



WOMEN & POLITICS INSTITUTE  
SCHOOL of PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Contact: Julia Piscitelli 202.262.3681

## **Women & Politics Institute Announces New Director**

*Brown Professor, Author, Dr. Jennifer Lawless to Take the Helm at American University's WPI, WPI's Founder, Director Karen O'Connor will be Director Emeritus*

**Washington, DC** -- Women & Politics Institute (WPI) founder and director, Karen O'Connor, J.D./Ph.D., the Jonathan N. Helfat Distinguished Professor of Political Science today announced that Jennifer Lawless, Ph.D. will be the new director of the institute, effective this summer, and Dr. O'Connor will become director emeritus. Dr. Lawless joins the American University faculty as a tenured associate professor of government in the School of Public Affairs. She comes to AU from her position as assistant professor of political science and public policy at Brown University. She is the co-author, with Richard Fox, of *It Takes A Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

**“Professor Lawless taking the helm at WPI is a huge get for WPI and for AU. Dr. Lawless is at the forefront of academic research and writing about women in politics and, specifically, women’s political ambition,”** said Dr. O'Connor. **“There is simply no better way to celebrate the tenth anniversary of WPI, than by looking forward to the next ten years under the leadership of Jennifer Lawless. Her vision for the future of women in all facets of politics and her unparalleled record of scholarship on the issue brings tremendous assets to the thriving institute.”**

At the Women & Politics Institute Dr. Lawless joins a team of talented professors, motivated funders, and committed students. Founder Karen O'Connor has published more than twenty five books including the best selling political science text book in the country for the last decade.

Rounding out the WPI team is campaign, media and political expert Julia Piscitelli who is serving her first year as WPI assistant director and faculty member after eight years on the WPI Young Women Leaders' Board.

***For more information about the academic and leadership programs of the WPI, go to <http://wandp.american.edu/>***

***For more information please call Julia Piscitelli at 202.885.3103 or 202.262.3681***

