

The Imperial Presidency

Will Congress take back its power to declare war?

Purpose: This seminar will explore the erosion of Congressional checks on presidential powers in the realm of foreign policy and waging war, and the growing trend toward a presidency wherein the chief executive is accountable only to the electorate or through impeachment.

Course #	19SIP
Format:	Seminar
Moderator:	Gene Fisher
Date and Time:	Monday, 9:30-11:30 10 weeks, starting February 25
Location:	Smith College Campus Center, Room 102

Description: After an introductory first session, the remaining 9 weeks of the seminar will follow the traditional presentation - discussion format. Two topics will be presented and discussed each session. The topics will follow mostly the chapter headings in Schlesinger's and Louis Fisher's books, *The Imperial Presidency* and *Presidential War Power*. The topic list will include the intentions and disagreements the founding fathers had over the president's powers; numerous examples of presidents overriding the powers of Congress, especially in wartime; proposed structural changes in the presidency; and court rulings (or non-rulings) on the matter. The second half of the 10th week session will feature an open discussion by all participants on what can be done about the imperial presidency.

Role of participants: Each participant will choose one or, depending on seminar enrollment, two topics from a pre-arranged list of 17 topics, ordered by date. Each participant will have 50 minutes to present (30 minutes) and discuss (20 minutes) his/her topic.

Resources: There are two required texts: (1) *The Imperial Presidency* by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Mariner Edition, 2004; (2) *Presidential War Power* by Louis Fisher, third edition revised, University Press of Kansas, 2013. An optional source recommended to all is *Absolute Power: How the Unitary Executive Theory is Undermining the Constitution* by John P. Mackenzie, The Century Foundation Press, 2008.

About the Moderator: An Emeritus Professor of Sociology from UMass, Amherst, Professor Fisher has participated in four 5CLIR seminars, and moderated one seminar on the Evolution of Islamic Salafism.

Maximum number of participants: 18

Auditors accepted: yes, up to 2