

GottaKnows

Underpinnings Unit

Intro

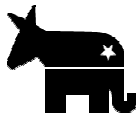
1. What is politics?
2. Lessons from Primitive Politics
3. Theories of Democracy – especially Elitism, Pluralism, & Majoritarianism
4. Founders' perception of Direct (Pure) Democracy v. Indirect Democracy (aka Republicanism)
5. Initiative, Referendum, Recall
6. Philosophy of the Declaration and John Locke

Constitution

1. Structure and problems with the Articles of Confederation
2. Conflict and compromise at the Constitutional Convention
3. Structure of Congress and the Connecticut (Great) Compromise
4. How the Constitution was ratified
5. Federalist 51 (Madisonian Model) – Place control beyond the majority, Checks and Balances, Separation of Power) – “ambition must be made to counteract ambition (In Fed. 48 Madison discusses that "parchment barriers" are not sufficient to stop ambitious politicians from stealing each other's powers that's why it is good that they are so ambitious – they cancel each other out)
6. Bill of Rights – what are they and why were they added to the Constitution?
7. Know significant Amendments
8. Most common way to amend the Constitution
9. Informal means of changing the meaning of the Constitution

Federalism

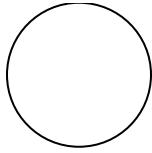
1. Unitary vs. Confederal vs. Federal systems
2. Implied vs. Enumerated Powers
3. Significance of Marshall on the SCOTUS (Gibbons v. Ogden & McCulloch v. MD)
4. Power of the Commerce Clause (know several “backdoor” commerce examples)
5. McCulloch v. Maryland and the Supremacy & Elastic Clauses
6. Federalism and the 10th Amendment
7. Dual v. Cooperative Federalism (Layer v. Marble cake)
8. Devolution (know examples of power being returned to the states)
9. Politics of Money (Mandates, Grants-in-aid, and Block Grants)
10. Tragedy of the Commons



Articles of Confederation (1781-1788)

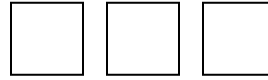
ENGLAND

"Circle on Top"



ARTICLES

"Squares on Top"



Why did the colonists want this change?

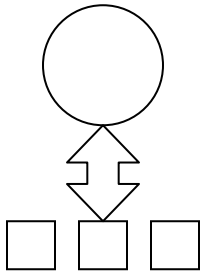
- AOC was the United States' first constitution
- Unicameral Legislature (there was NOT a President or Supreme Court)
- Child/Parents Analogy
 1. Colonists under Britain =
 2. Colonists under the Articles =

Problems with the Articles

1. Congress - the circle - couldn't collect taxes (had to beg \$ from the states)
2. Congress - the circle - didn't have any political muscle
3. The country had huge economic problems
4. Each state - the squares - had only one vote in Congress no matter what their size was:
 - Georgia had one Congressperson to represent its 25,000 citizens
 - Virginia had one Congressperson to represent its 270,000 citizens
5. 9/13 needed to pass a law
6. 13/13 needed to amend (change) the AOC
7. Confederations are historically unstable - the AOC tried to glue together 13 separate nations - squares - all wanting to do their own thing

By 1787 the Articles were not functioning at all. They made the United States weak and unable to respond to English military forts on our borders and Spain closing the Mississippi River to shipping traffic. Another concern was poor farmers who took up guns (Shays' Rebellion) to protest the horrible economic situation. Something needed to be done. In May of 1787, 55 men met in Philadelphia to "revise" the Articles (ask me to tell my "stinky story")

The Constitution (1788-Present)



The US was the first nation to ever use this system. It was an American invention that has been copied by many nations around the world. It was a combination of the English system and a Confederation.

The Constitution solved many problems of the AOC:

1. Problem: The circle was not powerful enough
Solution: _____
2. Problem: The AOC only had one branch of government (the Unicameral Congress)
Solution: Three Branches (Congress, President, Supreme Court)
3. Problem: Under the AOC, each state got one vote (no matter the size of their population)
Solution: Great Compromise
 - Upper House (Senate)
 - Lower House (House of Reps)

Slavery also needed to be dealt with at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787:

1. Problem: Southern states wanted to count their slaves as population so they would have greater political power (they did not want to give African Americans power or allow them to vote – they just wanted to count them). The Northern states didn't want to allow this because they had the population advantage.
Solution: 3/5th Compromise – Article I, Section 2, Clause 3 – determined that 3 of every 5 slaves would count for both population and for taxes (the government used to collect taxes per person and not on income)

There are two things you never want to watch being made... laws and sausages



Higher State
Population

More Reps
in Congress

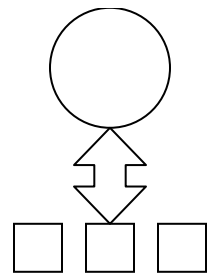
More State
Power

2. Problem: Southern squares worried that the circle would abolish the slave trade
Solution: The Constitution allowed the slave trade to continue for 20 years before they could do something about it – Article I, Section 9, Clause 1

Problem: Some thought that under the Constitution that the circle would grow and soon would dominate the squares (just like King George III and Parliament controlled the 13 Colonies)

- People against the Constitution were called Anti-Federalists. Many Anti-Feds were patriots who fought in the Revolutionary War like Patrick Henry and Sam Adams. They weren't anti-American, just anti-Constitution.
- People for the Constitution were called Federalists because they desired the newly created Federal System of government. The Federalists wrote the very creatively named "Federalist Papers" to convince people that the Constitution was necessary.

FEDERAL SYSTEM

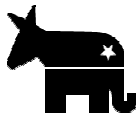


1. Solution: Checks and Balances (page 135)
2. Solution: The Federalists had to promise to add a Bill of Rights (Amendments 1-10) to protect people from the government. They fulfilled this promise in 1791.

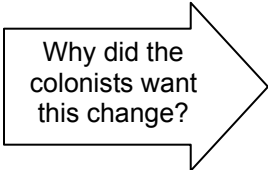
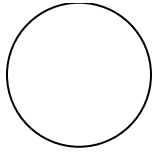
Article VII of the Constitution required that 9 states had to ratify (approve) the Constitution before it could go into effect. In June of 1788, the Constitution was officially ratified and the United States had its "more perfect union."

What are your rights?

1. Do Nazis have a right to march through a town of Holocaust survivors?
2. Do you have the right to pray in school?
3. Can the police pull you over because they suspect you're up to no good?
4. Does the government have to pay for your attorney?

**Articles of Confederation (1781-1788)****ENGLAND**

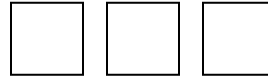
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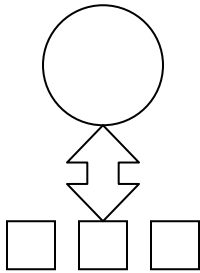
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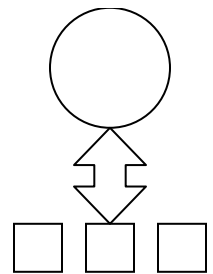
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Judicial Activism Reconsidered

Like many catchwords, “judicial activism” has acquired so many different meanings as to obscure more than it reveals. Yet it is not a term that can simply be ignored as intellectually “void for vagueness,” for at the heart of it are concerns about the very meaning and survival of law. Abandonment of the term not being a viable option, clarification becomes imperative.

“Judicial Activism” and “Judicial Restraint” raise logically obvious but often ignored questions: Activism toward what? Restraint toward what?

Are judges deemed to be activist or restrained toward:

1. The current popular majority,
2. The legislature representing the current popular majority,
3. The statutes [laws] passed by present or past legislatures,
4. The acts of current or past executive or administrative agencies,
5. The meaning of the words in the Constitution,
6. The principles or purposes of those who wrote the Constitution,
- or
7. The legal precedents established by previous judicial interpretations of the Constitution?

Activism or restraint toward one of these does not imply the same toward all the others, and may in some instances imply the opposite toward some other or others. For example, a “restrained” jurist, attempting to hold fast to the “original intentions” of constitutional provisions, must actively strike down statutes passed by a legislature which repeatedly over-steps the bounds of those provisions. Conversely, an “activist” jurist may passively accept expansive legislative action of a sort deemed consist with general constitutional “values,” even if lacking specific constitutional authorization or entering a “gray area” of constitutional prohibitions.

From Judicial Activism Reconsidered <http://www.tsowell.com/judicial.htm>

Activism Is in the Eye of the Ideologist

Conservatives like to divide judges into liberal “activists” and conservative nonactivists who interpret the law rather than making it. Anyone who follows the courts knows that conservative judges are as activist as liberal judges —just for different causes. A new study of Supreme Court voting patterns confirms this and suggests that the conservative Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas are actually more activist than their liberal colleagues.

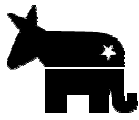
Lori Ringhand, a professor at the University of Kentucky College of Law, examined the voting records of the Supreme Court justices from 1994 to 2005. Because judicial activism is a vague concept, she applied a reasonable, objective standard. In the study, which is forthcoming in Constitutional Commentary, justices were considered to have voted in an activist way when they voted to overturn a federal or state law, or one of the court’s own precedents.

The conservative justices were far more willing than the liberals to strike down federal laws — clearly an activist stance, since they were substituting their own judgment for that of the people’s elected representatives in Congress. Justice Thomas voted to overturn federal laws in 34 cases and Justice Scalia in 31, compared with just 15 for Justice Stephen Breyer. When state laws were at issue, the liberals were more activist. Add up the two categories, and the conservatives and liberals turned out to be roughly equal. But Justices Thomas and Scalia, who are often held out as models of nonactivism, voted to strike down laws in more of these cases than Justice Breyer and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the court’s two Clinton appointees.

By the third measure, overturning the court’s own precedents (for which data were available only up to 2000), the conservatives were far more activist. Justice Thomas voted to overturn precedent 23 times and Justice Scalia 19 times, while the court’s four liberals did so in 10 cases or fewer.

Activism is not necessarily a bad thing. The Supreme Court is supposed to strike down laws that are unconstitutional or otherwise flawed. Clearly, all nine justices, from across the political spectrum, believe this, since they all regularly vote to strike down laws. What is wrong is for one side to pretend its judges are not activist, and turn judicial activism into a partisan talking point, when the numbers show a very different story.

From The New York Times, Activism Is in the Eye of the Ideologist (September 11, 2006)



When LBJ abruptly announced in late March 1968 that he would not run for reelection, the door opened for his vice president, Hubert Humphrey (MN). Humphrey felt it was too late to campaign in primaries against other candidates already in the race (Robert Kennedy, George McGovern, and Eugene McCarthy). Nevertheless, he commanded enough support among party leaders to win the Democratic nomination. The stormy protests outside the party's conventions against "inside politics" of his nomination led to major changes in the way both parties have nominated their presidential candidates.

UNTIL 1968

Party Dominated

The nomination decision is largely in the hands of party leaders. Candidates win by enlisting the support of state and local party machines.

Few Primaries

Most delegates are selected by state party establishments, with little or no public participation. Some primaries are held, but their results do not necessarily determine the nominee. Primaries are used to indicate candidates' "electability" (in other words, they are "beauty-pageants").

Short Campaigns

Candidates begin their public campaign early in the year of the election.

Easy Money

Candidates frequently raise large sums quickly by tapping a handful of wealthy contributors. No federal limits on spending by candidates.

Limited Media Coverage

Campaigns are followed by print journalists and, in later years, by television. But press coverage of campaigns is not intensive and generally does not play a major role in influencing the process.

Late Decisions

Events early in the campaign year, such as the NH Primary, are not decisive. States that pick delegates late in the year, such as California, frequently are important in selecting the nominee. Many states enter the convention without making final decisions about candidates.

Open Conventions

National party conventions sometimes begin with the nomination still undecided. The outcome is determined by maneuvering and negotiations among party factions, often stretching over several ballots.

SINCE 1968

Candidate Dominated

Campaigns are independent of party establishments. Endorsements by party leaders have little effect on nomination choice.

Many Primaries

Most delegates are selected by popular primaries and caucuses. Nominations are determined largely by voters' decisions at these contests.

Long Campaigns

Candidates begin laying groundwork for campaigns three or four years before the election. Candidates who are not well organized at least eighteen months before the election have little chance of winning.

Difficult Fundraising

Campaign contributions are limited so candidates must work endlessly to raise money from thousands of small contributors. Candidates who accept federal matching funds have to limit their overall campaign spending.

Media Focused

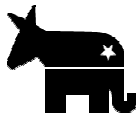
Campaigns are covered intensively by the media, particularly television. Media treatment of candidates plays a crucial role in determining the nominee.

Front-Loaded

Early events, like IA and NH, are important. The nomination may be decided even before many major states vote. Early victories attract great media attention, which gives winners free publicity and greater fundraising ability.

Closed Conventions

The nominee is determined before the convention, which does little more than ratify the decision made in primaries and caucuses. Convention activities focus on creating a favorable media image of the candidate for the general election.

**Purpose of Political Parties**

- Nominate candidates for office
- Run campaigns
- Give cues to voters
- Articulate politics
- Coordinate policymaking (the party-in-government)

Why do we have 2 dominant political parties?

- Electoral system – The Electoral College
- Electoral system – single member districts won by plurality vs. proportional representation
- Political socialization
- Practicality
- Commonality of views (Big-tent parties)

Why are parties getting weaker?

- Drastic increase in Independents (I > D > R)
- Ticket splitting on the rise
- Cynicism & Political apathy on the rise
- Decentralized party structure (no more party Bosses) – Parties from state to state are so different (if “Zellephant” Miller can be a D...anyone can)
- Mass Media – Image of candidates is stressed, not their party (“It’s the image, stupid”)
- Decrease in importance of caucuses/conventions and increase in power of primaries
- Interest groups have exploded
- Divided Government – what better example than Minnesota prior to 2002 where the state Senate was controlled by DFLers, state House controlled by Rs, and the Governor’s mansion controlled by the IP.

Third Parties

- Splinter Parties & Potential Kingmakers
 - Bull Moose split the R vote in 1918
 - Strom Thurmond and the Dixiecrats (received 29 electoral votes in 1948)
 - George Wallace’s American Independent Party of 1968 (received 46 electoral votes)
 - Perot Factor in 1996
 - Nader and the Green Party in 2000 (95,000+ votes in FLA when 537 votes separated Gore and Bush)
- Ideological Parties (Greens, Libertarians, Socialists)
- Single Issue Parties

LINKAGE INSTITUTIONS

Political Parties and interest groups are never mentioned in the Constitution, yet they have become a couple of the most common ways that people connect to their government.

2004 BALLOT ACCESS

In all, Nader needed about 620,000 valid signatures to reach his goal of getting on the ballot in all 50 states. Nader tried to collect many more than that, because scores of signatures were disqualified for a variety of reasons (and b/c of Democratic challenges). Nader estimated that he would need 1.5 million.

If you see CANDIDATE NAME (I) on the news, we identify that person as an Independent. That doesn’t mean they are a member of THE Independent party. It means they are independent of the 2 party system and are running unaffiliated.

“I am not a member of any organized political party – I am a Democrat.”
Will Rogers

**2000 Presidential Candidates
Ds & Rs got 96.25% of the vote**

Nader (Green), Buchanan (Reform), Browne (Libertarian), Phillips (Constitution), Hagelin (Natural Law), McReynolds (Socialist), Harris (Socialist Workers), Smith (Libertarian), Moorehead (Workers World), Brown (Independent), Lane (Vermont Grassroots), Venson (Independent), Dodge (Prohibition), Youngkeit (Unaffiliated). There were also 20,565 write-in candidates.

Realignment

- Typically occurs after one party has been dominant for a long period of time
- New issues combined with economic or political crises persuade large numbers of voters to reexamine their partisan loyalties
- Establishment elite is weakened by these crises allowing a new coalition to form
- Voters shift support from one party to another and must last for a many years
- New coalition gains dominant control of government (controls both Congress & the White House)

Critical Elections

1. 1800 Jeffersonian Republicans defeat the Federalists
 2. 1828 Jacksonian Democrats
 3. 1860 Republicans formed
 4. 1896 Reassertion of Republican dominance
 5. 1932 FDR's New Deal Coalition
- Don't worry about memorizing these facts...they're too "historical." Focus on the 1932 realignment and what's happening now.
- Comprised of unionized labor, urban ethnic groups, southerners, northern blacks, middle-class liberals, and sectors of the business community
 - Dominated the government of politics of the US until the 60's when it was shattered by conflicts over race, Vietnam, and government policy
 - Split the electorate into the groups we associate with the Democratic and Republican parties today

1980? – The Reagan Realignment?

- 12 years of White House Control (Reagan & Bush)
- Reagan won in 1984 carrying 49 states
- Breakup of the Democratic "Solid South" (now it's reliably Republican)
- Both houses of Congress controlled by Democrats for almost the entire 1980's and into the 90's
- Bush was at 91% approval rating in 1991, but lost in 1992 to Clinton
- 1994 Republican Revolution captured Congress for the Republicans, but their majority is very tenuous.
- Schism in Republican Party between fiscal conservatives and social conservatives.

Post-9/11 Realignment?

Reasons For	Reasons Against

Are we re-aligning or de-aligning?

GottaKnows

Institutions Unit

Bureaucracy

1. Pendleton Act
2. Patronage (Spoils System)
3. Civil Service
4. Iceberg Analogy
5. Merit Principle
6. Types of Bureaucratic Entities – know the distinction between and examples of each type
 - ß Cabinet
 - ß Independent Regulatory Agencies
 - ß Independent Executive Agencies
 - ß Government Corporations
7. How do civil servants get their jobs?
8. How do political appointees get their jobs?
9. Who can the president fire in the bureaucracy?
10. How do Independent Regulatory Agencies have quasi-government powers?
11. How does the bureaucracy implement public policy?
12. Fragmentation
13. Deregulation
14. Privatization
15. Tug-of-war between Congress & the President for Control of the Bureaucracy
16. Sunshine legislation
17. Sunset legislation
18. Negotiated Rulemaking

Congress

1. Confirmation Power
2. Treaty Ratification
3. Pork
4. How a bill becomes a law
5. Committees
6. Chairs & Ranking members
7. Congressional Leadership
8. House Rules Committee
9. Congressional Staff
10. Casework
11. Filibuster
12. Congressional Districts
13. Reapportionment
14. Redistricting
15. Racial Gerrymandering
16. Party of President loses seats in midterm
17. Power of incumbency
18. House & Senate Differences
19. Oversight
20. Casework
21. Trustee vs. Delegate philosophy
22. Enumerated vs. Implied Powers
23. Pay & Perks
24. 1994 Republican Revolution
25. CBO

Budget

1. Re-read “The Budget – the ultimate ‘who gets what, when, and how guide’”

POTUS

1. Line Item veto
2. Veto Override Frequency
3. Pocket Veto, Line Item, & various other types of vetoes
4. When can a bill become law without signature?
5. Executive Agreements
6. Vice President
7. Mandate Theory
8. Presidential Approval Ratings
9. Head of State
10. Chief Executive
11. White House organizational style
12. Cabinet vs. White House Staff
13. State of the Union
14. Executive Orders
15. War Powers Resolution
16. Budget and Impoundment Control Act
17. Reprieves and Pardons
18. Impeachment procedure (HOUSE impeaches and SENATE removes with 2/3 vote)
19. Executive Privilege
20. Two Presidencies (Foreign & Domestic)
21. Commander in Chief

SCOTUS

1. Judicial activism vs. judicial constraint
2. Strict vs. loose constructionism
3. Marbury v. Madison
4. Judicial Review
5. Marshall, Warren, Burger, and Rehnquist Courts
6. Common vs. statutory law
7. Number of justices
8. How appointed, how removed
9. Layers of the court system
10. Dual (state & federal system)
11. Civil vs. Criminal courts
12. What type of activities happen at each level in the federal system?
13. Rule of Four
14. Writ of Certiorari
15. Types of decisions
16. Law Clerks
17. Conference
18. Stare Decisis
19. Ideological shift over the second half of 20th century
20. Judicial Migration
21. “Least Dangerous Branch”
22. Litigants (plaintiff v. defendant)
23. Standing
24. Amicus Curiae
25. Politics of judicial selection
26. Senatorial Courtesy
27. Famous Cases

MCQ Practice

Beliefs & Behavior Unit

Public Opinion

1. Exit Polls
2. Gallup Polls
3. Margin of Error
4. How can polls be flawed?
5. Tracking Polls
6. Push Polls
7. What factors are important in political socialization?
8. Changing Demography of America

Campaign Finance

1. Buckley v. Valeo
2. BCRA AKA McCain/Feingold Campaign Finance Reform
3. PACS and Campaign Finance
4. EMILY
5. FECA
6. FEC
7. Independent Expenditures
8. Soft vs. Hard Money
9. Fund raising scandals

Elections

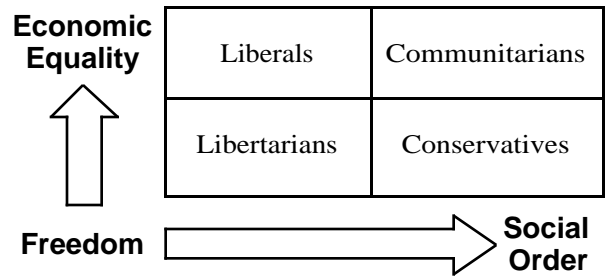
1. How do primaries & caucuses work?
2. Significance of Iowa & New Hampshire
3. Closed vs. Open Primaries
4. Move to the extremes to get the nomination and move to the center to get elected
5. Who decides when primaries and caucuses are held and who decides how delegates are awarded?
6. Super Tuesday
7. What is the purpose of political conventions?
8. Old conventions vs. new conventions
9. McGovern/Fraser Commission
10. Super Delegates vs. Delegates
11. Electors = Senators + Representatives
12. What happened in the 2000 Presidential Election?
13. Who are electors?
14. Problems with the Electoral College
15. Purpose of the Electoral College
16. 270
17. Bush v. Gore (2000)
18. Frontloading
19. Midterm Elections – why does the party of the President typically lose votes in the Midterms?
20. Butterfly ballot
21. Faithless Electors
22. Was there a Nader Factor?
23. When is the President truly elected?
24. Election Timeline
25. Matching Funds
26. Rational Ignorance
27. Dow, not Paula Jones
Registration
28. Who votes and who votes which way?
29. Turnout
30. Favorite son
31. Coattails
32. Why don't people vote?

GottaKnows

Parties, Interest Groups & Media Unit

Political Parties

1. Liberals & Conservatives
2. “Sweet Spot” on the political spectrum
3. Who are stereotypical Ds and Rs?
4. Big Tent Parties & Parties within Parties
5. Political Realignment & Critical Elections
6. Dealignment & Decline in the strength of parties
7. Why do we have two parties?
8. Parties as Linkage Institutions
9. Closed vs. Open Primaries
10. What is the role of Third Parties?
11. Why do Third Parties have a hard time achieving electoral success?



Interest Groups

1. Know Interest Group examples
2. What are the many things that Lobbyists do besides talk to legislators
3. Multiple Points of Access (know examples of group activity at each level & branch of government)
4. Interest Groups and the 1st Amendment
5. Interest Groups as Linkage Institutions
6. PACs
7. Why do people join Interest Groups?
8. Bowling Alone
9. Interest Groups & Pluralist/Elitist/ Theory
10. Federalist 10 = Factions
11. Iron Triangles (Hyperpluralism) and Interest Group
12. Hard Money vs. Soft Money (Soft goes directly to the party NOT to the candidate)

Media

1. Historic examples of the media
2. Is the media biased? Which way?
3. How does the government regulate the media
4. How is the media changing?
5. Spin
6. Incredible Shrinking Sound Bite
7. Role of the White House Press Secretary
8. Wag the Dog
9. The Modern Media Conglomerate (Time Warner)
10. Managing the Media for Free Airtime

Frequently Asked Questions...and the Answers!

JUSTICES

How is the Chief Justice different from the other eight Justices?

The Chief Justice is considered “first among equals.” His vote does not weigh more than that of any other Justice, but he does preside over oral arguments and over the conference which the Justices discuss the cases. Also, he has additional administrative duties as head of the Judicial Branch of the Federal Government.

How is the Chief Justice appointed? Does the most senior Justice become the Chief?

All of the Justices, including the Chief Justice, are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. One does not have to serve on the Bench prior to being appointed Chief Justice.

Where are the Justices’ Chambers?

The Justices’ Chambers are located throughout the building.

Do all of the Justices have to be present in order to hear a case?

Not all of the Justices need to be present to hear a case. It takes a quorum – six of the nine Justices – to hear a case.

What is the salary of the Justices?

The Chief Justice makes \$202,900 a year.
The Associate Justices make \$194,200 a year.

What are the qualifications of the Justices?

The Constitution does not specify qualifications, i.e., age, profession, education, etc., for a Justice. Although every Justice has been a lawyer, not all have graduated from law school (i.e.-early years).

What is the size of a Justices' staff?

A Justices' staff is fairly small. Each is allowed 4 law clerks. In addition, each has a secretary, an assistant secretary and an aide.

Do all of the Justices read all of the petitions?

The Justices review all of the 7,000 petitions, or summaries of the petitions, that are filed at the Court.

Have there always been nine Justices?

Congress has the power to determine the number of Justices. Originally, the Federal Judiciary Act of 1789 set up the Supreme Court with six Justices: five Associate Justices and the Chief Justice. The number of Justices was increased to seven in 1807, and seats eight and nine were added in 1837. A tenth seat was added to the Bench in 1863; however, two seats were removed in 1866, leaving the number of Justices at eight. The current number of nine Justices was restored in 1869.

Do the Justices' friends and family come very often?

Guests of the Justices visit the Supreme Court occasionally, but the frequency of these visits depends on the individuals.

Do the Justices have secret service agents watching over them or any other sort of protection?

In this building our police force provide security for the building and all within. If necessary, when a Justice is out of the building, they do have assistance from our police officers.

How long do the law clerks serve and what do they do?

The law clerks serve the Justices for one year. They help the Justices with research, and in such manner as his/her Justice requests assistance.

What is behind the curtain in the Courtroom?

Behind the curtain are volumes of the United States Reports.

Do the people involved with the case have reserved seating?

Each attorney can reserve seats for his/her guests. The attorneys arguing the case before the Court are seated at a table directly in front of the Bench. Reserved seating may be arranged for other persons involved.

PUBLIC

What do you have to do to hear a case argued? How early do you have to line up and where?

To hear oral arguments, the public is seated in the Courtroom on a first-come first-served basis. The number of people waiting in line varies depending on the publicity of the case. Lines form early in the morning of argument days on the front plaza along First Street.

How do you become an intern for the Supreme Court?

The selection process for becoming an intern at the Supreme Court involves applying for a position, completing an interview and being selected by the office which offers the internship. Intern programs are offered by the major offices of The Supreme Court, including the Curator's Office and the Clerk's Office. Contact the appropriate office to get more information.