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UCSB Affiliates Town Forum to Examine Power of the Presidency

When the framers of the Constitution defined the terms of the nation's democratic system of government, they envisioned a delicate balance of power between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. Over the past 220 years, however, this balance has often tipped in one direction or another. Responding to global threats, recent presidents have claimed vast executive authority over national security, military deployments, and even questions of war and peace. Their actions have raised questions about the existence of a permanent imperial presidency and how an upset of the balance of powers affects policy making and citizens' rights.

A panel of four political science professors at UC Santa Barbara will discuss these and other issues at a UCSB Affiliates Town Forum on Tuesday, March 4. Their talk is titled "American Presidents: Too Powerful for Our Own Good?" Speakers include Gayle Binion, Roger H. Davidson, John T. Woolley, and M. Stephen Weatherford.

The lecture begins at 7:30 p.m. in the First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall, 21 E. Constance Ave. Admission is \$8 for UCSB Affiliates, alumni, or Chancellor's Council members and \$10 for all others. Advance registration is recommended by calling the UCSB Office of Community Relations at (805) 893-4388.

Binion, who will moderate the panel, is a specialist in public law, particularly the role of the judiciary in protecting constitutional rights. Most recently, she contributed chapters to the scholarly publications "Women's Rights: A Human Rights Quarterly

Reader" (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006) and "The U.S. House of Representatives: Reform or Rebuild?" (Praeger, 2000).

Davidson is co-author of "Congress and its Members" (CQ Press, 2008) and co-editor of "Understanding the Presidency" (Longman, 2008). He also serves on the UCSB Affiliates board of directors.

Weatherford's research focuses on presidential leadership, national economic policy, and community decision-making. He is co-author of two recently published articles: "Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: The States of Presidential Decision-Making" and "Ronald Reagan as Legislative Advocate."

Woolley, chair of the political science department, is co-author of "State of the Union: Presidential Rhetoric from Woodrow Wilson to George W. Bush" (CQ Press, 2006). He also helped develop The American Presidency Project, a Web site based at UCSB that contains nearly 70,000 presidential documents and more than 700 recordings.

About UC Santa Barbara

The University of California, Santa Barbara is a leading research institution that also provides a comprehensive liberal arts learning experience. Our academic community of faculty, students, and staff is characterized by a culture of interdisciplinary collaboration that is responsive to the needs of our multicultural and global society. All of this takes place within a living and learning environment like no other, as we draw inspiration from the beauty and resources of our extraordinary location at the edge of the Pacific Ocean.