FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: media@debates.org

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr. and Michael D. McCurry, co-chairs of the non-partisan Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD), today announced the moderators for the 2016 general election presidential and vice presidential debates. The moderators, and the schedule and locations for the debates (as announced on September 23, 2015), are as follows:

First presidential debate:
Lester Holt, Anchor, NBC Nightly News
Monday, September 26, Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY

Vice presidential debate:
Elaine Quijano, CBS News Correspondent and CBSN Anchor
Tuesday, October 4, Longwood University, Farmville, VA

Second presidential debate (town meeting):
Martha Raddatz, Chief Global Affairs Correspondent and Co-Anchor of “This Week,” ABC
Anderson Cooper, Anchor, CNN
Sunday, October 9, Washington University in St. Louis, St. Louis, MO

Third presidential debate:
Chris Wallace, Anchor, Fox News Sunday
Wednesday, October 19, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

The CPD also announced that Steve Scully, Senior Executive Producer, White House and Political Editor for C-SPAN Networks, will serve as backup moderator for all the debates.

Fahrenkopf and McCurry said that, "These journalists bring extensive experience to the job of moderating, and understand the importance of using expanded time periods effectively. The formats chosen for this year’s debates are designed to build on the formats introduced in 2012, which focused big blocks of time on major domestic and foreign topics. We are grateful for their willingness to moderate, and confident that the public will learn more about the candidates and the issues as a result."
Format
The format for the debates, announced on July 7, 2016, will be:

First presidential debate
The debate will be divided into six time segments of approximately 15 minutes each on major topics to be selected by the moderator and announced at least one week before the debate.

The moderator will open each segment with a question, after which each candidate will have two minutes to respond. Candidates will then have an opportunity to respond to each other. The moderator will use the balance of the time in the segment for a deeper discussion of the topic.

Vice presidential debate
The debate will be divided into nine time segments of approximately 10 minutes each. The moderator will ask an opening question, after which each candidate will have two minutes to respond. The moderator will use the balance of the time in the segment for a deeper discussion of the topic.

Second presidential debate
The second presidential debate will take the form of a town meeting, in which half of the questions will be posed directly by citizen participants and the other half will be based on topics of broad public interest as reflected in social media and other sources. There will be two moderators. The candidates will have two minutes to respond to each question and there will be an additional minute for the moderator to facilitate further discussion. The town meeting participants will be uncommitted voters selected by the Gallup Organization.

Third presidential debate
The format for the debate will be identical to the first presidential debate.

With the exception of town meeting, all debates will be moderated by a single individual and will run from 9:00-10:30 p.m. Eastern Time without commercial breaks. As always, the moderators alone will select the questions to be asked, which are not known to the CPD or to the candidates. The moderators will have the ability both to extend the segments and to ensure that the candidates have equal speaking time. While the focus will properly be on the candidates, the moderator will regulate the conversation so that thoughtful and substantive exchanges occur. The CPD is in discussion with technology and civic groups that will provide data to the moderators to assist them in identifying the subjects that are most important to the public.

This year’s debates will build on the successful 2012 debate formats which introduced longer segments, allowing the candidates to focus on critical issues. “The CPD has a simple mission, to ensure that presidential debates help the public learn about the positions of the leading candidates for president and vice president,” CPD co-chairs Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr. and Michael D. McCurry said. “These formats will allow an in-depth exploration of the major topics in this year’s election.”

The CPD has sponsored and produced all the presidential and vice presidential debates since 1987, the year it was established. For more information, please visit www.debates.org.