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USE OF THE INTERNET IN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS: COMPARING CURRENT TRENDS IN THE U.S. AND JAPAN

Lecture by Shoko KIYOHARA, Ph.D
Commentary by Adjunct Prof. James Miller

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6:00 pm – 7:30 pm

American University Washington College of Law
4801 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, 6th floor

Japan is currently reviewing possible revisions to the Public Offices Election Act to allow for the use of the Internet for election campaigns without regulation. The Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) submitted legislative bills to revise the Election Act three times since 2006 as the opposition party. While none of these bills were deliberated and eventually all died in the Diet, the momentous elections of September 2009 broke the 50-year dominance of the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and made the DPJ the ruling party. For the first time, some promise for real revisions to the Act for use the Internet can be seen in the Japanese Diet. While new legislation was not submitted in time for the recent Upper House Election in 2010, most political parties made some novel uses of the Internet to deliver their political messages to constituencies during the campaign period.

Against the backdrop of the results in Upper House Election and changing attitudes about the role of the Internet in campaigns, Prof. KIYOHARA will compare and contrast the US and Japanese political systems, and discuss trends affecting attitudes and the significance of using the Internet for the campaigns in the U.S. and Japan.

Shoko Kiyohara teaches Information and Communication Policy at Meiji University as a lecturer. Prior to this, she worked for InfoCom Research as a researcher, and Interfaculty Initiative in Information Studies, University of Tokyo as an assistant professor. She received Fulbright Scholarship in 2005 and holds her Ph.D in political science from Keio University. Funded by Ohira Masayoshi Foundation, she published her dissertation as a book in 2008

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