December 15, 2016

Eugene Kiely, director of FactCheck.org, answers questions on the new initiative with Facebook:

**Question:** How does this arrangement benefit FactCheck.org? Does FactCheck.org have a financial arrangement with Facebook?

**Answer:** We have don't have a financial arrangement with Facebook. So why do it? It's an extension of our mission – which is “to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics.” We have been writing about bogus political claims that circulate in chain emails and on social media sites for years – mostly in Ask FactCheck, a feature we started in December 2007. Ask FactCheck answers readers’ questions – many of which deal with stories or memes that readers have seen on Facebook or Twitter or claims that have read in an email from a friend or relative. Some recent examples: We debunked one bogus story claiming that Pope Francis had endorsed Donald Trump and another claiming that President Obama signed an executive order banning the pledge of allegiance.

**Q:** How will the initiative with Facebook work?
**A:** We will be alerted to suspicious stories circulating on Facebook and we will provide Facebook with a link to our article debunking any fake stories that we have written about. We expect at times that we also will research and write new stories, based on what we are seeing trending on Facebook, but only to the extent that we have the resources and it fits our mission.

**Q:** Do you expect to receive a lot of requests to fact-check stories?
**A:** I don’t know if we will get flooded with requests, but the simple fact is that we are a small nonprofit organization with limited resources so we will continue to do what we have been doing and make our work available to Facebook – just as we make our work available to other news organizations, including USA Today, MSN.com, the Philadelphia Inquirer and others that use our stuff. Our copyright policy allows for anyone to use our material free of charge, as long as our work is properly credited and not edited in any way that would alter the meaning. (Our full copyright policy is on our website.) What Facebook plans to do with our stories is up to Facebook.

**Q:** What kinds of fake stories will you debunk?
**A:** We are not going to write about all fake news, just fake news that deals with politics. And we will write about those articles to the extent that we can. Our primary mission is to fact-check statements made by politicians, so that’s our number one priority. If we see that we can do more with fake political news – and I assume that we can – then we will consider seeking funding for it. I see this as just a start.