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NBC's Brian Williams to Moderate GOP debate Jan. 23, 2012 at USF in Tampa

TAMPA BAY, Fla – The St. Petersburg Times, NBC News, National Journal and the Florida Council of 100 today confirmed new details for their previously announced Republican presidential primary debate.

The GOP debate will air live on NBC on Monday, Jan. 23, from a small theater on the Tampa campus of the University of South Florida. NBC Nightly News anchor Brian Williams will moderate, along with a panel including Times Political Editor Adam Smith.

The Florida primary is Tuesday, Jan. 31. The debate will follow the Iowa caucuses and New Hampshire and South Carolina primaries.

“Florida will be at the center of next year’s presidential election, and this is the state where national issues like the economy and health care loom especially large,” said Paul Tash, Times Chairman and CEO.

This will be the first weekday primetime airing of a primary debate on a broadcast network in the 2012 election cycle. Telemundo also will broadcast the debate, which was first announced in April, in its entirety with simultaneous Spanish-language translation. The event will stream live on tampabay.com and usf.edu.

It also marks the third time the St. Petersburg Times and USF have partnered to produce nationally televised political debates. The first was the vice presidential debate in 1996; the second a series of back-to-back U.S. Senate and gubernatorial debates a year ago.

“USF is the perfect place for candidates to tell us their ideas for our future,” said USF President Judy Genshaft. “Universities represent the future, and students will want to hear how anyone who wants to be president can shape the years to come.”