

Mayoral Candidates Debate on Campus

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With one month to go in the New Orleans mayoral election, candidates are pushing hard to get their messages out to the voters who will head to the polls on Feb. 6. With that in mind, Tulane hosted a debate in McAlister Auditorium on Tuesday (Jan. 12).



A group of candidates for New Orleans mayor talk about the issues in McAlister Auditorium on Tuesday (Jan. 12). (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Clancy DuBos, political columnist for the *Gambit Weekly* and the on-air political commentator for WWL-TV, moderated the debate, which featured Jonah Bascle, Rob Couhig, Jerry Jacobs, James Perry, Nadine Ramsey and Troy Henry. The candidates fielded questions submitted by the student body, and topics touched on issues such as economic development, crime, housing, public health and transparency in government.

The debate got off to a late start due to an earlier candidate forum at Dillard University that overran its schedule. Candidates Mitch Landrieu and John Georges, who attended the Dillard event, were not present during the debate at McAlister.

In spite of the delay, the crowd was large and engaged, offering applause to Perry and Couhig, and often appearing amused by one-issue candidates Bascle and Jacobs. Bascle (a professional comedian who is disabled) focused his answers and wit on the issue of wheelchair accessibility, while Jacobs' answers all revolved around the legalization of marijuana.

Perry and Henry continued a sparring session that apparently began during the Dillard debate, taking shots about each other's plans for economic development as well as Henry's similar background to current mayor Ray Nagin. Judge Nadine Ramsey, who sat between Perry and Henry, touted her two degrees from Tulane and the work ethic instilled by her upbringing in the Ninth Ward.

The candidates continue their breakneck pace with multiple debates and forums planned until the polls open for the primary elections in February.

Tuesday's debate was organized by the TUCP Lyceum Committee, the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the Department of Political Science and the School of Medicine.