

# Roundtable focuses on 'civil discourse'

With a contentious presidential election just weeks away and voters hotly agreeing to disagree with those who don't share their preference among the candidates, Pennsylvania College of Technology's Madigan Library is hoping to inject some civility into the personal issue of political opinion.

"Talk the Vote!," scheduled from 6 to 7 p.m. Tuesday in the library, will feature a roundtable among Sandra Lakey, associate professor of speech communication-composition at Penn College; Ryan D. Beardsley, a mass media communications student and host of "Take a Stand: The Importance of the Youth Vote" on the college's WPTC radio station; Donald Noviello, a tutor and part-time college faculty member in history-sociology-political science; Robert O. Rolley Jr., interim publisher of the Williamsport Sun-Gazette; and Jonathan Williamson, chair of the political science department at Lycoming College.

"Just prior to the 2004 election, I read a story on the front of the Orlando Sentinel

The logo for Pennsylvania College of Technology is displayed on a blue background. It features the text "Pennsylvania College of Technology" in a large, white, serif font. Below this, the word "PENNSTATE" is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. Underneath the text is a white shield-shaped crest containing a stylized landscape with a sun, a river, and a bridge, with the year "1855" at the bottom.

local section that reported a man had locked his girlfriend in the basement of their house because she was voting differently from him," said Matthew David, assistant director, library services, and organizer of the program. "Luckily, the man was arrested, but the story stuck with me, especially because I have had plenty of political arguments among my own family and friends that were probably unnecessary."

Talking about this young nation's unique style of government is controversial because it's so personal, but part of America's strength is its diversity — including the diversity of political ideas, he said.

"There are advantages to interacting with those who disagree with us," David added. "The alternate view

can help us clarify our own views, which is good, but there is always the potential we can change our minds when appropriately persuaded. The question is, 'How?' How do we talk with one another about something so personal without tearing each other limb from limb?"

He strongly encourages those who attend to bring questions for the panelists — as well as their own stories and insights into the incredible challenge of civilly talking about politics. Light refreshments will follow the program, which will be held in the library's second-floor reading loft.

For more on "Talk the Vote!" (and other Madigan Library events), visit [www.pct.edu/library/community](http://www.pct.edu/library/community) or call 327-4523.