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By Luis Martinez
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Booth Library will have a presentation focusing on the similar views Abraham Lincoln and Barack Obama shared on constitutional war powers both men had before they became president.

The presentation will be at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday in the Witters Conference Room in Booth Library.

The presentation is part of the Lincoln exhibition, which began in early September.

The exhibition has had three presentations about different aspects of Lincoln's presidency during the Civil War, as well as the roles his wife played during the time.

Ryan Hendrickson, the interim dean of the graduate school and a professor of political science, will be presenting "Congressman Abraham Lincoln and Senator Barack Obama: The Evolution of War Powers from Congress to the White House."

Hendrickson said, "I wanted to contribute to Booth Library for the Lincoln exhibition," he said. "The library has such an impressive record of bringing in first-rate scholars, and I was hoping to be a part of the forum on President Lincoln in some capacity."

Hendrickson said on the topic of studying and understanding constitutional war powers, he has been researching the topic since 1995.

"I am attempting to answer how closely Congressman Lincoln and Senator Obama acted with regard to the application of war powers while each served in the Congress," Hendrickson said. "The presentation, while addressing Lincoln, will devote more analysis to modern political events and how they may relate to Abraham Lincoln's tenure in the House of Representatives."

The constitutional war powers are based off an article in the United States Constitution called the "War Powers Clause," and it says Congress has the power to declare war, and only five wars have been formally declared through this: the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, the Spanish-American War, World War I and World War II.

Hendrickson said he spent a lot of time over the summer months working on his presentation, and this topic has been a main research topic of his for many years.

"Since my graduate school years, I have been interested in the question of how the United States chooses to use force abroad," Hendrickson said. "I have always been interested in checks and balances and the extent to which Congress shapes the decision to use force abroad."

Hendrickson said at least half of his presentation will focus on President Obama, rather than being a purely historical analysis, and any faculty, staff, student and Charleston resident is welcome to attend.

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