

# AU Newsmakers

## October 9 – October 16, 2015

Prepared by University Communications

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### Top Story

#### **American University, in Nation's Capital, Is Getting More Selective**

*The Washington Post* [Washington Post's Grade Point](#) featured American University's President **Neil Kerwin** in a discussion about how AU has been changing. The article focused on AU's lowest admission rate to date, which dropped from 53 percent to 35 percent in a seven-year span, how need-based financial aid has doubled, the new East Campus that will open next year, and the success of graduates in finding good jobs or enrolling in graduate school. **Kerwin** said, "I'd like to think that the things we've chosen to do, we're doing at a pretty high level." (10/13)

### Additional Features

#### **All for One: D.C.'s Collective Theater Scene**



With WAMU-FM's [The Koko Nnamdi Show](#), theater professor **Caleen Sinette Jennings** talked about finding a way around the challenges of bringing a play to the stage through a collective theater model. **Jennings**, a playwright and member of one collective called "The Welders," discussed the growing movement and the collective's work in D.C. and how it is changing regional theater making. (10/12)

#### **The Online MBA at American University's Kogod School of Business**

 Kogod Partner Facing Online Programs director **Maureen Breslin** and **Jill Klein**, Assistant Dean of Digital Initiatives and New Programs, spoke to [Data Informed](#) about Kogod's online master's degree programs, MBA@American and Analytics@American, as well as the "Business in the Capital" initiative. **Breslin** said, "With our online master's degree programs, we are bringing our unique education philosophy to students around the world, giving professionals the chance to earn a Kogod degree no matter where they live and work." (10/09)

### Faculty Author

#### **A Road to Damascus, Via Moscow**

*The New York Times* For the [New York Times](#), School of International Service emeritus professor **Gordon Adams** and his co-author argued that the United States and Russia should combine forces to seek common goals in Syria rather than pursue unobtainable objectives. **Adams** and his co-author conclude "A joint Russian-American effort may fail to solve the Syrian problem. It's not a perfect remedy, but the partial overlap in American and Russian interests is the most promising route toward a solution." (10/13)

### Expertise

#### **Dutch Report: MH17 Downed by Russian-Made Missile**



For a [CNN](#) segment on the release of a highly anticipated report about the takedown of airline flight MH17, Carmel Institute of Russian History and Culture director **Anton Fedyashin** said the report was inconclusive and did not bring closure to the victims' families. (10/14)

#### **Congress Chaos Exposes U.S. Republican Divide Ahead of 2016**



For [Agence France Presse](#), Center for Congressional & Presidential Studies director **James Thurber** commented on the ideological divide among House Republicans. He

explained, "There's no way to really placate the far right and govern at this point, and that's the problem facing the Republican Party." (10/10)

### Cuban Band Buena Vista Social Club Plays the White House



With [CBS News Newspath](#), World Languages and Cultures associate professor **Ana Serra** discussed the significance of White House's invitation to Cuban band Buena Vista Social Club to perform a concert. **Serra** said the event "evokes international collaboration." (10/15)

### First Democratic Candidate Debate



Public communication professor **Robert Lehrman** spoke to [Media General](#) in advance of the first Democratic candidate debate. He talked about how debates can lead to breakthrough moments, but he cautioned that a poor performance could lead to withdrawal of donor support. **CBS**, **NBC** and **ABC** affiliates nationwide aired the segment. (10/13)

### With Afghanistan Decision, Obama Abandons Goal of Ending Wars He Inherited

**Los Angeles Times** School of International Service emeritus professor **Gordon Adams** spoke to the [Los Angeles Times](#) about Obama's legacy in light of his decision to keep troops in Afghanistan through 2017. Concerning President Obama's legacy, **Adams** said, ". . . presidents get blamed, so, like Bush before him, Obama's legacy will be tainted by the 'failure' to 'win' or 'end,' these conflicts." (10/16)

### Clinton Puts Gender Front and Center



For [The Hill](#), Women & Politics Institute director **Jennifer Lawless** discussed Hillary Clinton's renewed emphasis on the possibility of being the first female U.S. president during the first Democrat candidates' debate. **Lawless** said, "I don't think she has changed, and I don't think the American people have changed, but I do think there has been political learning involved." **Lawless** also spoke to the [Christian Science Monitor](#) about Vice President Joe Biden entering the race and why his sitting out the first debate was shrewd. (10/13, 10/14)

### Presidential Contender Primer: What the 6 Democrats Could Mean for Your Money



Executive director of the Kogod Tax Center **Don Williamson** provided insights to [LearnVest](#) on the Democratic candidates' economic and tax platforms. Williamson spoke about Hillary Clinton's proposed \$350 billion new College Compact plan, Bernie Sanders' proposed "Robin Hood" tax on Wall Street and Joe Biden's support of the current White House plan geared toward the middle class. (10/13)

### Ben Carson's Campaign Surges after Controversial Muslim, Holocaust Comments



Communication professor **Leonard Steinhorn** spoke to [The WRAP](#) about Republican presidential candidate Ben Carson's latest controversial claim that armed Jews could have prevented the Holocaust. **Steinhorn** said, "Carson has a history of making intemperate and ill-informed statements." (10/12)

### Can NFL Approach Lead to More Diverse Boards?



For [Bloomberg BNA](#), Washington College of Law professor **Jeremi Duru** weighed in on how the National Football League rule requiring teams to interview minority candidates for top positions could be used to address the lack of diversity in American boardrooms. **Duru** called the NFL's "Rooney Rule" largely effective and said it could work in other industries.

## **Bonus Clip**

### **Late Show With Stephen Colbert is this Generation's 'Meet the Press'**

**THE HILL** For [The Hill](#), School of Public Affairs executive-in-residence **Betsy Fischer Martin**, former executive producer for *Meet the Press*, recalled longtime host Tim Russert's 2007 interview with Stephen Colbert, saying Colbert held his own and that "he's very steeped in politics. You could tell he loved it." (10/14)