

The Huntsman Seminar at the Hinckley Institute of Politics

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August 7th 2009

Instead of highlighting one single unit to be taught in an American Civics/Government course I chose to do five lesson plans from different units, all encompassing information that was gained from various speakers and presentations during the Huntsman Seminar at the Hinckley Institute of Politics during the summer of 2009.

Lesson #1: The Importance of Voting

Perhaps the single greatest lesson we can instill in our students is the importance of voting, as emphasized by Salt Lake County Clerk, Sherrie Swensen. After discussing voting trends, statistics, and behavior with my students, I will require them to come up with an advertising campaign designed to increase voter turnout (see Handout #1), similar to what the county clerk's office has done in recent years.

Lesson #2: Lobbyists

One of the most difficult things for my students to understand is the role lobbyists play in the political process. After a lengthy discussion on lobbying, using information gleaned from the session with Jennifer Cannaday, Bill Crim, and Chris Kyler, I will require my students to choose one specific lobby and present to the rest of the class. Students will be required to cover aspects such as role, purpose, beliefs, membership, tactics, and effectiveness of their lobby (see Handout #2)

Lesson #3: The Supreme Court

Although we didn't tackle the Supreme Court directly in any of our sessions, and although the court system "is the most reactive branch of government," according to Utah Supreme Court Justice Jill Parrish, it is vital for students to understand the role, function, and history of the Supreme Court. Therefore, after a lengthy lecture and discussion, students will be assigned one specific Supreme Court case to research and present to the class (see Handout #3). My hope is that my students will follow the current court with renewed interest.

Lesson #4: The Media

As the school newspaper adviser I really took to heart what Ken Verdoia and Steve Gurhke had to say about the role of the media in a free society. Specifically, I liked their suggestion for students to look at more than one source of news. After a lengthy lecture on the history of the American media, I am going to require my students to follow one issue for at least a week using at least three different media outlets. Then, students will be required to write a letter to the editor of one of our two daily newspapers (see Handout #4). My hope is that students will want to stay informed on current events.

Lesson #5: Careers in the Court

One reason why many students are turned off from politics and civics is that they see no application of these things to their daily lives, nor do they see any potential in these fields. All too often, students are never informed about these potential careers and instead are steered other directions. This is why I loved the handout given to us at the Federal Court Building on Careers in the Court. I am going to make my students read this handout and answer my accompanying questions (see Handouts 5A and 5B). Although this isn't challenging their critical analysis skills, it is my hope that students will recognize that there are many career opportunities (some of them very lucrative) open to them in the field of law and within our court system.

HANDOUT #1

Voters and Voter Behavior

Your firm has just been hired by the Federal government, your state, or your county clerk's office to come up with some type of advertising campaign to increase voter turnout in the upcoming election. You can do this using any medium you'd like and be creative as you like. A prize will be awarded to the best campaign.

Types of mediums:

Poster (or butcher paper)

Smaller ad for a newspaper or magazine

A radio commercial or jingle

A television commercial

A documentary

An editorial cartoon

A comic strip

A poem

A song/rap

A web page

A pamphlet

A bumpersticker (you must actually make it)

A photographic essay

HANDOUT #2

Name:

Period:

Interest Groups

Your job is to research and report on one of the following Interest Groups below. You hear about these organizations all the time in the news, now it's time to figure out what they're about and what their purpose is. As you report to the rest of the class on your interest group you must have some type of visual, which could include:

- a poster
- butcherpaper
- powerpoint
- documentary
- handout

In your presentations, you must cover the following:

- What is the name of your interest group? (full name and acronym if it has one)
- What is the mission statement or basic purpose of your interest group?
- How many members does it have?
- How does one become a member? (pay dues, automatically enrolled, etc...)
- What kind of tactics does it use to influence policies? Campaign contributions? Grass roots efforts? Things like that.
- How much influence does it have? (this is your thoughts after doing your research)
- Has your organization been in the news recently for anything?

Interest Groups to choose from:

- | | |
|---|---|
| AARP | Greenpeace |
| NAACP | ERGO |
| NRA | American Medical Association |
| ACLU | American Immigration Control Foundation |
| Sierra Club | IWW |
| Swift Boat Veterans | U.S. Chamber of Commerce |
| NEA | The American Legion |
| AFL-CIO | VFW |
| Emily's List | The Cato Institute |
| Planned Parenthood | The Eagle Forum |
| National Right to Life | NOW |
| Minute Man | American Bar Association |
| American Association for Affirmative Action | Human Rights Campaign |
| NORML | League of Women Voters |
| MADD | |
| Partnership for a Drug-free America | |
| AFT | |

HANDOUT # 3A

Key Supreme Court Case

Along with a partner, your job is to research an assigned Supreme Court case and present your findings to the class. The criteria for each case is as follows:

- Presentations should be 3-4 minutes long
- Tell us any pertinent history/background of your case
- Tell us which issue is being debated or argued (freedom of speech, religion, etc...If you can be cite a specific law or amendment, all the better)
- What was the court's ruling and by what margin
- Explain the opinion of the court in one or two sentences
(this is going to be the tough part)
- Did anyone dissent? Why? Again, explain with one or two sentences.
- Significance. Why does this case matter or how can we feel the effects of it today?
- You must have some type of visual for the rest of the class as you are presenting. This could include:
 - *a powerpoint
 - *a handout to give to the class
 - *a poster or piece of butcher paper with pertinent info

Due Date: _____

Oyez is a great website to use for this assignment!

HANDOUT #38

Name:

Date:

Key Supreme Court Cases

1. Brown vs. Board of Education (1954):
2. Dred Scott vs. Sandford (1857):
3. Gideon vs. Wainwright (1963)
4. Furman vs. Georgia (1972):
5. Gregg vs. Georgia (1976):
6. Hazelwood School District vs. Kuhlmeier (1988):
7. Korematsu vs. United States (1944):

16. Sheppard vs. Maxwell (1966):

17. Texas vs. Johnson (1989):

18. United States vs. Eichman (1990):

19- Tinker vs. Des Moines

Writing a Letter to the Editor

How to write a letter to the editor:

1. Pick a topic that you feel passionate about. Relate it to an issue very recently discussed in the publication to which you are writing.
2. Think of new ways to discuss the topic and present unique solutions to the problem.
3. Write clearly and concisely following the limitations usually given on the editorial page or letters-to-the-editor page.
4. Include your major points within the first few paragraphs.
5. Type your letter and double space between lines.
6. Use your spell check and then proofread.
7. Sign your name and include your phone number and address if required.
8. Mail, fax or e-mail your letter to the address listed for the publication.
10. Keep in mind that most publications verify by phone or in writing that you, and not someone attributing these opinions to you, authored the letter.

How to reach us

Forum » 801-257-8883

Other » 801-257-8888

Tribune fax » 801-257-8525

E-mail » letters@sltrib.com (Send text only, attachments will not be opened. Put "letter" in the subject line.)

Mail » Public Forum, The Salt Lake Tribune, 90 S. 400 West, Suite 700, Salt Lake City, UT 84101

Letter policy

The Tribune welcomes letters of up to 200 words on a single topic of general interest. If published, they become the sole property of the paper and may be edited for length, grammar, accuracy or clarity. Letters must include the writer's full name, street address and daytime and evening telephone numbers, though only name and city of residence are published. Only one letter per writer can be published within 30 days.

Opinion online

For more political commentary on Utah, the nation and world, visit *The Tribune's* Web site at www.sltrib.com/opinion

YOUR OPINION

Mailing address: Readers' Forum,
Deseret News, P.O. Box 1257, Salt Lake
City, UT 84110

Email: letters@desnews.com

Fax: 801-237-2530

Forum rules: We recommend letters to the editor be kept short. We routinely condense and edit them. All letters must include full name, address, telephone number and, whenever possible, a signature. Names are withheld only when publication would endanger or seriously embarrass the writer.

↑ SL Tribune

← Deseret News

United States District Court for the District of Utah

Community Education and Outreach Program

Careers With the Court

(here are some of the many court careers that you could pursue)

Judge

Judges apply the law and oversee the legal process in courts. They ensure that rules and procedures are followed, and interpret the law. Judges also work outside the courtroom, "in chambers." In these, their private offices, judges read documents, research legal issues, write opinions, and oversee the court's operations. In some jurisdictions, judges also manage the courts' administrative and clerical staff. Judges instruct juries on the law. When the law does not require a jury trial or when the parties waive their right to a jury, judges decide the cases. A bachelor's degree and work experience usually constitute the minimum requirement for a judgeship or magistrate position. A number of lawyers become judges, and most judges have first been lawyers. Federal and State judges usually are required to be lawyers first. All federal judges are nominated by the President and confirmed by the United States Senate, as stated in Article III of the Constitution. Federal judges serve for life unless they are impeached. Magistrate judges are appointed by majority vote of the active federal district judges in their district and serve for 8 years. Every state has its own procedures for becoming a judge. In Utah, you must be admitted to practice law in Utah, have lived here for 3 years and be at least 25 years old (5 years residency and 30 years old to be a Utah Supreme Court justice). Applicants are nominated for review through public comment and investigation. The final list is presented to the Governor who selects the next judge. State judges in Utah are subject to retention elections.



Law Clerk

Law clerks assist judges in research. Some law clerks work for judges for a very long time and are referred to in federal courts as staff attorneys. Law clerks help draft decisions, jury instructions, and other material. A law clerk arranges the judge's calendar and schedules meetings and conferences. A law clerk must have a bachelor's degree. Law clerks are either in law school or have recently completed law school. Some judges require that their clerks have passed the state bar exam and have 1-10 years of legal experience.



Attorney

Lawyers, also called attorneys, act as both advocates and advisors in our society. As advocates, they represent one of the parties in criminal and civil trials by presenting evidence and arguing in court. As advisors, lawyers counsel their clients concerning their legal rights and responsibilities. Lawyers spend the majority of their time outside the courtroom, conducting research, interviewing clients and witnesses, and handling other details in preparation for trial. Lawyers who work for state attorneys general or U.S. attorneys, prosecutors, public defenders, and courts play a key role in the criminal justice system. Government lawyers help develop programs, draft and interpret laws and legislation, establish enforcement procedures, and argue civil and criminal cases on behalf of the government. Lawyers often work long hours, and of those who regularly work full time, about half work 50 hours or more per week. Formal educational requirements for lawyers include a 4-year college degree, 3 years in law school, and the passing of a written bar examination.



Paralegal/Legal Assistant

Paralegals assist attorneys in many ways. They may help prepare the legal arguments, draft documents to be filed with the court, and assist attorneys during trials. Paralegals also organize and track cases and documents. Some paralegals coordinate the activities of other law office employees and maintain financial office records. Additional tasks may differ depending on the employer. There are several ways to become a paralegal. The most common is through a community college paralegal program that may lead to an associate's degree. Some employers train paralegals on the job, hire college graduates with no legal experience, or promote experienced legal secretaries.



Court Clerk

The court clerk takes care of the judge's papers and files. The court clerk also swears the witnesses in. The court clerk sits at a desk beside the judge. Court clerks also manage the administration of the courthouse, attending to staff needs, building maintenance, computer systems, finance and budget concerns, and the regular operation of the court. In federal courts, clerks have many titles ranging from docket clerk to courtroom deputies. All clerks assist the judges and the public. Court clerks usually have to have a college degree or 2 to 4 years of other court experience.



Court Reporter



Court reporters oversee the recording of all things that occur during court. Some courts use video equipment, while others use a shorthand typing device. Court reporters play a critical role not only in judicial proceedings, but at every meeting where the spoken word must be preserved. The amount of training required to become a court reporter varies with the type of reporting chosen. It usually takes less than a year to become a voice writer. In contrast, the average length of time it takes to become a stenotypist is 33 months. Some states require court reporters to be notary publics. Others require passing an exam.

Interpreter

Court interpreters convert one spoken language into another. They often assist non-English speaking persons in filling out forms and preparing legal documents. Court interpreters work in a variety of legal settings, such as attorney-client meetings, and all stages of a trial. In addition to interpreting what is said, court interpreters also may be required to translate written documents. To become a court interpreter you must be fluent in another language, have a high school diploma, and pass a language proficiency exam. Some courts, including federal courts, require certification of language skills for certain languages. All court interpreters must swear an oath similar to the ones made by witnesses to be truthful in their interpretations.



US Marshal

U.S. Marshals provide security in the courtroom and patrol the courthouse. They maintain order by removing or calming disruptive people, and operating security check points at the doors. Marshals escort judges, juries, witnesses and prisoners to and from the courtroom. They also administer first-aid and assistance during emergencies, accidents or illnesses. U.S. Marshals also execute, or carry out, the warrants and other orders of the court, as well as track fugitives. To become a US Marshal you must be legally eligible to carry firearms, and complete a 2 year training program or have 2-4 years of law enforcement experience. Many U.S. Marshals have college degrees and military training.



Mediator

Mediators are trained in communication and conflict resolution. They assist parties in coming to an agreement about their dispute without going to trial. Some courts and judges require that people try to mediate before coming to court; while other courts offer mediation as a service to the parties who are interested. Many states require court mediators to complete a training program, ethics exams and to have 50 hours to 10 years experience as a mediator. There are many training programs in the community and most schools offer degrees in related fields (such as law, communication and dispute resolution).



Probation Officer

Probation officers supervise people on probation or supervised release through personal contact with the offenders and their families. They investigate the background of offenders, write pre-sentence reports, and make sentencing recommendations. Officers may be required to testify in court as to their findings and recommendations. They also attend court hearings to update the court on the offender's compliance with the terms of his or her sentence and on the offender's efforts at rehabilitation. A bachelor's degree in social work, criminal justice, or a related field usually is required. Applicants usually are administered written, oral, psychological, and physical examinations. Sometimes applicants are required to complete a training program.



Careers with the Court

Name:

Period:

1. List 5 roles of a judge.
2. How does one become a Federal judge?
3. State judges in Utah subject to what?
4. What do clerks do?
5. What do attorneys do as advocates? As advisers?
6. What do government lawyers do?
7. What do paralegals do?
8. What is the most common way to become a paralegal?
9. Name 3 responsibilities of a court clerk.
10. What does a court reporter do?
11. What does an interpreter do?

12. List 3 roles of a U.S. Marshal.

13. Mediators are trained in what?

14. What do probation officers do?