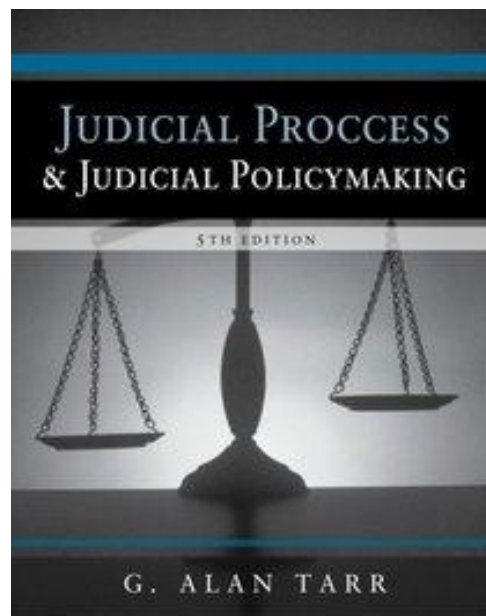


LAW, COURTS AND POLITICS



POLS 0105-501 Spring 2012

This course will focus on the policymaking role of the courts in the United States with emphasis on the function of the U.S. Supreme Court. The class will grapple with one of the great debates in American legal history, exploring the proper role of unelected judges in a democratic political system. Courts across the land struggle with difficult, controversial issues such as limits on reproductive freedom, discrimination on the basis of gender and race, equal protection for gay individuals, interpretation of First Amendment issues, and how to balance the basic civil liberties of its citizenry with the exercise of sweeping presidential powers in times of war. This course will evaluate the role of the judiciary in a democracy by analyzing how and when the courts are fully integrated into the political process.

Required Texts:

J. Fruchtman, Jr., *The Supreme Court: Rulings on American Government and Society*, (Lanahan Publishers, Inc., 2006)

G. Alan Tarr, *Judicial Process and Judicial Policymaking*, (Wadsworth, Fifth Edition, 2009)

Course Requirements:

Weekly online assignments such as quizzes and discussion boards to show that you are mastering the material (30 percent).

Four 2-3 page briefs of Supreme Court cases. (20 percent).

A midterm examination and a final examination. (Each test is worth 25 percent).

**Instructor Julia L. Maycock, Esq., jmaycock@westfield.ma.edu
or call me at (978) 468-2551.**