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UVM debate spotlights federal stimulus

Today's event latest in Janus Forum series

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Was the \$787 billion federal stimulus package an enlightened act of government intervention that averted economic catastrophe or a colossal waste of taxpayer money that has done more harm than good?

That question is the subject of the today's installment in the University of Vermont's Janus Forum, a debate series in its second year that matches prominent thinkers with opposing views deliberating on important social issues.

The debate, titled "\$787 Billion: Stimulus or Sedative," will be held from 4 to 5:30 p.m. today in the Davis Center's Grand Maple Ballroom. It pits Justin Wolfers, associate professor of business and public policy at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, arguing for the benefits of the stimulus, against Jeffrey Miron, senior lecturer and director of undergraduate studies at Harvard University and a senior fellow at the Cato Institute.

The event is open to the public and will include a question-and-answer period following the debate.

James Gatti, a finance professor in UVM's School of Business Administration, founded the Janus Forum with Arthur Woolf, an economics professor in the College of Arts and Sciences, and Richard Vanden Bergh, also of the School of Business Administration.

The goal of the debate series, said Gatti, "is to examine the important and controversial policy issues of the day and to challenge individuals to reexamine their views in the light of well articulated contrary positions.

"Many people who have a position on important issues often dismiss opposing points of view out of hand," he said. "We want to expose them to vigorous arguments on both sides of the debate."
