

Important Items about The Courts

You need to begin familiarizing yourself with these terms. You will be having an identification quiz at the halfway point of the Unit. Remember, the quiz has no word bank, you must know these terms.

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| Chapter 16 Amicus Curiae briefs Appellate jurisdiction Class action suits Courts of appeal District courts Judicial activism Judicial implementation Judicial restraint Judicial review Justiciable disputes <i>Marbury v. Madison</i> | Opinion Original intent Original jurisdiction Political questions Precedent Senatorial courtesy Solicitor general Standing to sue Stare decisis Statutory construction Supreme Court <i>United States v. Nixon</i> |
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THE COURTS



Learning Objectives (you should be able to answer these by the time we finish the Unit)

Chapter 16 – The Courts

1. Clarify the reasoning behind calling the American judicial system an *adversarial* system.
2. Identify the major actors in the judicial system and explain their functions and responsibilities.
3. Differentiate between *original* and *appellate* jurisdiction, and between *civil* and *criminal* law.
4. Describe the functions of federal district courts, courts of appeals and the U.S. Supreme Court.
5. Summarize judicial selection procedures for federal judges and justices.
6. Discuss the backgrounds of judges and justices.
7. Describe the role of the courts as *policymakers*.
8. Distinguish between *judicial review* and *statutory interpretation*.
9. Summarize procedure in the U.S. Supreme Court, including the “discuss list,” oral argument, the conference, and opinion writing.
10. Explain the importance of opinion writing at the Supreme Court level and describe the different types of opinions.
11. Identify factors used by the Supreme Court in deciding which cases to accept for review.
12. Analyze the contrasting positions of *judicial restraint* and *judicial activism*.
13. Trace the historical evolution of the policy agenda of the Supreme Court.
14. Examine the ways in which American courts are both democratic and undemocratic institutions.