

Issues & Insights

Fall 2012



Montgomery County
Community College

Celebration of Democracy: The United States 2012 Elections

The Montgomery County Community College Political Science "Honors" class, in cooperation with the history and political science faculty, present an imaginative educational program intended to promote greater understanding of challenges facing the U.S. in our time.

In this celebration of democracy, a panel of experts will speak about the issues confronting our nation and the candidates of the two major parties. To give the program a reality-show quality, a faculty member will simulate a third-party candidacy and raise serious and humorous issues that the conventional candidates are likely to ignore.

The focus of the fall Issues & Insights program will be to stimulate public awareness of matters of national importance through serious, civil discussions as well as the use of critical but benevolent humor.

FREE

Open to the Public
Science Center, Room 214, Blue Bell
Simulcast to Pottstown

Wednesday, Sept. 19, 12:30 p.m.

First Town Hall Meeting

Tom Kolsky: Candidate of the "American Preservative Party". A listening Q & A.

Wednesday, Oct. 3, 12:30 p.m.

Domestic Politics—Issues and Candidates

Panel of Experts.

Wednesday, Oct. 17, 12:30 p.m.

Second Town Hall Meeting: Lessons from a Crisis

Part 1: Tom Kolsky's Vision of "Preservatism: Keep the Best, Mend the Rest" as alternatives to gridlockism.

Part 2: 50th Anniversary of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Lessons of Presidential Crisis Decision-Making.

Wednesday, Oct. 31, 12:30 p.m.

Domestic and Foreign Policy—Issues and Candidates

Wednesday, Nov. 14, 12:30 p.m.

The Meaning of the 2012 Elections

Where do we go from here? Panel of Experts.

Montgomery County Community College

With tongue in cheek, professor makes run for the White House

By LINDA STEIN
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WHITPAIN TWP. — Thomas Kolsky is a funny guy. He likes to crack jokes and draws amusing caricatures.

But Kolsky, a Montgomery County Community College history and political science professor, also hopes to provoke

thought and serious discussion among his students and the wider community, with a faux campaign for president.

Kolsky appointed himself the candidate of the American Preservative Party and developed a 14-plank platform, that includes scholarships for math and science students and ramping up the space program. Other planks include building on and

improving the Affordable Care Act of 2010 and defining health care as a matter of national security and raising the eligibility age for Social Security to 70 and increasing the Social Security tax ceiling to \$200,000.

He's been thinking about issues and teaching history and political science for 26 years,

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From A1

he said. And he's grown more and more concerned about the negative tenor of campaign rhetoric.

"I thought about this for a long time," said Kolsky, an Upper Gwynedd resident. "Campaigns make a lot of noise." But talking about serious issues in slogans and sound bites doesn't help voters learn what they need to know about those issues to make an informed decision, he said.

"All we hear is hope and change and jobs," he said.

Instead Kolsky would like to see an exchange of ideas and "a positive campaign."

Kolsky, who was born in Russia and lived in Czechoslovakia and Israel before coming to the U.S. as a teenager, earned degrees from Rutgers, The University of Hawaii, The University of Pennsylvania and a doctorate from George Washington University. His daughter, Amy Kolsky, teaches film at MCCC.

Kolsky also enjoys coining new words like "dumbnesia," meaning the dumbing down of political language to create amnesia in the voters and "truthification," meaning "you crucify the truth on the cross of expediency."

"I often say things to make people think," he said, modestly. "I don't think I have a monopoly on the truth. I have a real prob-

lem with rigid ideologies, which can be very damaging." He noted the he is open to changing his mind if given new information.

He's also concerned that the proliferation of tweeting and texting is robbing people of their ability to focus for any length of time.

"The media is chatter, chatter, chatter," he said. "There's no time to reflect."

While his presidential campaign is meant to be humorous, he also hopes that someday there could be a third party that takes the White House.

"My platform may appeal to a lot of people," he said. "My techniques are humorous, but the platform is very serious."

Kolsky will kick off his campaign with a Town Hall Meeting on Wednesday Sept. 19 at 12:30 p.m. at the Science Center Auditorium, room 213, 340 DeKalb Pike. He will deliver his acceptance speech to the 15 students in his political science honors class and interested members of the public are welcome to attend. Kolsky will take questions after his speech.

The fun will continue with his Issues & Insights series on alternate Wednesdays. On Oct. 3 when Kolsky will discuss domestic issues with two panel guest, immi-

gration attorney, Wendy Castor Hess, and business and tax attorney, William R. Wanger. On Oct. 17, the topic will be the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis with panelists assistant history Professor Anna Raskin, history Professor Lawrence Backlund and Jodi Empol-Schwartz, political science assistant professor. On Oct. 31, Kolsky will discuss domestic and foreign policy with Dick Polman, a commentator with The Philadelphia Inquirer. And on Nov. 14 the topic will be the meaning of the 2012 elections with panelists Empol-Schwartz, Benn Prybutok, director of the criminal justice program at MCCC and students.

In the spring, Kolsky will have a commentary on April 10, about the state of the nation and world. Finally, on April 17 he will hold an interdisciplinary forum with other MCCC staff about social media. All these forums are free.

For more information email Kolsky at tkolsky@mc3.edu

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THOMAS KOLSKY
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

PRESENTS

FOURTEEN POINTS:

THE PLATFORM
OF THE AMERICAN
PRESERVATIVE
PARTY

FOURTEEN POINTS: THE PLATFORM OF THE AMERICAN PRESERVATIVE PARTY (MOVEMENT FOR NATIONAL RENEWAL)

The American Preservative Party declares its commitment to the following fourteen policy initiatives necessary to assure our national well-being and to secure the blessings of liberty:

I. EDUCATION

- 1. Promotion of increased scholarship programs for mathematics and science**
- 2. Revitalization of health and physical education programs**
- 3. Initiation of a national two-language competence educational program**
- 4. Promotion of national and world historical literacy**
- 5. Introduction of secondary school and college Scholastic Olympics**

II. HEALTH

- 1. Building upon and improving the Affordable Care Act of 2010**
- 2. Initiating a national free-tuition medical school educational program to meet the demand for doctors in underserved areas**
- 3. Establishing a national commission of experts on long-term reform of Medicare**
- 4. Instituting a national malpractice insurance plan to relieve physicians of the extraordinary expenses that inflate the cost of their practice**
- 5. Passing extremely strict legislation to prosecute all medical fraud**
- 6. Defining defense of health as a matter of national security, particularly in view of threats of epidemics and biological terrorism**

III. SOCIAL SECURITY

- 1. Raising full social security eligibility, with health-related exceptions, to the age of seventy**
- 2. Increasing the social security tax ceiling to \$ 200,000**

IV. IMMIGRATION

- 1. Augmenting dramatically the national border protection against illegal immigration**
- 2. Beginning a tough amnesty program for illegal immigrants and passing the Dream Act for the children of illegal immigrants**

V. NATIONAL SERVICE

1. Initiation of a national service program for all able young people (18-30) with choice of service in domestic service corps, the military, or international programs like the Peace Corps
2. Implementation of training programs (work force development) for the national service participants with the goal of preparing and training them for future employment in a changing domestic and world economy

VI. TAX REFORM

1. Dramatic simplification of the Federal tax system
2. Close review and elimination of targeted tax deductions and loopholes

VII. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Creation of a national public transportation system in order to improve commuting and conserve energy

VIII. SPACE PROGRAM

Resumption of vigorous space exploration and flight projects

IX. PRISON REFORM

1. Initiation of a comprehensive review and overhaul of the United States penal system
2. Reduction of the prison population by revising penalties for drug possession and devising a more effective rehabilitation of prisoners

X. AMERICAN YOUTH COMMUNITY CENTERS

Creation of youth national community centers supported by private business and government agencies to promote educational and recreational engagement for small children and teenagers in economically disadvantaged areas.

XI. JUNIOR-SENIOR ALLIANCE FOR PROGRESS

Establishment of community centers designed to bring young people and senior citizens into mutually supportive contact that would bridge the gap between the generations. This endeavor would enable the two groups to become better acquainted and thereby reduce the feeling of alienation and estrangement which often afflicts many among them.

XII. EX-PRESIDENTS' ADVISORY COUNCIL

Passage of a constitutional amendment establishing an ex-presidents' advisory council designed to advise the sitting president.

XIII. REAL WARTIME PATRIOTISM ACT

1. Passage of legislation which would assert that it is the national policy of the United States that any war must be financed on a pay-as-you-go basis. During wartime, therefore, a national patriotic assessment fee would be collected from all citizens, except from the actual warriors and their families, as a demonstration of patriotism and shared national sacrifice.
2. Passage of legislation providing that during wartime ten percent of members of Congress should be embedded with the fighting troops in the war both as proof of support for the troops and to be able to provide first-hand information to their counterparts in Washington about the situation in the battlefield.

XIV. IMAGINATIVE MIDEAST PEACE INITIATIVE

Initiation of a historic break of the Israeli-Palestinian stalemate by helping both sides, with incremental negotiated incentives for them, to reach a peaceful solution of their conflict through the adoption of the following measures:

1. Commitment of an American peace force to separate the Israelis and the Palestinians that would remain in the area until five years after the creation of an independent Palestinian state.
2. Commitment of economic assistance to the Palestinian Authority for ten years at the same level as the military assistance provided for Israel.
3. Commitment for further assistance to the Palestinians and the Israelis, if they create an economic union

Rationale: The purpose of the proposal above is to create conditions that would allow a Palestinian state to come into existence and flourish economically. It would lead to a situation of non-expectation of conflict between the two sides. It would remove a major irritant to our grand policy in the Middle East and in the long run would be a major contribution to peace and stability in the region. An expenditure of 50-60 billion dollars over a decade would conceivably produce better results than the trillion plus we have spent recently with no guarantees of positive returns.