



POL 207 The Courts (3 credit hours) Course Syllabus

Course Description

The course analyzes the political context of the judicial process. Topics covered include the structure and function of American court systems, court staffing, judiciary, roles of lawyers and other actors in the American legal system.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Differentiate how the court system operates on a federal, state and local level.
- Analyze the concepts, institutions, and officials that make up court system at each level.
- Apply the meaning and intent of the United States Constitution, as it relates to the levels of the court system.

Prerequisites/Corequisites

None

Required Textbook(s) and Resources

For this course you will need to purchase the following materials:

Neubauer D. W., & Meinhold, S. S. (2017). *Judicial process: Law, courts, and politics in the United States*. (7e) Boston, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN: 13: 978-1-305-50652-7

Newspapers, as well as journal articles, will be required for completing the written assignments.

Some lectures/activities may contain additional resources. See individual lectures/activities for those requirements. Where applicable, Tiffin University has obtained permission to use copyrighted material.

Additionally, you will need a library barcode to conduct research through the University library and access any library resources provided in the course. If you do not already have a barcode, please request one by clicking on the following link:

*Link (online form): [Barcode Request Form](#)

Minimum Student Technology Requirements

In order to have a quality learning experience in your online courses, the University requires that your primary computer (the computer used to access course materials and on which you will be required to install course-specific software) meets or exceeds certain specifications. Click on the following link to view the specifications:

*Link (website): PC Recommendations

Time Commitment

Time management is an important part of academic success. Please refer to the approximate (average) times noted below for readings and assignments to help plan your time accordingly.

Learning Activities

Two discussions each week plus responses to those discussions from other students

Six essays – two to three pages in length for each essay

Final Paper – five to seven pages in length

Grading

The chart below identifies the individual contributions from each type of activity, per week.

Activity	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Total
Discussion 1	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	175
Discussion 2	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	175
Assignment 1	75	75	75	75	75	75		450
Final Paper	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	200	200
Total	125	125	125	125	125	125	250	1000

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%

Grade	Percentage
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

Please see the [Academic Bulletin](#) for grade appeal information.

Course Schedule and Weekly Checklist

Topic	Learning Activities (Due by 11:55 p.m. ET on day designated)
Start Here	<input type="checkbox"/> MON: Introductory Discussion
Week 1: Understanding the Courts	<input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> SAT: All Discussions: Secondary Posts <input type="checkbox"/> SUN: Assignment 1: Research Essay
Week 2: State versus Federal Courts	<input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> SAT: All Discussions: Secondary Posts <input type="checkbox"/> SUN: Assignment 1: Research Essay
Week 3: Ethics and the Court System	<input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> SAT: All Discussions: Secondary Posts <input type="checkbox"/> SUN: Assignment 1: Research Essay
Week 4: Defendants' versus Victims' Rights	<input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> SAT: All Discussions: Secondary Posts

Topic	Learning Activities (Due by 11:55 p.m. ET on day designated)
	<input type="checkbox"/> SUN: Assignment 1: Research Essay
Week 5: Civil Courts and Tort Reform	<input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> SAT: All Discussions: Secondary Posts <input type="checkbox"/> SUN: Assignment 1: Research Essay
Week 6: Juries and Special Interests' Groups	<input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> SAT: All Discussions: Secondary Posts <input type="checkbox"/> SUN: Assignment 1: Essay
Week 7: The Supreme Court and its Decisions	<input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> WED: Discussion 1: Initial Post <input type="checkbox"/> THURS: Assignment 1: Final Research Essay <input type="checkbox"/> SAT: All Discussions: Secondary Posts

Tips for Success

Successful online learning requires a good deal of self-discipline and self-direction. As seekers of the truth, we should be willing to challenge and review one another's academic work in a spirit of respectful comradery and constructiveness. You should accept constructive feedback as a gift. Your course is a place for you to stretch and grow as you benefit from the expertise, knowledge, experience and diverse perspectives of your instructor and peers. Constructive feedback will challenge you to stretch your own thinking, thereby expanding your knowledge, understanding and application.

To get the most out of your learning experience, you should actively engage (participate) in **ALL** course activities. Course elements in any given week are arranged chronologically. To complete a week, simply work your way "down the page" through all of the course materials and activities.

Your Instructor Will Expect You to:

- Thoroughly review orientation materials (Start Here) within the first 48 hours of the term.
- Monitor your TU email account **daily** for important updates and announcements.

- Take ownership of your learning experience and act in a proactive, self-directed manner. That means:
 - Fully participate in all learning activities.
 - Complete assignments as described in rubrics or other instructions.
 - Submit all work on time and in the specified format (e.g. APA format for citations).
 - Utilize and incorporate instructor provided feedback to improve your work.
 - Ask questions so you can better understand course material or assignments.
 - Use the highest standards of intellectual honesty and integrity. For more information, see the TU Library guide: [Digital Literacy: Netiquette and Internet Safety](#).
 - Treat others respectfully and demonstrate "netiquette" (online politeness and respectfulness) at all times. TU celebrates cultural uniqueness and expects all students to be considerate and thoughtful throughout their learning experiences.

You Should Expect Your Instructors to:

In general, your instructors should advocate for your success as a learner and help guide you toward successful completion of the course activities and most importantly, attainment of the course learning outcomes. To accomplish this, your instructors should:

- Post an introductory announcement/email at the beginning of each week to provide updates and help you prepare for the week's activities.
- Maintain an active and engaged presence in all course activities and throughout the course.
- Respond to your emailed questions within 48 hours, if not sooner.
- Clearly communicate any absences or expected non-participation due to extenuating circumstances. For example, "I will be traveling to attend a funeral this week and may not be able to respond to questions or participate in forums for a couple of days."
- When grading your work, your instructors should:
 - clearly indicate their grading approach (what they like to see in submitted work as well as what types of errors they tend to penalize more harshly),
 - thoroughly review and evaluate your submissions in a timely manner (in less than 5 days for most assignments), and
 - provide constructive feedback that indicates the strengths and weaknesses of your work and provides suggestions on how you can improve your performance on future assignments.

Accommodations

The **Office for Disability Services** supports the institutional commitment to diversity by providing educational opportunities for qualified individuals with disabilities through accessible programs and services in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

If you need reasonable accommodations due to a documented disability, contact the Office for Equity, Access, & Opportunity 419.448.3021 or via email at disabilityservices@tiffin.edu.

Additional Resources & Support

For technical support, either email moodlesupport@tiffin.edu or call the 24/7 Technical Support Call Center at 855-664-1200.

If you need to consult an academic advisor refer to TU's [Meet the Team](#) page.

For information about TU's peer tutoring program see the Murphy Center's [Tutoring Policies and Procedures](#) page. Veterans and active military can seek assistance from TU's [Veteran and Military Services Web Page](#).

Comments or Concerns

TU's online programs are designed to be student *driven*: to empower you with a voice and stake in your learning. Our courses feature multiple and varied ways that you can share feedback, and we invite you to become an active voice and help drive our improvement efforts. In addition to providing in-course feedback, we encourage you to submit questions or comments directly to the online team at online@tiffin.edu.