



**U.Va. Miller Center and
ABC News' This Week Partnering on Debate Series
on 2012 Issues**

First Debate airs this Sun., Dec. 18

ABC News' "This Week" and the Miller Center at the University of Virginia are partnering for "The Great American Debate," a series of debates on the key issues of the 2012 presidential campaign. The series will kick off Sunday, Dec. 18 and continue through Election Day.

The debates will take place before a live studio audience at the Newseum in Washington, D.C. and air on Sundays as special episodes of "This Week." Amanpour will moderate.

The first debate will take on the issue of big government tackling such issues as entitlements, taxes, and government regulations. Participants for "There is Too Much Government in My Life," will include Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.), chairman of the House Budget Committee, and columnist George Will versus Rep. Barney Frank (D-Mass.), senior Democrat on the House Financial Services Committee, and former Labor Secretary Robert Reich.

Five additional debates are planned before Election Day.

"The Great American Debate allows us to really delve into the substance of this election and unpack the differing visions for the country. By talking to key thinkers, we hope to move beyond talking points and examine the ideological divide separating the two parties" said Amanpour.

“Too often in this country, important issues are not discussed or debated as much as they are reduced to soundbites and slogans. Our purpose is to educate and to elevate the level of understanding and civility when the issues of 2012 are discussed. I’m especially pleased that these debates will not only help inform voters but also help teach students across the country,” said Gov. Gerald L. Baliles, director and CEO of the Miller Center.

The Miller Center will create and disseminate educational materials for the debate. Leading scholars will write white papers on each debate topic. The white papers will be turned into lesson plans that middle-school and high-school teachers can use to educate students about election issues. The lessons plans will adhere to the standards of learning in all 50 states. White papers and lessons plans will be available at millercenter.org.

Viewers are invited to post their comments and questions on the topics during the week before each debate on Twitter, using the hashtag #GreatDebate, and at [facebook.com/amanpourabc](https://www.facebook.com/amanpourabc) and [facebook.com/millercenter](https://www.facebook.com/millercenter). Some may be used on air.

Check local listings for air times.

Founded in 1975, the Miller Center is a nonpartisan institute at the University of Virginia focused on the presidency, policy and political history that works to inform public debate and national decision-making. It is the leading organization in the country looking to provide historical insights for the policymaking challenges the country faces today. For more information about the Miller Center, go to millercenter.org.

Miller Center Contact: Kristy Schantz 202.758.3918 kkschantz@virginia.edu

ABC News Media Relations: Heather Riley 212.456.4396 Heather.M.Riley@abc.com