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AU Newsmakers

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Top Story

AU Wonks Talk Fiscal Cliff Potential



Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies experts **James Thurber** and **Patrick Griffin** along with international service professor **Gordon Adams** provided analysis on the fiscal cliff negotiations. **Thurber** spoke to the [Christian Science Monitor](#) about President Obama's position. "He's stopped negotiating with himself. It helps to have an election under your belt and somewhat of a mandate to do what he wants to do with fiscal-cliff issues," said Thurber. To [Bloomberg Businessweek](#), **Griffin** explained, "Republican opposition to \$1.6 trillion in tax increases over a

decade, \$50 billion in stimulus spending, home mortgage refinancing, and Obama's plan to end direct congressional control over raising the debt ceiling should be taken in context." In an interview with [SiriusXM Satellite Radio](#), **Adams** spoke about the Pentagon budget under sequestration. "What really matters here is what the appropriations committee does, and what happens 'I call it a fiscal pothole rather than a fiscal cliff at least as far as the defense department is concerned,'" said Adams. (11/30, 12/3, 12/6)

Op-Eds/AU Authors

Demilitarize the CIA

The New York Times

In a co-authored op-ed for [New York Times Online](#), international service professor **Gordon Adams** wrote about rebalancing the CIA from the trend toward the militarization of intelligence operations.

"The agency should be rededicated to support diplomatic operations. Our ambassadors need robust intelligence to manage crises," wrote Adams (12/3)

Expertise

Mars Redux: NASA to Launch Curiosity-Like Rover



In [three](#) interviews with the [Associated Press](#), public affairs professor **Howard McCurdy** talked about [NASA's](#) ambitious announcement to send a mega-rover to Mars in 2020 despite shrinking budgets. "Let's hope that it can take advantage of

economies of scale, in which case it would cost less than the Curiosity mission. That sort of approach would extend our exploration capability while freeing funds for other expeditions," said McCurdy.

Combined, more than **730** outlets, including [Huffington Post](#), [Houston Chronicle](#), and [San Jose Mercury News](#), republished these articles. (12/4, 12/5, 12/6)

Senate Approves New Sanctions for Iran Energy, Shipping



International service professor **Jeff Colgan** spoke to [Reuters](#) about the U.S. Senate's approval for expanded sanctions on global trade with Iran's energy and shipping sectors. "The expanded sanctions would represent a continuation of a cat-and-mouse game. The

sanctions get placed, Iran tries to find ways around them, and the U.S. tries to close the loopholes. But so far, a dent in the [Iranian] economy has not resulted in a change in the nuclear program," said Colgan.

More than **30** outlets, including the [Chicago Tribune](#), [MSNBC Online](#), and [Orlando Sentinel](#), republished this article. (11/30)

Three Years after Arrest, American Alan Gross Still Jailed in Cuba



[ABCNews Radio Online](#) spoke to international service professor **Phillip Brenner** about Cuba's imprisonment of American Alan Gross based on government contract work he was doing. Commenting on the recent lawsuit his wife filed against U.S. agencies claiming they did not inform Gross of the risks, Brenner said, "This work he was doing was on behalf of the United States. Whether they have a legal responsibility, I think the court has to decide that. Whether they have an ethical--a moral--responsibility, there's no question that they do." (12/3)

Microsoft, Google Patent Fight Rests on Defining Fairness



Law professor **Jorge Contreras** talked to [Bloomberg Businessweek](#) about the patent lawsuit between Google and Microsoft. "The litigation we're seeing, which is costing hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars, is inefficient and it would be good to reduce the litigation if possible. The patent holder has told the market that it does not need exclusivity and is willing to accept money in return. The only question is how much money it is owed, a question that the court should answer soon," said Contreras. (12/4)

Debate in Washington Focuses on Internet Privacy Protection



Communication professor **Kathryn Montgomery** spoke to the [Philadelphia Inquirer](#) about the significance of the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

"I'm an adult, and I don't want some of this stuff. We ought to have a system in place that gives privacy protections for everybody," said Montgomery. (12/6)

End of the Peace Process?



International relations professor **Boaz Atzili** spoke to [Washington Jewish Week](#) about the United Nations' recognition of Palestine as a nonmember observer state and Israel's reaction. "Israel is quite clearly trying to punish the PA [Palestinian Authority] as it said it would before the UN vote. Israel is

getting closer to elections and domestic politics might play into it. It's a signal to [Israel's] right that we're doing what you want us to do," Atzili said. (12/5)

Mistaken Nation



Communication professor **W. Joseph Campbell**, talked to [American Journalism Review](#) about the influence that journalists have on history via media-driven myths. "Each media-driven myth shares a common DNA; it has to be simple and plausible. It has to condense complicated events into a story

that's easy to grasp," said Campbell. (11/30)