Ch 14: The Judiciary

What is the importance of the Bush v. Gore decision and why is it so controversial?

How are federal judges selected for their positions? Describe the process.

  - Senatorial courtesy

What qualifications are necessary in order to become a federal judge or Supreme Court justice?

The jurisdiction of a court

  - Original jurisdiction
  - Appellate jurisdiction

Describe the importance of legal precedent (stare decisis)

Writ of certiorari (cert)

Be sure to review the names of the current 9 Supreme Court justices

The role of the solicitor general

Judicial conference

Briefs

Supreme Court decisions

Opinions of the Supreme Court

  - Majority opinion
  - Plurality opinion
  - Concurring opinion
  - Plurality opinion
  - Dissenting opinion

The responsibilities of the US District Courts
The “upper court” myth

The major tasks of federal judges in US Appeals Courts

How are state courts typically organized?
  - Elected positions
  - The merit plan

The “federal court” myth

Discuss the process whereby the President selects a Supreme Court nominee

The importance of the Senate Judiciary Committee in the appointment process

Describe the characteristics of judicial appointees

The distinction between the facts of a case and the law of the case

The broad categories of the law
  - Civil law
  - Criminal law
  - Procedural law
  - Constitutional law
  - Statutory and administrative law

The major constraints on the judiciary

Describe the political influences the judiciary faces
  - Judicial leeway in decision-making
  - Friend of the court briefs (amicus curiae)
  - The impact of the Congress
  - The impact of the President
  - The justices’ own political beliefs
The importance of Marbury v. Madison

The power of judicial review (the authority to declare a law unconstitutional)

The differences between judicial restraint and judicial activism

Compliance

How does the US court system compare to European courts?

The Gideon decision

The Rehnquist Court & its “federalist revolution”

The Vieth case

Chief Justice John Marshall’s contribution

**Ch 13: The Federal Bureaucracy**

Bureaucracy & its characteristics

- Hierarchical authority
- Job specialization
- Formalized rules
- Neutral competence

Strengths of bureaucratic organizations

Pathologies of bureaucratic organizations

Types of Administrative organizations

- Cabinet departments
- Independent agencies
  - NASA
  - CIA
- Regulatory agencies
EPA
SEC
Government Corporations
US Postal Service
Amtrak
Presidential Commissions

Policy implementation

The patronage system (spoils) v. the merit (civil service system)

Agency point of view

Sources of bureaucratic power
  The power of expertise
  The power of clientele groups
  The power of friends in high places

The ways in which bureaucrats can be held accountable

Internal checks on bureaucracy

  Whistle-blowing

  Demographic representativeness

Ch 15: Economic & Environmental Policy (p. 457 to 465 only)

Fiscal Policy

Deficit spending

The differences between an economic depression and an economic recession

Keynes view of govt action during an economic downturn

Budget deficit
National debt
Balanced budget
Budget surplus
Demand-side economics
Supply-side stimulation
Inflation and steps taken to control inflation
The role of the OMB in the national budget process
“Budget resolution”
The role of the House Appropriations Committee
Graduated personal income tax