



---

# The University of Georgia

---

Public Affairs  
*News Service*

Tuesday, Sept. 18, 2012

Writer/Contact: John F. Greenman, 706-542-1081, jgreenma@uga.edu

## **PolitiFact editor to speak at McGill Lecture**

Athens, Ga. – Bill Adair, editor of the Pulitzer Prize-winning PolitiFact, will speak on “The Truth-O-Meter, False Balance and the Promise of Fact-Checking” at the McGill Lecture at 4 p.m. Oct. 24, in Room 150 of the Miller Learning Center. The free lecture is open to the public and will be followed by a reception.

PolitiFact is the best known of the nation’s political fact-checking operations. It was launched by the then-St. Petersburg Times in 2007 to fact-check the 2008 presidential campaign and then expanded in January 2009 to fact-check members of Congress and the White House.

Political fact-checking has emerged as “one of the most positive trends in journalism,” said Richard Stevenson, the political editor of the New York Times. It is part of a movement, said New York Times Public Editor Margaret Sullivan, “to present the truth, not just conflicting arguments leading to confusion.”

PolitiFact’s Truth-O-Meter checks the accuracy of statements by candidates, elected officials, political parties, interest groups, pundits and talk show hosts. PolitiFact writers research the statements and rate them as True, Mostly True, Half True, Barely True, False and Pants on Fire.

PolitiFact received the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting for its coverage of the 2008 election. The Pulitzer Board cited PolitiFact's use of “probing reporters and the power of the World Wide Web to examine more than 750 political claims, separating rhetoric from truth to enlighten voters.”

Adair, PolitiFact’s creator and editor, also serves as the Washington Bureau Chief for the now-Tampa Bay Times and as an adjunct faculty member at the Poynter Institute. He has worked in Washington since 1997 and has covered Congress, the White House, the Supreme Court, national politics and aviation safety.

Adair is the author of “The Mystery of Flight 427: Inside a Crash Investigation,” a behind-the-scenes account of how the National Transportation Safety Board solved one of the biggest mysteries in aviation. He is the winner of the Everett Dirksen Award for Distinguished Coverage

of Congress, the Society of Professional Journalists Sigma Delta Chi Award and the Manship Prize for New Media in Democratic Discourse.

Adair is the latest significant figure in journalism to speak at the McGill Lecture, which for three decades has brought renowned journalists to the University of Georgia to honor Ralph McGill's courage as an editor.

McGill, while editor and publisher of The Atlanta Constitution, was regarded as the "conscience of the south," using the newspaper's editorial pages to challenge segregation in the 1950s and 1960s. McGill was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 1958 for long, courageous and effective leadership."

Established in 1978, this annual lecture series addresses major issues impacting American journalism.

##