

POLI 4000 Politics of the U.S. Supreme Court
Louisiana State University
Department of Political Science
Fall 2019
Tuesday and Thursday 1:30-2:50
228 Tureaud Hall

Instructor: Elizabeth Lane
Office: 208B Stubbs Hall
Office Hours: 3:00 - 4:00

emphasis on social scientific research on law and legal process. Students should leave this class with a functional understanding of the inner workings of the U.S. Supreme Court, the judicial decision making process, and how both internal and external mechanisms influence this process.

II. OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the semester, students should have a deeper understanding of the judiciary in the United States, the ability to identify and explain particular stages of the Supreme Court legal system (i.e., the nomination and confirmation processes, agenda setting, opinion writing, etc.). More specifically, students should be able to articulate and apply social scientific theories to the legal process and judicial decision making. Using this lens, then, students should have the ability to critically evaluate the process. Specifically, students should be able to answer the following questions:

1. How does the Supreme Court nomination and confirmation process shape the character of the Court?
2. What are the institutional factors that constrain or enable a justice to pursue their policy preferences?
3. How and when do institutional factors constrain or enable a justice to pursue their policy preferences?
4. How do elected politicians (i.e., members of Congress) influence the Supreme Court?

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III. SOCIAL SCIENCES COMPETENCY STATEMENT

LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic differences.

IV. COURSE TEXTS

Required Text

Woodward, Bob and Scott Armstrong. 2005. *The Brethren: Inside the Supreme Court*. New York: Simon and Schuster. ISBN-10:9780743274029.

Supplemental Text

Most readings on the course schedule are scholarly articles from academic journals or texts from academic texts. All of these will be posted on Moodle.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

Your course grade will be graded on a points system (points by points possible). The points will consist of class attendance, participation, responses, quizzes, two exams, and a pretest. A summary of the points breakdown is as follows:

Assignment	Due Date	Points
PreTest	Friday 8/30	50

assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation. For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU. For graduate students, suspension is the appropriate outcome for the first offense.

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

Nearly everyone understands that copying passages verbatim from another writer's work and representing them as one's own work constitute plagiarism. Yet plagiarism involves much more. At LSU plagiarism is defined to include any use of another's work and submitting that work as one's own. This means not only copying passages of writing or direct quotations but also paraphrasing or using structure or ideas without citation. Learning how to paraphrase and when and how to cite is an essential step in maintaining academic integrity.

Written assignments for this class may be subject to review by plagiarism detection software. Incidents of dishonesty may also be reported to the Department or University, which can result in further disciplinary action.

With regard to group work, all work must be completed without assistance unless explicit permission for group or partner work is given by the faculty member. This is critical so that the professor can assess your performance on each assignment. If a group/partner project is assigned, the student may still have individual work to complete. Read the syllabus and assignment directions carefully. You might have a project with group work and a follow up report that is independently written. When in doubt, e-mail the faculty member or ask during a class session. Seeking clarification is your responsibility as a student. Assuming group/partner work is okay without permission constitutes a violation of the LSU Code of Student Conduct.

WORD OF WARNING: There are several online resources that summarize the facts of the case, the main issue, and decision. I strongly recommend that you **DO NOT VISIT** these websites until after you have written your discussion memo, and even when you do use them, only use them as a reference. I do not want you to be
