

**POL2260 - ONLINE**  
**AMERICAN JUDICIAL PROCESS**  
**WINTER SESSION 2015**

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**Course Description:**

The purpose of this course is to examine the role of the courts in the American political system. In addition to comparing various judicial systems (including comparative constitutional systems, U.S. state and federal court systems, and aspects of the U.S. criminal justice system), the course will also briefly review Jurisprudence (judicial activism and restraint, the interpretive and noninterpretive theories of constitutional analysis) and Major Legal Concepts (jurisdiction, standing, mootness, etc.), before examining the history of Judicial Power & Judicial Decision-Making in the U.S. Supreme Court.

**Requirements:**

Students are responsible for knowing how to access Blackboard and properly complete and/or participate in the course assignments, Chat Sessions, Discussion Boards, and Exams. Any computer questions should be directed to the *WPU Computer Helpdesk*. Students are required to read the assigned chapters each week, review any Outlines or Discussion Board questions I've posted on Blackboard, and turn in the assignments on time. Assessment will include two (2) ONLINE Examinations and one (1) randomly assigned Discussion Paper. Discussion Papers are NOT research papers. Instead, they are 3 page, typed papers critically and creatively examining an assigned topic from the student's perspective but based upon the concepts, history, processes, and philosophy discussed in the readings, posted Outlines/Discussion Boards, and/or Chat Sessions. Exams will feature 2 essay questions. The exams are mandatory, therefore it is the Student's responsibility to arrange their schedule to take the exams if there is any conflict with the dates/times. The exams & papers will be graded on their Content, Creativity, Critical Thinking, Grammar, and Organization. The exams are worth 100 points each, while the discussion paper is worth 50 points.

**Required Texts:**

Banks & O'Brien, *The Judicial Process: Law, Courts, and Judicial Politics*, (Sage/CQ Press, 2016)  
Principe, *American Government, Policy, and Law, 3rd ed.* (Kendall/Hunt, 2012)

