



Welcome to the **Emory University September 10 presidential debate media tip sheet.**

Our media relations team has identified dozens of Emory experts to discuss the September 10 presidential debate. You are welcome to use all materials listed. If you would like to be connected to one of our experts, please contact the media relations team at [news@emory.edu](mailto:news@emory.edu).

### **Debates**

**Ed Lee** is a relentless advocate for public debate and dialogue, and is a national media commentator for US presidential debates and the use of arguments in public discourse. His expertise includes debate strategies and the impact on national politics, as well as the use of arguments in public discourse.

### **Political Fandom**

**Professor Mike Lewis** looks at fandom and has done research as well on political fandom. He's experimented with [TikTok](#) and YouTube, doing a few videos on cultural segments and voting. Professor Lewis says, "When I look at Trump and Harris in terms of cultural segments it's an election between fans of Elon Musk, Tom Brady and Joe Rogan versus fans of Megan Rapinoe, Meghan Markle and LeBron James. It's largely pop culture vs counter culture."

[View research on Republican Fandom and Trump's VP Choice.](#)

**Professor Erin Tarver** specializes in feminist philosophy, American pragmatism, and the philosophy of sport. She has particular interests in the relationship between popular culture and the self. She has written on a range of topics, including politics, sports, William James and Michel Foucault.

### **Economics**

**Professor Tom Smith** is an economist who can discuss all policies surrounding labor, real estate, and cultural economics.

### **Political Science Experts**

**Zachary Peskowitz** focuses on American politics, with a particular interest in how elections affect policy outcomes.

He says, "This debate is Harris' best opportunity to define herself to a large audience in an unscripted setting. Harris will be looking to project an image as a competent, experienced, and moderate leader. Trump will

attempt to define Harris as a politician who has held inconsistent positions on approaches to crime, fracking, and economic policy.”

**Michael Rich** specializes in public policy, policy analysis and evaluation, federalism, and urban politics/policy.

He says: “Presidential debates have traditionally not been a venue for deep discussion of domestic policies beyond very broad generalities. It will be interesting to see how, if at all, the issues of housing affordability and workforce development, which many consider to be among the most pressing, are addressed.”

**Andra Gillespie** focuses on African American politics and political participation.

She says, “In general, I want to see how much of the discussion between the two candidates is substantive, as opposed to focusing on personality and theatrics. In the last debate, there was so much attention focused on Joe Biden’s poor performance that we forgot to interrogate the substantive policy discussion. What stood out to me in June were the silences—who couldn’t answer a question or who pivoted to a non-sequitur when asked about a specific policy? Moreover, I paid attention to who told lies more frequently in the last debate. Those questions remain important to me in tonight’s debate as well.

In addition, I’ll be looking for different things from each candidate. The big question for Donald Trump is his general comportment. Can he be disciplined during this debate, or will he launch ad hominem attacks against Vice President Harris, especially attacks that have racial or gender over- and undertones? For Harris, I will be paying attention to how she responds any attacks. I will also be looking to see how much depth and detail she provides on her policy positions since she’s still introducing her platform to the American electorate.”

**Alex Bolton** studies American politics, with a focus on executive branch politics and policymaking.

He says, “Since the entry of Vice President Harris into the race, the Trump campaign has struggled to make a consistent case against the Democratic ticket. Despite this, former President Trump’s position in the polls remains strong. I will be looking to see both how President Trump advances his policy vision for the country as well as how he contrasts that with a potential Harris administration. Undoubtedly, he will seek to tie the Vice President to President Biden’s policies. Whether he can do that in a way that sticks in voters’ minds and how the Vice President deals with those attacks may be critical for how people understand the race.”

**Bernard Fraga** is interested in American electoral politics, racial and ethnic politics, and political behavior. He can discuss the following:

- Impact of race and ethnicity in elections
- Minority voter turnout and office seeking
- Analysis of data on voter registration records and election results

**Alan Abramowitz** is interested in American politics, political parties, elections, and voting behavior. He can discuss the following:

- National politics, polling and elections
- Election forecasting models
- Party realignment in the U.S.