This course examines the research literature in judicial politics, focusing on both classics in the field and contemporary contributions. Participants are expected to have basic knowledge of American political processes and political science research techniques.

Student performance evaluations will be based on the following:

1. course participation (25%)
2. manuscript review (15%)
3. mock conference paper proposal (5%)
4. research paper (25%)
5. final examination (30%)

Participation is expected and required. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings, and be prepared to respond when called upon by Dr. Vining. Manuscript reviews will be written in response to anonymous manuscripts submitted to journals for blind peer review (not for widespread distribution). The research paper will resemble a conference paper, complete with data analysis consistent with your level of training. Please discuss your topics, data sources, and research methods with the instructor for approval.

Students are required to purchase the following books:
* Jeffrey Segal and Harold Spaeth, The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited (2002)

Additional readings will be available from either JSTOR or other online databases. If you have difficulty locating course readings, please consult your instructor or colleagues for assistance.

While the course should follow the schedule below as closely as possible, adjustments may be made as necessary. Make note of such adjustments and prepare accordingly.
Course Schedule

**August 20. American courts: origins, structure, role, study.**
1. U.S. Constitution, Article III.
2. The Federalist Papers #78-82.

**August 27. Data and measurement.**

**September 3. Judicial decision-making I: Legal model and extralegal explanations.**

*Legal model*

*Biographical approach*

*Social background theory (personal attribute models)*

*Small group theory*

*Norms*
2. J. Segal and H. Spaeth. 2002. The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited, Ch. 3 (p. 86-97), Ch. 4, Ch. 8 (p. 312-326), Ch. 10.

September 17. Judicial decision-making VI: Competing explanations and integrated models.
*Competing explanations of lower court behavior*

*Integrated models*

September 24. External influences on courts: SOP and interest groups.
*SOP*

*Interest groups*

October 1. Agenda-setting and legal participants.
*Agenda-setting*

*Legal participants*
October 8. Public knowledge and perception of courts.

Courts and Media

Public perception of courts

October 15. Effect of public opinion on courts.

Public support for courts
October 22. Judicial administration and leadership.

Federal courts

State courts

October 29. **No class – send manuscript review and conference abstract to Dr. Vining**

November 5. State judicial selection: Process and Campaigns

Competition, Ambition, and Endorsements

Campaign spending and advertising
November 12: State judicial selection: Outcomes and effects

November 19: Federal judicial selection: Process

November 26. Federal judicial selection: Confirmation and impact
The U.S. Supreme Court

Lower federal courts

The effects of judicial turnover

The U.S. Supreme Court

The lower federal courts

State courts

Final exam (take home, due December 12 – details TBA)
* Final exam will be placed in graduate student mailboxes to be completed within 24 hours of opening envelope. Submit hard copy to Political Science main office or to Dr. Vining.