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Class and Plans Underway for Upcoming Political Conventions

Winthrop University

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Class and Plans Underway for Upcoming Political Conventions

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Quick Facts

- Thanks to an ambitious program specifically designed to coincide with the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte N.C., Winthrop students will be able to savor firsthand the unique insights of some of the most important participants or observers of the political scene.
- Joining the Winthrop students for pre-convention activities will be college students and faculty members from 10 other higher education institutions across South Carolina - Lander, Newberry, Wofford, Coastal Carolina, Columbia College, York Technical College, S.C. State, Greenville Technical College, Clinton Junior College and University of South Carolina-Lancaster.



Karen Kedrowski

ROCK HILL, S.C. – Winthrop University college students will have the opportunity to witness **President Barack Obama's acceptance speech** Sept. 6 at **Bank of America Stadium** during the **Democratic National Convention**.

These Palmetto State undergrads also will get to meet the manager of political coverage for CNN—**Steve Brusk**, talk with a top political journalist from **The Atlanta Journal-Constitution**, **Aaron Gould Sheinin**, and question one of the top Democratic leaders in the **U.S. House of Representatives**, **Jim Clyburn**.



Katarina Moyon

Thanks to an ambitious program specifically designed to coincide with the **Democratic National Convention** in Charlotte N.C., Winthrop students will be able to savor firsthand the unique insights of some of the most important participants or observers of the political scene.

Joining the Winthrop students for pre-convention activities will be college students and faculty members from 10 other higher education institutions across South Carolina - **Lander, Newberry, Wofford, Coastal Carolina, Columbia College, York Technical College, S.C. State, Greenville Technical College, Clinton Junior College** and **University of South Carolina-Lancaster**. The group will descend en masse on Charlotte Sept. 1, 2 and 3. Their base of operation will be **First United Methodist Church**, just blocks from the convention site.

The college students attending weekend activities represent a broad mix of S.C. colleges—public, private, church-affiliated, historically black and a woman's institution.

Professor Karen Kedrowski, chair of Winthrop's **Department of Political Science** and director of the **John C. West Forum on Politics and Policy**, spent months with fellow political science adjunct professor **Katarina Moyon** crafting just the right mix of elements for the students. The slate of events students will be attending were specifically chosen to allow them to observe all phases of the convention process. The West Forum is helping sponsor the week of activities.

"The **2012 Presidential election year** has provided students with fantastic opportunities to study and participate in the American democratic process," said Kedrowski. "We have seized every opportunity to provide our students the chance to see the democratic process firsthand."

Earlier this year, Winthrop played host to a slew of Republican presidential hopefuls, including **GOP nominee Mitt Romney**, as well as the national media in the run up to the crucial South Carolina primary on Jan. 21. Data provided by the **Winthrop Polls** proved indispensable to observers of the political scene, as they endeavored to track the latest political sentiments of those in the **Palmetto State**.

Here are selected highlights of the students' program:

- * **President Barack Obama's** acceptance speech, Sept. 6 evening.
- * Speech by **Jim Clyburn**, assistant Democratic Leader in the 112th Congress, S.C. Representative for the Sixth Congressional District, Sept. 3.
- * Talk delivered by **Steve Brusk**, political manager of CNN, Washington, D.C., Sept. 1.
- * **Media Panel**, including The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, **Aaron Gould Sheinin**, Sept. 5.
- * Observing democracy at work by visiting anticipated **protest site** to interview protestors, including **Occupy Charlotte**.
- * Taking in art exhibits whose offerings are purposely tied to the convention, including former **U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's "Read My Pins" exhibit**, Mint Museum.

Then the Winthrop students, attending as a political science class, "**Presidential Nominating Conventions**," will continue enjoying the myriad of events offered in downtown Charlotte during convention week, and culminating in the president's acceptance address in **Bank of America Stadium** on Sept. 6. The political conventions class got underway online on Aug. 1.

"**Watch parties**" also are planned on campus for the Republican and Democratic national conventions. The parties – which are open to the public – will take place in the **Richardson Ballroom** in the **DiGiorgio Campus Center** on Wednesday, Aug. 29 and Thursday, Aug. 30 for the **GOP political convention** in Tampa, Fla., and on Sept. 5 to view the **Democratic convention** in Charlotte.

The August 29 and September 5 parties will feature foods representing the nominees (home states, favorite foods), while students eating in the **Winthrop dining hall** can "vote with your plate" -- Obama and Romney menus, or mix and match selections for Independents.

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