student clubs and organizations have organized more than a dozen politically charged events in anticipation of the 2012 presidential election.

Events kicked off in October, with a voter registration drive on the Dionne Campus Green that featured a “dance-off” by the College Democrats, College Republicans and Young Americans for Liberty (YAL).

On Oct. 8, the University’s Student Government invited Jeremy Roberts, journalist at The New York Times, to...
discuss the role of social media in the presidential campaign from a non-partisan standpoint. Social media played a substantial role in this election by allowing voters to interact with the candidates’ campaigns, share their concerns, and encourage others to vote.

Also on Oct. 8, a live broadcast of an Election 2012 town hall meeting, hosted by the Pennsylvania Cable Network (PCN) in Brennan Hall, launched the statewide television series. Panelists participating in the town meeting included William Parente, Ph.D., professor of political science at Scranton; Matthew Reavy, Ph.D., associate professor and chair of the Communication Department at Scranton; Chris Borick, Ph.D., director of the Institute of Public Opinion at Muhlenberg College; and Patrick McKenna, associate editor of The Scranton Times-Tribune;

The College Democrats, College Republicans, Debate Society, Education for Justice, Office of Residence Life, Political Science Department and YAL jointly hosted debate watch parties for the presidential and vice presidential debates that included discussion and presentations by University political science faculty and guest speakers. The presidential debate watch party on Oct. 22 featured Bryan McCann, Ph.D., professor of communication at Wayne State University, who spoke prior to the debate. This event was organized by Paul Porter, Ph.D., director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, with the College Democrats, College Republicans, Education for Justice, Residence Life and YAL.
The C-SPAN Campaign 2012 Bus stopped at the University on Oct. 23 as part of its national tour. The event allowed college students, as well as area residents and elementary and high school students, the opportunity to learn about the election and test their public affairs knowledge through interactive educational tools available on the state-of-the-art mobile studio bus.

The University hosted a town hall meeting with two congressional candidates for the 17th Congressional District in Pennsylvania, Matt Cartwright and Laureen Cummings, on Oct. 23.

An election day results watch party in the McIlhenny Ballroom of the DeNaples Center concluded the campaign 2012 events on campus. This event was organized by the College Democrats, College Republicans and YAL.

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