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**Video**

**Sac State project aims to inform voters**

It all started with a student’s quest to become a responsible voter.

About two years ago, Sacramento State Government Professor Kimberly Nalder was asked by a first-time voter where on the Internet she could obtain accurate, unbiased information about candidates and issues. Nalder couldn’t give her an answer then.

Nalder’s response now: The Project for an Informed Electorate.

“One of the most frustrating things in a democracy is seeing people not understanding the basics of what they are voting on,” Nalder says. “There’s never been a time in our history when political information was pristine and nobody was misled, but it has accelerated.”

The project is a multi-approach venture to inform the electorate and foster greater understanding of politics by identifying, creating and disseminating accurate, trustworthy and nonpartisan information.

Websites and cable news programs that cater to a particular niche restrict the scope of information. While it may feel good to hear from people who reinforce your beliefs, Nalder says, if those beliefs are factually untrue, the viewer may never realize it. “And that’s a problem for our democracy.”

The Project for an Informed Electorate aims to counter that through events such as lectures, panels and gatherings to explain initiatives and debates, and with the creation of a website where people can learn and understand more about government, politics, issues and current events. “It will be a place that’s nonpartisan, safe, trustworthy and well-rounded,” Nalder says.

The project also benefits students by having them perform academic research and otherwise participate in the process. Nalder is getting funds this year from Associated Students Inc. and hopes to get even more donations to pay the students for their time. “It’s important if you’re at a university and doing research to bring students
under your wing and teach them what the ins and outs of social science research are," she says.

Upcoming project events include:

**Misinformation in American Politics**, noon-1 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 18, University Union, Redwood Room

Lecture and discussion on the problem of misinformation in the electorate – when citizens believe political “facts” that are not true. What are the patterns, explanations and possible solutions? Original research on California will be presented, with examples from the 2012 campaign.

**Presidential Debate Viewing**, 5:45-7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 3, Sequoia Hall 301

A viewing of the first debate between President Barack Obama and former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney. The audience will be polled beforehand and after, followed by an open, post-debate discussion with political scientists there to comment and moderate.

**VP Debate Viewing**, 5:45-7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 11, Amador Hall 150

The vice presidential debate between Vice President Joe Biden and Rep. Paul Ryan. The audience will be polled beforehand and after, followed by an open, post-debate discussion with political scientists there to comment and moderate.

**Initiative Explainer**, 6-7:15 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 17, Sacramento Public Library Galleria, Ninth and I streets, Sacramento

A panel of nonpartisan experts including Nick Robinson, who is head of the Institute for Governmental Studies library at UC Berkeley, Philip Ung of California Common Cause, and Nalder unpack the 2012 state initiatives, including pros and cons, campaign finance, endorsements, etc. Bring your sample ballot and decide how you are going to vote.

**Assessing the 2012 Election: One Week Out**, 2-3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 13, University Union, Hinde Auditorium

A panel of experts will take a look back at the 2012 election. What impact did new campaign finance rules make? What strategies worked? What do the results mean for the state and the country? Come for a lively discussion.

All events are free and open to the public.
For more information, visit the website for the Project for an Informed Electorate at www.csus.edu/ssi/pie/. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

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