

**PSC 316-01: Judicial Process**  
**Fall 2015**  
**Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:45 am**  
**Curry 334**

**Instructor & Office Hours:**

**Dr. Susan Johnson**

**Office: 323 Curry**

**Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2-3:15 pm and by appointment**

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**Course Catalog Description:**

Analysis of the American legal system, focusing on the behavior of actors in that system, theoretical foundations of the system, and policy-making role of the courts.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

- To give students an introductory understanding of the structure of the American court system
- To help students explore their expectations of the court system and appreciate the way courts influence politics and everyday life
- To show students how judges make decisions, and why this process is different from our long-held myths about judges
- To practice reading and analyzing written judicial opinions

**Required Texts:**

- Carp, Robert A., Ronald Stidham, and Kenneth L. Manning. 2014. *Judicial Process in America*. 9th edition. CQ Press.
- Additional Readings on Canvas, as indicated on the schedule of topics. Please print and bring to class (with the exception of the Galanter article).

**Course Requirements:**

Reaction papers (5 of student's choice) –	20 pts each –	100 pts total
Class participation		50 pts total
Unit One exam		100 pts total
Unit Two exam	-	100 pts total
Unit Three exam		100 pts total

**Grading Scale:**

A+=439-450 pts	C+=349-357 pts	F=267 pts & below
A=417-438 pts	C=327-348 pts	
A-=403-416 pts	C-=313-326 pts	
B+ =394-402 pts	D+=304-312 pts	
B=372-393 pts	D=282-303 pts	
B-=358-371 pts	D-=268-281 pts	

### **Class Participation:**

Students are expected to regularly attend class and participate in discussion. This means that students should be prepared each class period to be called upon to answer questions relevant to the reading. Quality is more important than quantity in my evaluation of class participation. Class participation may also occasionally consist of assigned discussion questions for the following class period or a pop quiz, at the instructor's discretion. Attendance will be included as part of the class participation grade. Participation in class discussion and evidence of reading material prior to class will be taken into account in determining final participation grades.

### **Reaction Papers:**

You will be required to submit a single-spaced, one-page reaction paper of about 350-450 words for five of the readings of your choice as indicated on the schedule of topics. Reaction papers will be due on the date listed on the schedule of topics. ***Late reaction papers will not be accepted.*** It is up to the student to ensure that at least five reaction papers are completed by semester's end. If a student misses a reaction paper due to extenuating circumstances, then he or she will be asked to complete one of the upcoming reaction papers. In other words, you should plan accordingly and not wait until the end of the semester to turn in the last five reaction papers that are due. There are **26** opportunities to submit reaction papers throughout the semester. **DO NOT WAIT** until the end and submit the last five (you may risk missing one due to extenuating circumstances). Detailed instructions for writing reaction papers will be posted online and/or handed out in class.

### **Missed exams:**

Students are expected to be present to take the exams at their scheduled times. Only in extraordinary circumstances will make-up opportunities exist. Students must notify me PRIOR to the missed exam with a valid excuse and must be prepared to provide credible evidence (such as a written doctor's note) of the excuse. Excuses for missed exams after the fact will not be allowed, resulting in a failing grade for the missed exam. It is the instructor's sole discretion to determine whether or not an excuse is acceptable.

### **Academic Honor Code:**

I expect all students in this course to abide by both the letter and spirit of the university's academic integrity policy. **Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted.** The full text of the Academic Integrity Policy can be viewed at: <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>. Specifically pertinent to this course are the following rules:

1. "Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise."
2. "Plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise."

**Do NOT engage in either cheating or plagiarism.** The penalties for both offenses range from the need to re-do assignments to expulsion from the University, depending upon the severity of the cheating or plagiarism offense.

If you have any questions regarding what constitutes either cheating or plagiarism, please see me *immediately*.

**Classroom etiquette and use of electronic devices:**

Please show respect for your instructor and classmates by being in class on time and by planning to remain in class for the entire class period. Turn off cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Use of laptop computers is limited to taking notes, not surfing the Internet, chatting with others, working on assignments for other classes, or any other similar activities. **Students who use laptops to take notes must sit in the front two rows of the classroom.**

Please be on time for class. Wandering in and out of class is distracting to everyone else. Excessive tardiness or leaving class early will result in a deduction of the participation grade. Please do not smoke in the classroom (including use of e-cigarettes).

**Schedule of Topics:** Minor adjustments to the schedule may be made during the semester. Students are expected to keep up with any changes made to the schedule.

\*Note: Chapter numbers refer to the chapters in *Judicial Process in America*. Each day's reading assignments should be completed *prior* to class. **Reaction papers are due on the date the reading is assigned.**

8/18 Introduction and course overview / reaction paper overview

8/20 Chapter 1 – Foundations of Law  
Reserve: Holmes, Bork (**up to 2 reaction papers**)

8/25 Reserve: Scalia, Brennan (**up to 2 reaction papers**)  
Case: *DC v. Heller* (**reaction paper**)

8/27 Chapter 2 – Federal Judicial System

9/1 Cases: *Hamdi, Snyder* (**up to 2 reaction papers**)

9/3 Chapter 4 - Jurisdiction & Policymaking Boundaries  
Case: *DeFunis v. Odegaard* (**reaction paper**)

9/8 Chapter 6 – Federal Judges  
Reserve: Williams, Goldman (**up to 2 reaction papers**)

9/10 Video: Senate confirmation hearings

9/15 Wrap-up/review for Unit One exam

9/17 **UNIT ONE EXAM**

9/22 Chapter 3 – State Judicial Systems

9/24 Chapter 5 – State Judges  
Reserve: Bonneau (**reaction paper**)

- 9/29 Video: The Last Campaign
- 10/1 Video (cont'd)  
Case: *Caperton v. Massey Coal* (**reaction paper**)
- 10/6 Chapter 8 – Lawyers, Litigants & Interest Groups
- 10/8 Reserve: Galanter & Songer (**up to 2 reaction papers**)
- 10/13 Fall Break
- 10/15 Chapter 9 & 10 – Criminal rights  
Case: *Miranda* (**reaction paper**)
- 10/20 Criminal rights (cont'd)  
Cases: *Kyllo*, *Hiibel* (**up to 2 reaction papers**)
- 10/22 Case: *Gregg* (**reaction paper**)  
Case: *Roper*, *Lockyer* (**up to 2 reaction papers**)
- 10/27 Wrap-up and review for Unit Two exam
- 10/29 **UNIT TWO EXAM**
- 11/3 Chapter 11 – The Civil Court Process  
Reading: Civil cases (**include all cases in 1 reaction paper**)
- 11/5 Chapter 12 – Decision Making by Trial Court Judges  
Case: *Washington v. Glucksberg* (**reaction paper**)
- 11/10 Chapter 13 – Decision Making in Collegial Courts  
Reserve: Epstein & Knight – Chapters 1-3 (**include all 3 chapters in 1 reaction paper**)
- 11/12 Video: Justices' views on decision-making
- 11/17 Chapter 14 – Implementation and Impact  
Reserve: Rosenberg article (**reaction paper**)
- 11/19 Cases: *Virginia v. Black*, *Grutter v. Bollinger* (**up to 2 reaction papers**)  
wrap-up and review
- 11/24 Wrap-up and review for Unit Three exam
- 12/3 **9 am-11 am - Unit Three exam (length of regular class period)**