

SOCRATES PROGRAM

aspen institute

Emerging Governance
Leadership Seminar
August 26th-28th, 2022
Charlottesville, Virginia



About Socrates

The Aspen Institute Socrates Program provides a forum for emerging leaders from various fields to convene and explore contemporary issues through expert-moderated dialogue. The program's seminars are designed as values-based Socratic explorations to facilitate the exchange of ideas. The program also allows participants to join a diverse professional network, and to access the broader range of the Institute's programs.

Seminar Approach

Socrates seminars are collaborative endeavors of leaders from a range of fields. Discussions are built around classic and contemporary texts and are led by moderators who engage and encourage participants to share their views with a diverse group of peers. The seminars provide stimulating dialogue, values-based introspection, and dynamic debate that serve to enhance participants' leadership capabilities.

Seminar Information

The Socrates Program is excited to host our ongoing Emerging Governance Leaders Seminar in beautiful Charlottesville, Virginia. This series consists of seminars beginning on Friday afternoons and concluding on Sunday afternoons, followed by a closing lunch. Our partnership with the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Democracy Fund covers seminar tuition, lodging, materials, meals, and an outing at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello for Congressional staffers and others that work with our government.



A More Perfect Union

Article 1, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution states, “All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.” The creation of this legislative body marked a departure from past governance systems and the start of the “American experiment.” 230 years later, how do the foundations of the U.S. government inform and influence the role of Congress today – and the responsibilities and expectations of those who serve within? In this seminar, we will examine governance systems, the creation of Congress, and precedent-setting legal interpretations of the role of Congress. This seminar will build on these foundations to consider governance and responsibilities in pursuit of an inclusive republic.

This professional development experience will focus on three aspects: 1) developing skills that are applicable to the legislative body; 2) building informal networks that are key to career advancement and support, and 3) and providing participants access to a range of Aspen Institute programming. This opportunity will provide staffers with experiences and tools to help them thrive in their current roles and better position themselves for longer, more impactful careers in the U.S. Congress.

Moderator: Colleen Shogan

Colleen Shogan is Senior Vice President and Director of the David M. Rubenstein National Center for White House History at the White House Historical Association, Vice Chair of the Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission, and an Adjunct Professor of Government at Georgetown. She was previously the Assistant Deputy Librarian for Collections and Services at the Library of Congress, the Deputy Director at the Congressional Research Service (CRS), and the Deputy Director of National and International Outreach (NIO) at the Library of Congress. Prior to joining the Library, Colleen served as a policy staffer in the Senate, in which she handled matters on defense, appropriations, transportation, small business, and science & technology. She came to Capitol Hill in 2005 through the American Political Science Association (APSA) Congressional Fellowship program as the William E. Steiger fellow. Prior to working in Congress, Colleen was Assistant Professor of Government and Politics at George Mason University. She joined the George Mason faculty in 2002, after completing her PhD in Political Science at Yale University. Colleen is also a mystery writer and has published five novels.



Eligibility and How to Apply

Those who have been a Congressional or committee staffer for 3 years or less, a federal and state civil servant, a White House Fellow, or an individual working close with our government can attend and are interested in this seminar, please email socrates@aspeninstitute.org with your CV.

I recommend it to anybody. I recommend it to people who are exploring themselves and are new to their careers, and people who are unafraid of having candid conversations. And there was a lot of growth. I was able to question things because I learned about different perspectives – enriched personal and professional experiences – to see how people walk in their shoes.

Anthony Mitchell, EGL alum



Anthony (left) with fellow EGL alumni



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