

Constitution Day events Sept. 17 aim to get students engaged

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Constitution Day encourages students to become engaged citizens, and it has become an annual celebration at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, where civic engagement is a key component of students' education.

Constitution Day, recognized nationally on Sept. 17, commemorates the ratification of the Constitution in 1787; educational institutions in the United States that receive federal funding must observe the day.

Many institutions, though, have transformed the little-known mandate into an opportunity to reflect on government, liberties and obligations as US citizens.

UW Oshkosh is among those institutions. On Monday, Sept. 17, Constitution Day will be celebrated at UW Oshkosh with Constitutions and Cupcakes at Reeve Memorial Union between 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. Pocket-sized Constitutions will be available for students.

Then, on Sept. 18, UW Oshkosh will welcome Christopher Schmidt, from Chicago Kent College of Law to speak about the tension between the 10th Amendment's reservation of powers to the states and people and the 9th Amendment's allowance for additional rights to be added to the Bill of Rights. His timely talk is entitled *Broccoli, Liberty, and the Constitutional Battle over Health Care*.

"This year's Constitution Day address centers around a couple of vital questions: What kind of government do we have? What kind of government do we want?" said David Siemers, political science professor and chair of the American Democracy Project at UW Oshkosh. "Law professor Christopher Schmidt will discuss these matters through the lens of examining the constitutional debate over the new federal health legislation."

Annually, Constitution Day activities are put on by the American Democracy Project (ADP) on campus. ADP is an initiative focused on higher education's role in preparing the next generation of informed, engaged citizens for our democracy. The goal of the ADP is to produce graduates who are committed to being active, involved citizens in their communities.

"The ADP brings programs and speakers to students, faculty and staff programs that reflect the issues at hand in our democracy. We provide a public forum in which the university community and the Oshkosh community at large can discuss, debate and discern the issues," said Carleen Vande Zande, assistant vice chancellor of curricular affairs and student academic achievement.

"We hope that students will ask questions, discuss how this issue impacts their lives and form their own opinions in an informed way. This program supports the learning outcomes that we are all committed to on this campus, especially around civic knowledge and civic engagement. We want to educate problem-solvers and engaged citizens. We believe in active citizenship," Vande Zande added.

Check out this video from last year's Constitution Day at UW Oshkosh...

[YouTube Video](#)

Learn more:

- [UW Oshkosh American Democracy Project](#)