

## **Elected officials to discuss state's future Nov. 30**

by Audralynn See - Monday, November 29, 2010

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/7326/legislators-and-county-executives-to-discuss-states-future/>

On Tuesday, Nov. 30, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh will hold its first State of the State summit from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in Room 307 of Reeve Memorial Union Theatre, 748 Algoma Blvd.

The State of the State summit will be a discussion with elected officials about Wisconsin's future, including topics on tuition, taxes, healthcare and transportation. The State of the State summit is sponsored by the American Democracy Project and the Political Science Student Association.

"One of the best things about this event is that it was envisioned, planned and organized by students," said David Siemers, political science professor. "This forum was their idea, and they have worked on it for weeks now. My role is simply to help the students succeed in their planning and executing of the event."

The summit is open to not only the students on campus, but also the Oshkosh community. The elected official participants will include state Reps. Gordon Hintz, Jeremy Thiesfeldt and Jeff Fitzgerald, Winnebago County Executive Mark Harris and Fond du Lac County Executive Al Buechel. Audience questions and comments are welcomed during the discussion.

"We want to bring the people who make the laws and who work directly with the government to our students so they can gain insight and optimism," said Braden Frederickson, a junior education major from Oshkosh.

Frederickson, along with his fellow interns, came up with the idea for the State of the State summit while brainstorming for ways to get students more involved in the workings of government. The summit aims to get the local state legislators and county executives to share their ideas beyond the slogans and campaign commercials.

"Because of the results of the last election, Wisconsin is at a crossroads, and the decisions made in the next few months will be ones felt around the state," Siemers said. "We should know what they are likely to be and how they will affect us."

Siemers explained that the state budget would probably be the most important item up for discussion on Tuesday.

"But the budget relates to virtually everything that government does, from plowing snow to setting tuition rates," Siemers said. "So there will be a wide-ranging discussion."

By attending this event, UW Oshkosh students are being proactive and engaging the political leaders in a beneficial open forum.

“Our efforts in planning this event are backed by our passion for helping students participate more with politics,” Frederickson said. “The negative outlook on democracy is what we are trying to eradicate.”

Free parking for the event will be available in lot 15 and the lower level of the parking ramp. For more information about the American Democracy Project, visit [www.uwosh.edu/adp/](http://www.uwosh.edu/adp/).